

Development Committee

Wednesday, 14th January, 2009

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Browne (Chairman);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor D. Browne); and
Councillors Attwood, Campbell, Convery, Crozier,
Cunningham, Ekin, Humphrey, B. Kelly, Kyle,
C. Maskey, McCausland, Mhic Giolla Mhín,
Rodgers and Stoker.

In attendance: Ms. M. T. McGivern, Director of Development;
Ms. S. McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives;
Mr. T. Husbands, Managing Director of the
Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls; and
Mr. N. Malcolm, Committee Administrator.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors D. Dodds, Lavery, P. Maskey and McCarthy.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 5th January, subject to:

- (i) the omission of the minute under the heading "Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre" which, at the request of Councillor Stoker, had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration;
- (ii) the omission of that portion of the minute under the heading "Economic Development" referring to the World Trade Centre Belfast which, at the request of Councillor McCarthy, had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration; and
- (iii) the omission of the minute under the heading "Tender for the Provision of Café and Bar Services at the Ulster Hall" which, at the request of Councillor B. Kelly, had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

Presentation from the Nomadic Trust

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th November, it had agreed to receive a presentation from representatives of the Nomadic Trust to allow them to update the Committee concerning the progress of the project and to consider the release of the penultimate £50,000 of Council funding. Accordingly, the Committee was advised that Ms. L. Cowan and Messrs Ian Savage and Ronan Corrigan were in attendance and they were admitted to the meeting and welcomed by the Chairman.

With the assistance of visual aids, Mr. Savage informed the Committee that the objectives of the Nomadic Trust were to:

- (i) effect a sensitive and sustainable restoration of the vessel;
- (ii) develop a highly entertaining, competitive and collaborative attraction;
- (iii) focus on the wider social, heritage, educational and economic impact of the ship and to maximise access to it;
- (iv) create a legacy for Belfast; and
- (v) be a well-governed Trust.

He informed the Members further that the intention was that the refurbished Nomadic would become a museum where various artefacts from the period would be displayed and tours of the ship would be available in order to provide visitors with an in-depth understanding of its history and heritage. In addition, the vessel would contain an exhibition and events area.

He pointed out that in the five months following the opening of the Nomadic to the public in 2007, the ship had attracted over 18,000 visitors and that an economic appraisal had ascertained that the refurbishment and associated costs would be in the region of £5 million. He indicated that the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and Titanic Quarter Limited had agreed to restore the Hamilton Dock to enable the Nomadic to be permanently located thereat and, in September 2008, the Nomadic had been accepted onto the Core Collection of Historic Ships, which included other high profile vessels such as the Cutty Sark.

He advised the Committee that later in the month a public appeal for funds would be launched and that the Institute of Directors had nominated the Trust as the charity which it would support during 2009. In addition, once a Conservation Management Plan had been completed, an application for assistance would be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Also, the Nomadic Trust had been shortlisted to receive funding under the Peace III Shared Space Initiative and the outcome of the final deliberations would be known in the coming weeks. This, if successful, would result in the project receiving funding of £2 million. He pointed out that, if the Trust received all the monies which it had applied for, it would have sufficient funding to complete the project to refurbish the vessel.

Mr. Savage informed the Members that the Trust was grateful for the £150,000 which it had received in recent years from the Council and that this had been used to undertake a wide range of works, including the preparation of the ship for its opening in 2007, movement of the ship to the Odyssey, marketing activities, the development of the economic appraisal and ongoing running costs.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the deputation withdrew from the meeting.

The Committee discussed the matter and agreed to provide £50,000 to the Nomadic Trust as the penultimate tranche of the £250,000 of funding which had been agreed by the former Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 23rd March, 2007.

Revenue Estimates 2009/2010

(Mr. T. Salmon, Director of Corporate Services, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered a report which had been prepared by the Director of Corporate Services in respect of the estimates of revenue expenditure for the year 2009/2010. A copy of that section of the report, in so far as it applies specifically to the Development Committee, is set out hereunder:

“A spending limit of £24,226,210 is recommended for the Development Department in respect of the financial year 2009/10. Excluding capital charges of £1,326,950 this represents an increase of £429,760 or 1.91% over last year.

The main budgetary intentions of the Department for 2009/10 are set out below:

	£
Economic Initiatives Section	7,227,010
Community Services	6,456,490
Waterfront Hall / Culture & Arts	5,249,110
Directorate	5,293,600
	24,226,210

The Department's increased budget of £429,760 provides for increased *employer's superannuation and utility costs* of £75,180 and £207,470 respectively.

The Department will also incur increased costs with the opening of the Ulster Hall and the new funding arrangements with DETI for Local Economic Development.

The *Ulster Hall* will be fully operational in 2009/10. This will increase the Department's expenditure by £751,150 but will be mostly offset with income of £574,300.

The first phase of the European Development Funding for *Local Economic Development* is complete. Under this arrangement 50% funding was from the European Union through DETI with the remaining 50% funding being provided by the Council. Under the new programme, with the change in priority areas, it is anticipated that income from DETI will fall to 40% leaving the Council bearing 60% of the cost of the programme. This funding change will result in additional costs of £180,000 in 2009/10 and may lead to further additional costs in subsequent years.

