

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 9th November, 2016

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Graham (Chairperson);
Aldermen Haire, McGimpsey, Patterson and Spence; and
Councillors Beattie, Boyle, Carson,
Dudgeon, Hargey, Howard, Johnston, Kyle,
Magee, McAteer, McDonough-Brown,
Mullan, O'Hara, Reynolds and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. D. Durkan, Director of Development;
Ms. N. Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 12th October were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Matters Referred Back from Council

Notice of Motion: Tourism Offer in Belfast

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st November, had considered the following Notice of Motion which had been moved by Councillor McVeigh and seconded by Councillor Nicholl:

“This Council recognises the importance of tourism to our City's economy. With proper stimulus and support, we have the potential to substantially grow this sector and create many more jobs across the City.

It is recognised that tourism related jobs, in hotels, bars, restaurants, cinemas, shops, tourist attractions and taxis are often the most accessible for the lower skilled and those most removed from the labour market. It is crucial that we do everything that we can to support the growth of this sector.

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It is imperative that opening hours for our restaurants, pubs and clubs, particularly within our City centre, are reviewed and modernised. It is very clear that residents and tourists alike are often left with little to do at key times of the evening and weekend and that this is hampering our tourism offer.

This Council calls upon the Minister for Communities and the Assembly to further devolve licensing decisions to councils. Local councils are best placed to make decisions about appropriate opening hours.

In recent months, a number of potential international investors have expressed an interest in developing an Entertainment and Casino complex in Belfast, with a planned investment of £150 million and the creation of in excess of 900 new jobs.

This Council agrees to carry out a public consultation, including with our tourism and hospitality sector, to ascertain whether the citizens of Belfast wish to see the modernisation of our licensing laws and opening hours and the development of an Entertainment and Casino Complex within Belfast.”

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the Motion had been referred without discussion to the Committee.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting on the proposals within the Notice of Motion, to include information on:

- the proposal to undertake a public consultation to ascertain whether the citizens of Belfast wished to see the modernisation of Licensing laws and opening hours in Northern Ireland, and the development of an Entertainment and Casino Complex within Belfast, with associated costings;
- the suggested parameters and mechanisms which would be used for such a public consultation; and
- related issues which had already been subject to public consultation by other government departments, including timescales and any conclusions which had arisen from them.

Presentation

The information contained in the following report is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

Restricted

Special Action Areas and Animating the City

The Director of City Centre Development provided the Committee with an update on the regeneration approaches which were being undertaken within the five Special Action Areas (SAAs) of the City Centre.

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The Members were reminded that the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) had identified five SAAs which were in need of a detailed and integrated planning approach, namely, the Inner North, the North East Quarter, the Inner West, Oxford Street/the East Bank and the Transport Hub/South Centre. The Director provided the Committee with an update on how work in each of the areas was progressing. She highlighted the importance of local neighbourhood connectivity and why it was integral to the success of the City, particularly with reference to social inclusion and creating local opportunities. It was reported that a phased approach would be taken towards preparing more intensive local plans for each SAA to ensure that the larger ambitions of the BCCRIS were met.

During discussion, the Director advised the Members that representatives from the Transport Hub had offered to present to a future meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

The Director outlined proposals for a city animation programme, commencing in the summer of 2017, working with the local sector on a number of seasonal and longer term interventions. The Members were provided with a number of examples of where successful schemes had been implemented, including 'King's Cross Pond' in London and 'P.S.1' in New York. The Director outlined a number of benefits which interventions would provide, namely to:

- improve connectivity across the city centre, driving footfall between and across the wider city centre area;
- raise awareness of vacant sites and opportunities for development;
- catalyse economic development options to support retail, leisure and tourism opportunities;
- create opportunities for existing residential communities to become engaged, increase perception of shared ownership of the city and identify potential job opportunities that may come forward as part of the interim uses;
- address a range of challenges from anti-social behaviour and perceived safety to unattractive and derelict spaces; and
- promote Belfast as a unique urban destination.

In response to a Member's question regarding the Inner West, the Director confirmed that a long term plan was being put in place to address anti-social behaviour (ASB) and that, through engagement with traders in the area and in working on schemes with the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and the Director of Development, it was expected that an increased footfall in the area would decrease ASB significantly.

In response to a further Member's question about integrating the Titanic Quarter (TQ) into east Belfast, the Director confirmed that work was ongoing in this regard with a focus on creating better pedestrian connectivity between the TQ and the east of the City. She pointed out that animating the river to increase connectivity between the East Bank, the TQ and the city centre was part of the planned approach for this area.

After further discussion, the Committee:

1. agreed to further develop the approach to city animation;
2. agreed to a report being submitted to the December Committee meeting with selected areas for animation and costings for approval; and

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3. agreed to invite representatives for the new Transport Hub to present to a future meeting.

Request to Present to Committee

NIE Networks

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from NIE Networks to present on the key elements of its business plan, detailing what it proposed to deliver between 2017 and 2024 and also its emergency plans for winter and any severe weather.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Transport NI was unable to attend the Special Infrastructure Committee meeting on 16th November and that it would instead be invited to attend a future meeting. The Committee also noted that, further to the Committee's decision at its meeting on 12th October, representatives from the Department of Infrastructure would also be invited to attend.

The Committee agreed to accede to the request from NIE Networks and agreed that it be invited to the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee meeting on 16th November, to which NI Water would also be invited.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

East Bank Update

The Director of City Centre Development reminded the Members that the East Bank Framework was being created within the context of the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (CCRIS) and the identified Special Action Areas (SAA) for areas of the city which were in need of an immediate, detailed and integrated planning approach.

She advised that, as previously agreed by the Committee, a multi-disciplinary expert team, led by Arup, had been appointed to take forward a detailed Framework for the area which had been identified as the East Bank. She pointed out that a project steering group had recently been established with council staff from the City Centre Development and the Local Development Plan team, who would work alongside the appointed team led by Arup.

She outlined to the Members that the East Bank area was situated in an important location between the east of the city and the traditional city centre and that there were a number of potential future engagement opportunities, including the Sirocco site which was under new ownership, the Queen's Quay which was owned by the Department for Communities and the Titanic Quarter. She confirmed to the Committee that all land owners in the East Bank area would be engaged with directly during the development of the Framework.

The Director stated that early consultation with elected Members and other key stakeholders would begin in December 2016, as part of Stage 1 of the project, with the aim of identifying key issues and improving the understanding of the area. She

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explained that Stage 2 of the consultation process would commence in January to explore the options for developing the strategy and the associated action plan.

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Critical City Infrastructure - Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Members on the ongoing work and engagement with Central Government on the development of an Infrastructure Plan for the City

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note that:

(i) The Infrastructure Minister, Chris Hassard MLA has confirmed his willingness to work with Council and other partners to develop an Infrastructure Plan for the Belfast City-Region and Eastern Corridor including examining forms of financing such a plan.

(ii) The Department for Infrastructure has indicated it would work with the Council to explore the potential to commission a feasibility study in relation to a high speed rail connection between Belfast and Dublin as raised in a recent Notice of Motion to Council.

(iii) The Executive’s Committee for Infrastructure has requested to meet with the Lord Mayor and Council delegation on the 7 December (am) in City Hall, to explore some of the key infrastructure challenges and priorities facing the city and how the Council may work more effectively with the Committee.

(iv) A further report will be brought back to January committee on the proposed Infrastructure Plan

3.0 Main Report

3.1 If the Belfast City-Region and connecting corridors (e.g. Eastern Corridor) is to fulfil its potential there is a need for sustained investment in critical city infrastructure. Infrastructure planning and investment is necessary to enable and support economic growth and investment and ensure that the city is capable of accommodating future development and plans for growth. It will also be important in terms of supporting the emerging Local Development Plan.

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- 3.2 Members will be aware that a cross-party delegation from Council has been meeting NI Executive Ministers to discuss the emerging Programme for Government, new Investment Strategy and Economic Strategy as well as exploring the key challenges, opportunities & priorities for the city.**

On the 20 October, Members met the Infrastructure Minister, Chris Hazzard, MLA. A key focus of discussion was the recent announcement by the Minister and Department for Infrastructure to extend the procurement bidding process for the York Street Interchange project with no definite date set for commencement of the scheme. This decision has received significant pushback and concern from the general public/commuters as well as industry.

- 3.3 The scheme has been in planning from 2009, with an Executive announcement to progress the infrastructure scheme made in 2015. The £165m scheme is critical to the city and would address the traffic gridlock which occurs daily at the busy junction, a key gateway into the city and the port. As Northern Ireland's busiest junction, it carries 100,000 vehicles each day, mostly commuters to and from Belfast as well as the haulage industry linkage to the port. This is not only an important scheme to increase the economic competitiveness of Belfast but also Northern Ireland Plc.**
- 3.4 The Minister indicated that the decision to delay the scheme was due to current uncertainty around funding availability given a proportion of the scheme was to be funded through Europe and the current uncertainties around Brexit as well as the pressures on the NI Executive infrastructure budget. The Minister indicated that the Department is working towards a likely 2018 timescale to submit a bid for funding for York Street Interchange under the 'Connecting Europe Facility Fund'.**
- 3.5 Whilst the Fresh Start Agreement provided for an additional £350m borrowing for infrastructure projects over the next four years, the Minister stated that the NI Executive have prioritised four flagship projects including the Belfast Rapid Transit, Belfast Transport Hub and the A5 and A6, therefore existing resources will be needed in the short-medium-term to take these projects forward.**
- 3.6 During discussions Members highlighted the desire of Council to work alongside the Department to explore what innovative financial mechanisms and funding models could be developed to deliver important city infrastructure schemes such as the York Street Interchange. The Council would specifically wish to examine the potential options around a potential public and private sector co-financing model for specific schemes such as the mixed-use**

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regeneration scheme around the Transport Hub. The financial model which could be developed to bring this scheme forward could potentially be structured in such a way that it could release capital for other infrastructure schemes that are likely to be put on hold, such as York Street Interchange.

Infrastructure Plan for Belfast City-Region and Eastern Corridor

- 3.7** The Council strongly believes that if Belfast and Northern Ireland is to make a further step change and compete on a global scale there is a need for targeted investment in the physical, economic and social infrastructure of the city. Having modern infrastructure in place will further enhance Belfast (and wider region) proposition as an attractive place to live, work and invest.
- 3.8** Understanding Northern Ireland's priority infrastructure needs, and planning to address these on an affordable and property sequenced basis, should be at the heart of the Investment Strategy. The Council would highlight the potential for central government, local government and the private sector to collaborate more closely in planning and delivering future infrastructure investment.
- 3.9** In this context, the Infrastructure Minister indicated at our recent meeting that he would be keen to work with Council and other Ministerial Colleagues to bring forward an Infrastructure Plan for Belfast City-Region and Eastern Corridor and to explore how such a plan may be resourced. This proposal was also discussed at the recent meetings with the Finance Minister, and First and Deputy First Ministers, all of which recognised the importance of this work for the city-region.
- 3.10** As agreed previously by Committee, officers have been carrying out initial scoping work on the development of an Infrastructure Plan to align with proposed growth figure within the Belfast Agenda and would now intend to engage with departmental officials to further refine this work. A report will be brought back to the January meeting of the Committee.
- 3.11** Members will note that the Executive's Committee for Infrastructure has requested to meet with the Lord Mayor and Council delegation on the morning of 7 December (am) in City Hall, to explore some of the key infrastructure challenges and priorities facing the city and how the Council could work more effectively with the Committee.

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High-Speed Rail Infrastructure

- 3.12 Members will note that the Infrastructure Minister confirmed that departmental officials would explore with the Council the potential to commission a feasibility study in relation to a potential high speed rail connection between Belfast and Dublin which had been proposed in a recent Notice of Motion submitted to Council. Again, a report will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee on this proposal.**

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.13 There are no financial or Human Resource implications contained within this report.**

Equality or Good Relations Implications

N/A”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Positioning Belfast to Compete

MIPIIM Update

The Director of City Centre Development reminded the Members that the Council, at its meeting on 1st June 2016, had agreed that a Belfast delegation would attend MIPIIM 2017, which was taking place between 14th and 17th March. She undertook to provide the Committee with an overview of the preparations which were underway for the Council’s attendance at MIPIIM, the largest international market for real estate professionals which was held annually in Cannes, France.

She reminded the Members that, in March 2016, the Council had led a successful Belfast delegation of 53 people from 23 sponsoring organisations to MIPIIM and highlighted some of the positive outcomes to the Committee, namely that:

- the strong Belfast plc proposition had put the City back on the investment map;
- 15 expressions of interest to visit Belfast had been made by major institutional investors and a number of funders sourced at MIPIIM were now actively investing in developments or very seriously considering investments in the very near future; and
- a significant hotel company was actively seeking a site in Belfast.

The Director explained that, while she had been appointed as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for MIPIIM 2017, an internal City Centre Programme Board, constituted in June 2016 and led by the Chief Executive, would provide strategic oversight. The Members were also advised that a private sector steering group had been set up to support the work on the sponsorship and messaging, and that it had agreed to hold sponsorship at the 2016 levels. The Committee was reminded that the Council had agreed to allocate £60,000 to MIPIIM, with additional costs to be met through private sector sponsorship.

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The Director confirmed to the Members that preparations for MIPIM 2017 would be progressed in tandem with other strategic initiatives including the Belfast Agenda, Place Positioning, and the International Marketing Strategy.

The Committee was reminded that, in 2016, Belfast had gone to MIPIM with strong messages around tax, talent and technology. The Director explained that the messaging for 2017 would build on these, but would also include strong references to tourism and transport. She highlighted that the aim of MIPIM was to showcase specific investment opportunities around these themes, such as the Transport Hub which would transform Belfast, the visitor attractions, the North Foreshore, the Sirocco site, the North East Quarter, in addition to specific development opportunities for new hotels, retail, offices, and leisure space.

The Director advised the Members that, following a competitive procurement process, the Council had appointed Lanyon Communications Ltd. to support the preparations, sponsorship and stand development for MIPIM 2017. She provided an overview of the key preparations which had been planned to date, including a Sponsor's launch event on 1st December to be held at the Belfast Telegraph building, symbolising the future regeneration of the City. The Members were also advised that a Public launch would take place in February 2017, in the Belfast Waterfront, as an opportunity to galvanise the Belfast delegation, and publically project the international ambitions of the city.

During discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting, highlighting the successful outcomes which had arisen from Belfast's participation in MIPIM 2016, noting that some investment proposals were commercially sensitive.

International Relations Framework Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“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 2016-2021 and seek approval to proceed with a number of forthcoming activities.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Agree the content of the new International Relations Framework 2016-2021.**

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- Agree to support the Chinese New Year 2017 celebrations to a maximum of £5,000.
- Agree to the attendance of the Lord Mayor and the Director of Development or their nominees at the Boston launch of the third Friendship Four Ice Hockey 2017 tournament from 5 - 8 January 2017, at a cost not to exceed £3,500.
- Agree to support the first Sport Changes Life US / NI Basketball tournament in Belfast in December 2017 at a maximum cost of £50,000, and thereafter support the tournament in principle for successive years, subject to annual committee and budget approval.
- Agree to the development of a 'Belfast in China Week' programme to take place in partnership with stakeholder organisations in the first six months of 2017, subject to Committee approval of the programme and associated budget.
- Agree to the development of a Belfast City Council economic, tourism and education mission to Nashville in partnership with key stakeholder organisations in Spring 2017, subject to Committee approval of the programme and associated budget.

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.

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- 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 - 2021 has been under development since August 2016. As part of the commission, the consultancy team engaged with a range of key internal and external partners to identify the appropriate focus, structure and priorities for the Council's investment in this field. A Members' workshop on the draft Framework was held on 26 October 2016.
- 3.5** A copy of the draft Framework is available on modern.gov. Some of the emerging principles and areas of focus identified include:
- **Need to clarify the role of the Council:** 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 convening and leadership role that opens up opportunities and access to influence on a scale that is beyond what our partners would be able to achieve working unilaterally.
 - **Positioning the City: importance of the collective message.** Belfast has a range of audiences to speak to in international markets, from potential investors to students and tourists. While the message needs to be targeted to the respective audiences, it is critical that this is underpinned by a shared, compelling narrative. All opportunities to take a "Team Belfast" approach in relevant activities should be explored.
 - **Strengthening our relationships with key partners and locations:** The existing City linkages appear to align well with those of our key partners. It appears prudent to explore opportunities for deeper engagement in a small number of key locations, as opposed to light touch engagement with a larger number of locations.
 - **Objectively assessing new opportunities:** The new Framework includes a methodology to effectively assess the value of any new linkages to the Council and our stakeholders. This approach should be endorsed.
 - **Promoting trade and investment opportunities as a key area of focus:** Belfast has achieved great success in attracting inward investment jobs in recent years. Our recent attendance at MIPIM is an example of

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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.

- **Attracting Visitors and creating positive perceptions of the city:** It is important that we develop a marketing strategy that sells the city to students, conference operators and leisure visitors. 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
- **Ensuring Transparency and Communicating Success**
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 partner organisations. There is a need for multi-annual planning for the city-to-city links as well as our wider international promotion activity. These multi-annual plans should have clear targets attached and, at the end of each year, successes should be communicated.

3.6 Taking account of these emerging principles, there are a number of activities in the pipeline which are considered to align well with the emerging direction of travel. While recognising the need to take a multi-annual approach to the planning of activities within the International Relations Framework, these activities require Council endorsement in order to commence the development work required. If approved, they will feature in wider multi-annual programmes of activity which will be brought back to this Committee for information and endorsement, as appropriate.

3.7 The emerging priority activities include:

- Chinese New Year 2017
- Friendship Four Ice Hockey Festival November 2017
- Sport Changes Life (SCL) Victory Scholar Basketball Programme
- Belfast in China week
- Future Nashville visit programme.

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Chinese New Year 2017

- 3.8 Members will be aware that since 2012, Belfast City Council has been supporting the City celebrations for the annual Chinese New Year. Each year the Confucius Institute along with the Chinese Consulate work with other strategic partners to bring famous traditional dance and art troupes from China to promote the beauty of traditional Chinese Culture in Belfast. A request has been received to support the 2017 Chinese New Year Guangzhou Art Troupe event in the Waterfront Hall on 1 February. The troupe will include puppet art theatre, music and folk art. The event will bring senior officials from the Chinese Embassy in London and the Chinese Consul General for Northern Ireland, senior officials from Ulster University, MLAs, and Mayors from various councils, together with over 3,000 people including students from the hub schools, parents, teachers and the general public.**

Friendship Four Ice Hockey Festival 2017

- 3.9 Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been a central support partner of the Friendship Four Ice Hockey tournament. The second tournament will take place in the SSE Arena from 25-27 November 2016 with teams from Quinnipiac, St Lawrence, Massachusetts and Vermont Universities. It is expected to attract 1,200 US visitors over the weekend, contributing almost £1million in visit spend to the Belfast economy.**
- 3.10 Work is already at an advanced stage on the third annual Friendship Four tournament in Belfast (November 2017) and the organisers are planning to formally announce the dates as well as participating teams at an event to take place in Boston in January 2017.**
- 3.11 The Lord Mayor and the Director of Development have been invited to attend the official launch of the tournament in Boston on 7 January 2017. This will be a national US press launch along with Mayor Walsh of Boston. It will be instrumental in promoting the tournament to increase the number of US visitors to Belfast in 2017 and to enhance the profile of the event. It will also present a significant opportunity to promote the city of Belfast as a cultural, tourist and business destination.**
- 3.12 Members are asked to approve the attendance of the Lord Mayor and Director of Development or their nominees at the launch in Boston. As part of this visit, there will be a number of additional meetings organised with a view to putting in place the plans for a potential inward business mission to Belfast from Boston in late Spring 2017. If this goes ahead, it will feature as part of the future work plan and will be**

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brought to this Committee for endorsement. The costs associated with this visit will not exceed £3,500.

Sport Changes Life (SCL) Victory Scholar Basketball Programme

- 3.13 Members may be aware that Sport Changes Life (SCL) is a sport-based charity that seeks to raise the aspirations of young people by promoting sporting excellence, vocational and academic achievement and personal development. It runs a number of outreach and engagement initiatives including the e-Hoops programme (which is to be supported under the Council's Employability and Skills Framework) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes for local businesses.
- 3.14 One of the charity's most significant programmes is the Victory Scholar initiative. This is run by SCL in partnership with Ulster University and brings US-based College student athletes to Ireland to study for a Master's degree and to work with disadvantaged youth as part of their programme. At present, twenty-three Victory Scholars are attending 10 Universities and Institutes of Technology throughout Ireland. Scholars work in structured settings with young people deemed to be at risk in society. In the course of 2016, it is anticipated that the Victory Scholars will work with over 60,000 young people through sports and personal development programmes. It is also intended to explore the development of a reciprocal programme to secure scholarships from Northern Ireland students in US colleges.
- 3.15 The networks established in the course of the 10 years that the Victory Scholars programme has been operational can provide significant contacts within many US corporations and across numerous prestigious US educational establishments. Furthermore, the alumni network of Victory Scholars who have spent some time in Northern Ireland can act as very positive Ambassadors for the region and can encourage further partnerships from their institutions.
- 3.16 Building on the work of the Victory Scholars programme to date, SCL are currently planning the first ever Northern Ireland-US College Classic in partnership with the US Basketball Hall of Fame. This is a first for US College teams to take part in competitive games outside of the USA.
- 3.17 Discussions are already under way with Ulster University with a view to the university becoming a strategic partner in the event. The Basketball Hall of Fame in the US has been

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confirmed as a partner and support from the Rory Foundation has also been secured. The organisers are also engaging with other potential funders in order to cover the costs associated with hosting the event.

- 3.18** At this stage, it is proposed that the 2017 event will attract four teams while it is planned that 8 teams will participate in the 2018 and 2019 events (the organisers are currently working on a three year planning schedule). The organisers are open to engaging with our partner cities of Nashville and Boston in order to ensure that there is representation from both cities.
- 3.19** The 2017 event will attract up to 30 players from each team along with officials, family and friends. Organisers are forecasting that the event will support around 2000 bednights, representing an income of around £400,000 for the local hospitality industry. It is proposed that it will take place in the SSE Arena and will be broadcast both locally and in USA. Organisers will work with Visit Belfast and Invest NI to ensure that all opportunities are taken to promote the city as a dynamic business and visitor destination.
- 3.20** It is proposed that the Council provides funding of up to £40,000 towards the cost of hosting the event along with provision of a civic welcome dinner at a maximum cost of £10,000. The organisers are also seeking support from US and NI-based corporate sponsors as well as other public bodies. There will also be revenue generated by income from ticket sales for the matches.

Belfast in China Week

- 3.21** Members will recall that the Lord Mayor and officers from Belfast City Council took part in a mission to China in May 2016. Other attendees included both universities, Invest NI, the NI Executive Office and local businesses. Partners undertook their own programme of meetings to pitch for international students, business and investment, in both Beijing and Shenyang. Thanks largely to the efforts of the NI Chinese Consul General, Madam Wang, the 'Friendly Cooperation' agreement with the city of Shenyang and Belfast was elevated to that of a formal Sister City Agreement.
- 3.22** The strong message coming from the British and Irish Embassies, as well as UKTI and the NI Executive Office, is that relationships need to be fostered over time to produce concrete outputs.

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- 3.23 Since the May visit there has been a significant increase in engagement with China. These include:**
- **Belfast City Council has begun an exchange of information and best practice with Shenyang on Smart Cities**
 - **Campbell College is actively engaging with the China Education Bureau to recruit Chinese students to board at the College**
 - **Visit Belfast has become proactive in the World Tourism Cities Federation to promote the city to a massive Chinese audience**
 - **Progress has been made to encourage a direct flight from Dublin to Beijing**
 - **QUB and Ulster University are progressing agreements for research and international student programmes**
 - **Confucius has secured an additional 12 Mandarin teachers for NI**
 - **Belfast City Council been working with Shenyang on a large scale exhibition to be launched in the city next year to promote its Sister Cities linkages**
 - **Belfast has been invited to send a cultural performance to Shenyang for a major cultural festival in 2018 and is working with Confucius, Arts Council and British Council to make this happen**
 - **Belfast City Council has undertaken a number of follow-up sales pitches for city investment with investor contacts engaged with during the May visit.**
 - **In order to further progress with tangible areas of cooperation and to build on the momentum created by the visit and subsequent activity, Members are asked to give approval for Officers to explore and develop a further visit – ‘Belfast in China Week’ in May or June 2017 to be led by the Lord Mayor, in conjunction with city partners. Subject to Committee approval, officers will commence work on the development of a detailed programme and this will be presented at a later date for Committee approval.**

Nashville Mission

- 3.24 Members will be aware of the Council’s March 2016 visit to Nashville led by the former Lord Mayor. The programme for the visit included meetings with Vanderbilt and Belmont universities, as well as the music industry and economic development stakeholders.**
- 3.25 Belfast City Council, jointly with Invest NI, held a pitching session with companies from Nashville from the health technologies and creative industries sectors, both the main growth sectors driving the Nashville economy. Since this visit, the City of Nashville has led two missions to Belfast,**

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one during the April Sister City Summit 2016 along with Boston, and the latter, during the October Sister Cities mission and Homecoming conference.

- 3.26** Immediately after the Homecoming event, the Chair of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, along with the Director of Development, travelled to Boston to hold a health technologies business showcase with Belfast, Boston and Nashville companies.
- 3.27** Since the March 2016 visit to Nashville, there has been significant progress on the Belfast-Nashville partnerships:
- Officers are currently following up live contacts and requests for linkages between Ulster and Queen’s universities with Nashville around creative industries and emerging technologies
 - Both universities are in discussions with Nashville universities around student placements
 - One school exchange has taken place (October 2016 with Methody) with a further two visits planned for 2017
 - Visit Belfast is now exploring opportunities to link with its Nashville equivalent around joint tourism promotion under the Sister Cities banner.
- 3.28** In order to maintain and build momentum, and to build a multi-annual work programme between the cities, Members are asked to give approval for Officers to explore and develop a programme for a further visit to Nashville in late Spring early Summer 2017. The programme would include tourism, business and education dimensions in partnership with stakeholders in order to progress the existing connections. Final approval on the details of the visit will be brought to a future meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for endorsement.

Financial and Resource Implications
International Relations Framework

- 3.29** 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 to Committee for approval.

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Chinese New Year 2017

- 3.30** Belfast City Council has been asked to provide £5,000 in support of the event on 1 February 2017.

Friendship Four Ice Hockey

- 3.31** The cost of the visit to Boston by the Lord Mayor and Director of Development or their nominees for the launch of the 2017 Friendship Four event as well as the series of business meetings will not exceed £3,500.

Basketball

- 3.32** The maximum cost of supporting the inaugural US Basketball Victory Scholar tournament in Belfast will not exceed £50,000.

Belfast in China Week

- 3.33** The anticipated cost of the Belfast City Council led 'Belfast in China Week' will not exceed £25,000. Costs for this activity will be included within the 2017/2018 departmental estimates, and are subject to Council approval.

Nashville

- 3.34** The anticipated cost of a Belfast City Council mission to Nashville is £10,000. Costs for this activity will be included within the 2017/2018 departmental estimates, and are subject to Council approval.

Equality & Good Relations Implications

- 3.35** The new International Relations Framework will be equality screened and all proposed activity will be embedded within this."

In response to a Member's question regarding the significant investments which had been made in Northern Ireland by American companies, specifically in relation to the recent protectionist comments on economic policy by the President Elect of the United States of America, the Director confirmed that a watching brief would be required to determine the impact on both existing and new investment opportunities.

The Director confirmed that, in relation to the school exchange programme, a wider range of schools would be asked to participate and clarified that the ones which had taken place so far were pilot schemes.

In response to a further Member's question, the Director confirmed that, through the Sports Changes Life programme, consideration was being given to creating opportunities for students from the USA to undertake international study in Belfast, and that work was ongoing with InvestNI and the two Universities to support that.

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Proposal

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Alderman Patterson,

That the Committee defers consideration of allocating £50,000 towards the inaugural US Basketball Victory Scholar tournament in Belfast until next month, to allow a more detailed report to be submitted.

On a vote by show of hands nine Members voted for the proposal and ten against and it was declared lost.

After discussion, the Committee adopted all of the recommendations within the report.

City Investor Advice Support - Proposal

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The Committee has recently received updates on progress with the current Committee Plan and the emerging areas of work that are being explored to support the delivery of the Belfast Agenda, which has inclusive growth at its core. This included proposals to grow the Belfast economy by supporting more business starts, helping existing businesses to grow in export markets and attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). ‘Growing the Economy’ to maximise the benefits for the city and for all communities requires a co-ordinated and city-wide approach, securing buy-in from city partners and stakeholders. This will require a city-wide approach to be developed for each stage in the process of:

- promoting Belfast as a place to invest and do business;**
- supporting business start-ups and business growth for indigenous businesses and attracting FDI companies**
- providing appropriate support and after-care service to those committed to investing in Belfast; and**
- investing in the relevant infrastructure to attract and retain investment**

1.2 In an increasingly competitive global environment, Belfast must emphasise its distinct competitive advantage if it is to continue to compete and successfully attract FDI, and tourists to the city as well as encouraging more businesses to start and support those existing businesses to grow in the city. Members have emphasised the importance of continuing to attract and support FDI to Belfast and the Council has been delivering on the Tourism Strategy Action Plan, developing a ‘Go to Market’ plan and working with city stakeholders in the development of the International

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Relations Framework to ensure that this is focused on attracting investment and positive profile for Belfast.

- 1.3** The purpose of this report is to outline a proposal to secure professional expertise to assist in developing a costed and resourced scope of services that could be provided by Belfast City Council, with partners, to augment the existing services and incentives to support, attract, secure and sustain business starts, business growth and investment. This will also be designed to provide assurance that future approaches are additional and complementary to those services and support that is already provided by city partners.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1** The Committee is asked to:

- Agree to the development of the city investor advice proposal as outlined in the report.

3.0 Key issues

- 3.1** Members are aware that the Belfast Agenda has at its core a commitment to inclusive growth. The scale of Belfast's ambition is set out in the draft Belfast Agenda which aims to grow the city's population by an additional 70,000 people and for the city's economy to support 50,000 more jobs by 2035. To focus our efforts on growing the Belfast economy, a number of ambitious and challenging targets have been set for 2021:

- Creating 15,000 new jobs
- Attracting £1 billion of private sector Foreign Direct Investment
- Supporting 4,000 small business start-ups

- 3.2** The pillars summarising the city priorities (below), demonstrate the importance of fostering business growth, attracting investment and making Belfast an easy place in which to do business to implementing the agenda.

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Belfast economy

- 3.3** Last month Committee received an economic briefing which highlighted the importance of rebalancing the economy, creating jobs and tackling the skills and employability issues in the city. Belfast's indigenous business population is dominated by micro and small businesses (96% of businesses) and Committee is aware of the challenges for the city with limited numbers of export-led businesses and low levels of business starts. However, Belfast has developed a successful track-record in attracting FDI to the city in recent years and a number of specialisms are emerging in the fields of Financial Technology, Financial & Legal Services, Creative & Digital Industries, Cyber Security, Green Tech and Life & Health Sciences.
- 3.4** The attractiveness of Belfast as a business investment destination is evidenced through accolades such as:
- Belfast is the number 1 destination for financial technology investments (FT Fdi Markets 2015)
 - Belfast is Europe's leading destination for new software development projects (FT FDI Markets 2015)
 - Belfast named as the most Business Friendly City of its size and is in the Europe's top 10 cities for business friendliness of any size (FT FDI Cities of the Future 2015)
- 3.5** 75% of investors choose to reinvest in Northern Ireland. Research carried out on behalf of the Council (2014) reported that those who have already invested in the city consistently report the positive aspects of the skilled workforce, the competitive cost base, quality of life, connectivity and the scale of city which makes it accessible. Accelerating investment in Belfast will require greater collaborative campaigns for the city to augment the City's strengths and services.

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- 3.6 Officers have been exploring opportunities for securing and re-aligning resources to support the ambitions set out in the Belfast Agenda for ‘Growing the Economy’ to ensure that there are no major gaps in the provision of support for businesses starting up, those who wish to grow their business and those foreign owned businesses who may choose to locate in Belfast. This includes improving signposting for businesses to ensure that they get the help they need when they need it; better packaging the support that Council as a whole provides to businesses and investors; exploring potential incentives to encourage additional businesses and investment (including financial incentives, business accommodation and business support services) and exploring opportunities for greater alignment between the Council’s investment in business support programmes and city development and infrastructure plans.**
- 3.7 The recent opening of the Innovation Factory, the refreshed International Relations Framework; as well as the ‘Go to Market’ plans and the preparation for MIPIM which are also being considered by Committee; provide fresh impetus to consider how the City can begin to embed and sustain this collaborative and outward-focused approach to deliver on the City ambitions in the Belfast Agenda.**
- 3.8 A key challenge moving forward is how Belfast can collectively meet the needs of FDI and indigenous businesses to make it easier to start up and grow businesses and encourages new investment in the city. This will enable us to identify gaps and augment current provision, to define the nature and scope of services required to provide an end-to-end service to support businesses and investors in Belfast.**
- 3.9 Based on initial discussions with city stakeholders and following a review of investor / business support service provision in other UK and ROI cities (e.g. Edinburgh, Dublin, Manchester), there is an opportunity to enhance the current offer and provision in Belfast; however this requires more detailed scoping and testing. Modern.gov includes an example of the type of services and support provided by other Councils.**
- 3.10 It will be necessary to secure external professional expertise to deliver the following which would form the basis of the terms of reference:**
- Identify and propose a package of potential support measures and incentives that Belfast City Council can offer to business start-ups, existing businesses wishing to grow and foreign owned businesses that might consider Belfast as an investment location. This should augment existing supports and incentives**

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that are available through other agencies such as Invest NI in order to support the city's ambition to attract £1bn of private sector FDI, businesses and developers to invest and grow their business in the city

- Specify a realistic scope of services to be provided through a 'City Support & Investment Advice Service' to meet the needs of FDI, developers and indigenous businesses who may choose to start up, grow and invest in Belfast.
- Recommendations for the establishment of a 'City Investment Advice Service' team; including an assessment of the level of resources (budget, staffing, ICT and data requirements) and proposed structure required to successfully deliver. This should take account of the role of the Council and key services in delivering the service, with our partners.

- 3.11** While this is referred to as a 'City Support and Investment Advice Service', this is a working title only at this stage. Through the consultation and benchmarking we would expect that this work would identify a title for the service that is distinctive and impactful, reflecting the nature of service offered, without replicating what has been done elsewhere.
- 3.12** As previously noted by Members, any proposals would need to demonstrate added value and complement the existing support to businesses and investors provided by Council and partners, such as Invest NI. As such, this work will include a critique of the current support and incentives available when promoting Belfast as a place to start a business, for existing businesses to grow in export markets and as a place for foreign owned businesses to invest and do business. Consideration will also need to be given to how such a service can be resourced and operationalised to ensure that it supports the delivery of plans, strategies and frameworks such as the developing programme of work to grow the Belfast economy, the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy, International Relations Framework and Employability & Skills Framework. A wide range of options for management of the service include in-house and more arm's length support.
- 3.13** This city service and suite of measures and incentives will form a key asset in the city's future pitch and offer to those interested in starting a business, those who wish to grow their business and those foreign owned businesses that may choose to invest in Belfast. Enhancing the existing city offer and service is expected to directly contribute to the city's ambition to attract £1bn of private sector FDI, create

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15,000 more jobs and support 4,000 small business start-ups by 2021.

- 3.14 Taking on board previous research this type of investor support service is likely to impact on several Council services such as City Centre Development, Planning as well as Development but it will also be important to tie in to the work of City & Neighbourhood Services who also support businesses across a range of operational areas including waste, food safety, health & safety, licensing, etc.**

Financial Implications

- 3.15 The estimated cost for commissioning the work would be £29,950, within the quotation limits of Council's procurement guidelines, and would be allocated from the existing departmental estimates.**
- 3.16 The recommendations arising from this work will include the identification of resource considerations and proposals for taking this forward.**

Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 3.17 Equality and Good Relations implications will be considered as this work progresses and in consultation with the Council's Equality & Diversity Officer."**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Growing Businesses and the Economy

Creative and Digital Industries Initiatives

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Draft Programme for Government (PfG) Framework 2016-2021 aims to support a more innovative, creative society. It includes an ambition to have more people working in better jobs and connecting people and opportunities through our infrastructure. Many of the associated outcomes in PfG relate to building confidence and an increased desire to work, live and visit Northern Ireland. This is reflective of The Belfast Agenda and the Growing the Economy 'pillar' in particular which identifies key growth sectors and clusters to help achieve the City's ambition.**

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1.2 Recent investments by Creative and Digital Industry (CDI) companies in Belfast demonstrate that the sector can be globally competitive, attracting international investment and generating indigenous businesses that can compete in global markets.

1.3 The purpose of this report is to update Members on emerging areas of work within the Council that can contribute to the further growth of the sector in the City and to secure approval to move forward on these initiatives.

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Support the work to explore the role for Council intervention in co-working space and develop a learning pilot for delivery of co-working space for Creative and Digital Sector Businesses, at a total cost of £50,000 (refer to sections 3.9 to 3.12).
- Agree to make a contribution of £20,000 towards the costs of hosting the Cartoon Business event in May 2017, subject to Belfast being chosen as the preferred location for the event (refer to sections 3.15 to 3.18).
- Note the proposal to develop a programme of activity and support a trade mission to SXSW Austin, Texas in partnership with Invest NI and Generator NI (10-19 March 2017) with a Council contribution of £20,000 towards an overall £50,000 funding package and agree that the Council should be represented at the event by the Chair of City Growth and Regeneration Committee or their nominee and one Officer (refer to sections 3.19 to 3.23).
- Approve support for delivery of the Output Conference and music showcase in February 2017 in partnership with Ulster University, private sector partners and Generator NI, with a £20,000 contribution from the Council towards an overall funding allocation of £55,000 (refer to sections 3.24 to 3.28)

3.0 **Main report**

3.1 Belfast is increasingly becoming a centre for professional services, software development and creative and digital technology. Research suggests that the City has specialisms in a number of areas including TV, film, gaming, animation and music as well as financial services technology, software development and cyber security.

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- 3.2 While the City has been extremely successful in many areas, it is recognised that that this success can only be sustained if there is ongoing investment by all relevant partners. This requires an integrated approach to planning and investment which, to date, has been limited. Members will be aware of proposals to establish an Economic Forum for the City in order to move forward on some of the economic priorities identified within the Belfast Agenda. The buy-in and professional expertise of the Economic Forum will be fundamental to informing how the City supports sector and cluster development for our growth industries of Financial Technology, Financial and Legal Services, Cyber, Creative and Digital Industries, Green Technology, and Health and Life Sciences while, at the same time, ensuring that this growth is inclusive.**
- 3.3 In August 2016, US-based financial technology company Tullett Prebon chose Belfast as the location for a major technology centre to create 300 new jobs contributing over £9.9m in additional salaries to the NI economy each year. Cyber Security is another growing sector with US firm Black Duck Software being the most recent investor to announce 58 new forecast jobs in Belfast contributing over £2 million annually in additional salaries to the local economy. There are currently 1,200 people working in the cyber security sector and the ambition is to continue to grow this to 5,000 over the next 10 years.**
- 3.4 Key economic drivers behind these investments are the local talent pool, competitive overheads, excellent telecommunications infrastructure and research excellence.**
- 3.5 Companies in this field are now working in global markets. In order to ensure that Belfast and its businesses can continue to play a role in these growing sectors, it is important to ensure that there is ongoing investment in infrastructure and support services to maintain and accelerate the rate of innovation and growth.**
- 3.6 A number of emerging developments including the Belfast Story Visitor Attraction, the investment propositions accompanying the Belfast Transport Hub, the relocation of the BBC, the proposed refurbishment and extension of Belfast's Central Library, the Innovation Factory and North Foreshore Film Studios will each help underpin that growth.**
- 3.7 A primary purpose of the Belfast Agenda is to ensure that actions under the "Growing the Economy" pillar are co-ordinated so that the requisite infrastructure and skills are available to meet demand, and that investments stimulate**

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social inclusion. As a starting point to developing the Council's role in the Creative and Digital Sector and to ensure strategic fit with partner stakeholder interventions, research was undertaken by Deloitte to understand the key ingredients for an internationally competitive creative and digital sector. These included:

- **Infrastructure:** including telecommunications and transport connectivity
- **Networking:** opportunities to engage with like-minded businesses to share ideas and support collaboration
- **Skilled Workforce:** there are some specialist technical skills that are needed to compete in the highly-competitive sector
- **Finance and Funding:** creative businesses often need access to non-traditional finance or they need investment to pump prime development in the early years
- **Internationalisation:** creative and digital businesses generally work in national and international markets; they are rarely focused on local markets only
- **Access to Markets:** given the international nature of the business, access to new markets and international clients and partners is critical
- **Culture and Atmosphere:** creative and digital businesses thrive in environments with a high degree of collaboration and opportunities for interaction
- **Mentors, Advisors and Support System:** these are critical for providing targeted interventions to address growth challenges.

3.8 The research noted that, while many of these ingredients were already in place in Belfast, there was a need for greater coordination and investment if the potential was to be fully exploited.

3.9 Collectively the Council is delivering cross-departmentally against many of these ingredients, in particular through the work of the City Centre Development, Smart Cities, International Relations, Employability and Skills and City Events teams as well as our partner engagement with Invest NI, Visit Belfast and Tourism Ireland.

3.10 Taking account of the work of our partner organisations, and focusing on areas in which the Council can provide added-value or those in which other partners are not directly engaged, it is proposed that a number of new initiatives will be taken forward to support the further development of the CDI sector in the City in the coming six months.

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Infrastructure & Networking: Proposal for Co-working Space

- 3.11 As Appendix 1 demonstrates, there are a number of providers of business workspace and business support initiatives to support the development of the Creative and Digital sector. Some of these are sector-specific: others are more generic but do tend towards higher-growth sectors, many of which are technology-focused. While there is now much more support available than in previous years, the scale of the demand is still outstripping supply. This is largely driven by work undertaken at Catalyst Inc. (formerly NI Science Park) as well as additional support in the Universities and Belfast Metropolitan College to encourage knowledge-based start-ups and new business growth.
- 3.12 The early concept work on the Belfast Story Visitor Attraction identifies the opportunity to support a number of complementary creative elements. In addition to the Belfast Story narrative, there are proposals for the integration of a cinema, performance space and studio space. Likewise, the adjacency to Ulster University is considered to provide opportunities for creative workspace to support spin outs and new business starts in the area identified in the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy as the 'Regional Learning and Innovation Centre'.
- 3.13 While this project is still some time off, it is proposed that further analysis is undertaken to understand how the Council (potentially with other partners) might add value in the interim in the provision of co-working space. This phased work will identify the need, inform the specification for any property solution and identify commercial terms through which the Council may engage and potentially develop a project in tandem with a third party, with a view to developing a sustainable solution. This project will be complementary to the work being undertaken by the City Centre Development Team to explore options for the use of vacant space.
- 3.14 Whilst analysis and development of a long-term co-working space solution advances there is also an opportunity for the Council to facilitate provision of accommodation and a support programme for small creative businesses in parallel. This will target new (less than two years old) micro businesses in the creative sector. This interim solution (approx. 6 months) will provide businesses with co-working space and business coaching support. Belfast City Council will invite established local creative companies to provide space for use by up to 40 individuals or new starts that do not currently have a base. The larger business will also be contracted by the Council to provide some business support and mentoring to the micro businesses. In addition, Officers will look at how venues such as the Innovation Factory can

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be used for masterclasses and showcasing events for participating businesses, in order to support the key elements of the creative support ecosystem and test out what works, in order to inform any future investment.

Internationalisation: Hosting major business events

- 3.15** Cartoon Business is an annual international business event focusing on securing finance for film and television series. It has been running for more than 20 years and has taken place in many cities around Europe including Dublin, Utrecht, Paris and Barcelona. The 2017 event will take place on 9-11 May and the organisers have issued a call for cities interested in hosting the event. Belfast City Council, DCAL and Invest NI supported the event in 2013.
- 3.16** Cartoon Business regularly attracts around 250 European animation professionals and addresses topics around sources of financing and how producers can increase revenues from their animated TV production. Public and private funding, new business models, licensing and merchandising and legal issues are also explored to allow professionals to capitalise on their investment and maximise opportunities for economic return.
- 3.17** The Conference is a three day event at which key speakers from the film and television sector share experience on a range of topics. By hosting the Cartoon Business Conference in Belfast, local animation companies will have the opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills, and help them understand the market to maximise the return on their productions. The Conference will also provide the opportunity for local studios and production companies to attend high level training at a reduced cost and animation students also have the opportunity to attend the sessions and face the key issues of the industry. Visit Belfast has forecast that the Conference will generate £230,000 to the local economy in terms of bed nights and visitor spend.
- 3.18** Partners from the Department of Communities, NI Screen, Ulster University and Visit Belfast have committed to provide financial assistance of up to £54,000/€60,000 towards the costs of the event. The partners have asked Belfast City Council to be part of the funding partnership, at a level of £20,000. The remaining amount will be contributed by the other partners – as set out in 3.29. A decision on the location for the 2017 event will be made in November 2016. If Belfast is chosen as the location for the event, it will take place in the Belfast Waterfront.

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Internationalisation & Access to Markets: showcasing

- 3.19** The Council's research work highlights the need to communicate the City's assets and strengths to key international markets and investors whilst promoting access to markets for local businesses.
- 3.20** South by Southwest (SXSW) in Austin, Texas remains the key US showcasing, deal striking, networking and media forum for the international media industry attracting 15,000+ attendees. Belfast City Council has participated in the event in previous years to promote music and digital industries and to profile Belfast as a key investment location and hub for new creative start up businesses. Fourteen Belfast businesses and three Belfast bands attended in 2016 leading to two new company/app launches, £185,000 sales and three USA Booking Agents confirmed. The 2017 event will take place from 10-19 March 2017.
- 3.21** Taking account of lessons learned from attendance at previous events, and recognising changes to Invest NI support for trade mission engagement, the proposed 2017 mission will involve the Council supporting five local micro businesses who are not Invest NI clients to attend. Since earlier this year, Invest NI has restricted its financial support towards trade mission activity to focus on Invest NI clients only. In line with its expanded role in supporting small business, the Council will identify five companies with the potential to export that are not currently active in export markets. The companies will receive mentor support before their visit in order to prepare them to make the most of engagement in the event. They will also be supported during the event and will have access to a post-event programme of support to ensure that they are able to follow up on opportunities identified. Invest NI and Generator NI (the music industry support body) will support twenty additional companies and four artists at SXSW 2017 by providing up to 50% of the travel, accommodation and Conference pass costs. Belfast participants supported by Invest NI or Generator may also avail of the Belfast pre and post trade mission support. This approach is supported by Invest NI and Generator.
- 3.22** Over the next 12 months, Digital Catapult NI will be developing Creative and Digital Clusters to engage in a stream of activities to support and help build on NI's capability in this sector. Belfast City Council is therefore working with Digital Catapult to maximise local participation at SXSW, particularly those new businesses that have never

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attended the event but that could benefit from engagement. By partnering with Digital Catapult on the Immersive Tech NI launch and Hackathon (taking place 4-5 November 2016 at The Hive PwC), it is hoped that new talent will be identified for participation at SXSW.

- 3.23** In addition to the company engagement, Belfast City Council will work with Invest NI and Generator NI to deliver a Creative Belfast Meet The Buyer event, a music showcase and networking event. The Belfast team can also participate on the UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) exhibition stand. The cost for the Council contribution will be £20,000 with another £20,000 being provided by Invest NI and £10,000 by Generator NI.

Atmosphere and Culture: support for key events

- 3.24** Output Belfast is a music Conference, showcase and performance event. The second annual event took place in February 2016 welcoming a daytime audience of 350 persons and 75 national and international guests. The evening showcase had an overall audience figure of 1,250, spread across 9 different venues. It was primarily hosted in The Mac and Oh Yeah Music Centre but also across multiple venues in the Cathedral Quarter.
- 3.25** Output Belfast is the island's largest one day music Conference, catering for the wider creative industries, and a one-night showcasing event of over 30 of Northern Ireland's most exciting new bands. The event is developed and hosted by Generator NI and Belfast City Council with additional support from the PRS for Music, BMI, Invest NI, Ulster University and the creative sector.
- 3.26** The Conference was designed to share knowledge using industry focused workshops, panels and networking events hosted and presented by national and international music industry leading figures.
- 3.27** Based on the successes of previous events, it is proposed that Output 2017 will be scaled up to attract 500 daytime delegates, 30 music showcases and a minimum audience at the evening showcase event of 1,400 persons. The provisional date for the event is 18 February 2017.
- 3.28** The overall cost of the event is £55,000. The proposed Council contribution to the event is £20,000. Other commitments include £15,000 from the private sector, £15,000 from Generator NI and £5,000 from Ulster University.

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Financial & Resource Implications

3.29 The total cost for delivery of these initiatives for Belfast City Council is £110,000 broken down as follows:

- **Co-working space development: £50,000 towards the research piece as well as the pilot project working with “host” businesses to support new creative start-ups**
- **Cartoon Business Conference: Council contribution towards a total cost of €60,000 (£54,000) is £20,000. The remainder will be met by Department for Communities (£20,000); NI Screen (£10,000), Ulster University (£2,000) and Visit Belfast (£2,000)**
- **South by Southwest, including pre and post trade mission mentor support to participants: Council contribution towards a total cost of £50,000: £20,000. Remainder to be met by Generator NI (£10,000) and Invest NI (£20,000)**
- **Output: Belfast City Council-led activity: £20,000. Remainder of programme cost met by Ulster University £5,000, Generator NI £15,000 and Private Sector £15,000).**

3.30 This budget is included within the Economic Development Revenue Budgets for 2016/17. As the Cartoon Business Conference is scheduled for May 2017 it is proposed that part of the funding will be included within the 2017/18 estimates process for the Department subject to Belfast being confirmed as the host City for the event.

Equality & Good Relations Implications

3.31 No specific equality or good relations considerations.”

In response to a number of requests from the Members, the Director confirmed that a site visit to, or a presentation from, a Creative and Digital Industry (CDI) representative within Belfast would be arranged at a future date for the Committee.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

St. George's Market and Belfast City Airport

The Director of Development advised the Members that a proposal had been received from the George Best Belfast City Airport's franchised catering partners, HMS Host, in relation to a significant refurbishment plan for the café area in the Departures Lounge. HMS Host had approached the Council in relation to the refurbishment, indicating that it wished to explore opportunities to reflect the local, and very successful, St. George's Market in the design work. He explained that the principle behind the proposal was that a version of the St George's brand would be incorporated into the

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branding of the wider catering provision, featuring panels to tell the history of St George's Market.

The Director explained that the association with the airport offered significant opportunities to promote St George's Market to leisure tourists who had been to the City and would be keen to come back, as well as to business tourists who might be keen to return to the City on a weekend break. The Airport was actively looking at how it could encourage visitors to return to Belfast and Northern Ireland for weekend visits and felt that the local messaging around key attractions, such as St George's, would support that ambition.

The Members were advised that, while it was planned that there would be an association with St George's Market, the produce on sale did not necessarily have to come from the Market. There had, however, been engagement with the catering franchise to look at opportunities for introducing products from traders at St George's where that was possible and they were keen to explore this further.

The Director pointed out that the City Airport was of critical importance to the development of the Belfast Waterfront as a conference and exhibition centre, highlighting that one of the key selling points of the Waterfront venue was its proximity to the airport and the City Centre.

The Committee was advised that, following engagement with the Council's Legal Services Section, officers had been advised that there were no reasons why the partnership should not proceed in principle. It would be important, however, to ensure there was a legal agreement between Belfast City Council and the airport's catering partner outlining the parameters for use of the brand.

The Committee:

1. noted the early engagement between the catering franchise partner at the George Best Belfast City airport and the Council with regard to using the St George's Market brand within the revamped catering facilities in the Departures Lounge at the airport; and
2. agreed that Officers should proceed with the development work, subject to the ability to sign off on the design concepts and subject to a form of legal agreement, to be drawn up in conjunction with the Council's Legal Services section.

Christmas Market

The Director of Development provided the Members with an update on the preparations for the Christmas Market which would operate in the City Hall grounds, and the immediate outer perimeter area on Donegall Square North, from 19th November to 22nd December, 2016.

The Director confirmed to the Committee that the delivery of the Christmas Market was put out to tender every year since its inception in 2004, with Marketplace Europe (MPE) having been appointed as the operator each year.

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The Members were reminded that the Christmas Market was one of the main attractions for tourists over the Christmas season. The Director reported that the last evaluation of the Christmas Market, carried out by Millward Brown Ulster in 2014, noted that the Market generated around £58million into the local economy, with 60% of Market attendees also visiting local shops and 39% visiting local restaurants and cafés.

The Director also reported that a recent survey showed that 91% of traders within the Belfast One BID area felt that the Market was of significant direct value to the City, while the traders at St George's Market also felt that the Christmas Market was complementary to their offer and had a positive impact on their trading performance.

The Director explained to the Committee that one of the most significant opportunities this year was the potential presented by the Northern Ireland Year of Food and Drink 2016. He advised that this year's Market would feature a number of unique local food traders who would be located in 20 new chalets along the outer perimeter railings on Donegall Square North. He pointed out that those stall holders would operate on a rota basis, changing twice a week, to ensure that they were able to produce sufficient stock. He advised that those companies had been selected by Food NI and would come from all over Northern Ireland.

The Director pointed out that MPE had yet again invested in a significant outreach programme with schools, a range of family friendly activities and tours at quieter times for those with disabilities. He reported that the chosen charity for the Christmas Grotto at the Market would be the Children's Cancer Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital.

In response to a Member's question regarding congestion at the Market, the Director advised that there would be around 90 chalets within the City Hall grounds, which was slightly fewer than in recent years as the organisers had worked to improve the layout in order to reduce congestion at peak times.

A further Member asked that measures be taken to ensure that the grounds of the City Hall be left in a good state of repair during the set-up and dismantling of the Market.

The Director advised that MPE wished to open the Market from 12 noon on Sundays this year and that the Legal Services Section had advised that there were no reasons why that could not happen in principle.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. noted the update on the Christmas Market at the City Hall;
2. agreed that the Market would open from 12 noon on Sundays;
3. agreed that assurances be sought from the relevant persons in relation to marshalling and crowd control at the market; and
4. agreed that due consideration and care be taken during the build of the Market and that the grounds and surrounding area of the City Hall be left in a good state of repair after the Market departed.

Chairperson