Members will recall that a budget of £400,000 was included in the 2008/09 estimates to support the *Tall Ships* event. A budget of £200,000 has been included in the 2009/10 estimates resulting in a reduction of £200,000.

Approval was also granted in 2008/09 to support the *World Irish Dancing Championships*. This budget will not be required in 2009/10 resulting in cost reductions of £100,000.

Costs associated with *Interreg* and *BERI* projects of £59,660 and £66,780 respectively have not been included in this year's estimate. These three year European funded projects, aimed at promoting best practice across Europe, are now complete.

Cost reductions have also been made in the *Policy and Research Unit*. As a result of work carried out by Business Improvement, the Policy and Research Unit is now structured to allow much of its work to be carried out internally. This will reduce its reliance on external consultants and as a result savings of £60,940 have been included in the 2009/10 estimates.

The Department will make a contribution of £163,840 to the *efficiency programme* in 2009/10. Efficiency savings will be made as follows:

Efficiencies	£
Insurances	65,300
Personal Computers	10,940
Stationery	11,290
Budgetary Efficiencies	<u>76,310</u>
Total Departmental Efficiency Savings	<u>163,840</u>

Departmental efficiencies will be made in employee costs as a result of reviews carried out by Business Improvement Section.

Belfast City Council like all other Local Authorities across the country is faced with the constant pressure of balancing increasing demands against ever decreasing resources and 2009/2010 will be no exception.

A major effort has been made by all concerned to ensure that the estimates presented are meaningful, realistic and correlate closely with the key tasks and activities within the Corporate Plan.

On February 2009 the estimates of the various Council Departments and Committees will be approved and adopted. In due course a full copy of the Corporate Plan incorporating a summary of the financial information will be distributed to each Member of Council.

My thanks are due to all for the continued co-operation and assistance which I have received over the past months in what has been a long and exhausting exercise to compile the Revenue Estimates.

DECISIONS REQUIRED:

1. To approve the Cash Limits for the Development Committee for the year commencing 1st April 2009 – Appendix 1.1.

**DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
REVENUE ESTIMATES 2009/2010**

	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Estimate 2008/09		23,796,450
Efficiency Savings		
Insurances	(65,300)	
Personal Computers	(10,940)	
Stationery	(11,290)	
Departmental Efficiencies	<u>(76,310)</u>	(163,840)
Increased Costs		
Utilities	207,470	
Employer's Superannuation	75,180	
Ulster Hall	751,150	
Local Economic Development	<u>180,000</u>	1,213,800
Cost Reductions		
Tall Ships	(200,000)	
World Irish	(100,000)	
Interreg	(59,660)	
BERI	(66,780)	
Policy and Research	<u>(60,940)</u>	(487,380)

Estimate 2008/09 (continued)		
Increased Income		
Ulster Hall		(574,300)
Normal Increase (eg pay awards / supplies and services)		441,450
Estimate 2009/10		24,226,210

**DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
MAIN ITEMS OF ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE 2009/2010**

	Inc. Capital Charges	Exc. Capital Charges
	£	£
Community Services	6,456,500	6,044,900
Waterfront and Ulster Hall	3,632,600	2,715,500
Economic Initiatives		
Events	2,398,000	2,398,000
Tourism	2,393,600	2,393,600
Arts and Culture	1,616,500	1,616,500
Economic Development	1,207,200	1,207,200
Planning and Transport	467,600	467,600
North Foreshore	400,200	400,200
Markets – Operations and Management	362,400	364,100
Directorate		
Development Directorate	2,918,600	2,918,600
City Development	930,100	930,100
Policy and Research	648,000	648,000
SNAP	501,100	501,100
European Unit	295,800	295,800

The Director of Corporate Services outlined the factors which had been taken into consideration in the preparation of the estimates and highlighted the costs across a number of areas which had contributed to a Departmental increase of 1.91% from the previous year. He informed the Committee that on 9th January the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, when it had been considering the cash limits for all of the Council's Committees had agreed, inter alia, that each of the Departmental estimates be examined in order to identify any further cost savings, together with their subsequent consequences, and that briefings be held for each of the Party Groupings on the Council in relation to the revenue estimates 2009/2010.

The Director of Development informed the Committee that the Development Department's estimates, compared to previous years, contained significantly less amounts towards the costs associated with overtime, staff training and attendance at conferences and that, following the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee decision, other areas of expenditure had been examined with a view to identifying further savings. This work had ascertained that two items could be removed from the Departmental Plan which would result in savings of £310,000 and result in the Committee's estimates increasing by 0.5%, rather than 1.91% from the previous year. These were as undernoted:

- (i) the event held on New Year's Eve which, at a cost of £250,000, offered poor value for money and meant that the Council was competing with the private sector on that date; and
- (ii) the proposal to organise street markets, at a cost of £60,000, which, in the current economic climate, could adversely affect St George's Market and the independent retail sector in the City.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Committee agreed not to hold a New Year's Eve event in 2009 and that no work be undertaken in connection with street markets in the financial year 2009/2010, which would result in savings of £310,000. In addition, the Committee noted that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 23rd January, would be deciding the Committee's cash limits for the 2009/2010 financial year.

Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre

(Mr. C. Quigley, Director of Legal Services, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of this matter to enable a special meeting to be held to which representatives from the Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre would be invited.

Economic Development - World Trade Centre Belfast

The Committee considered further that portion of the minute of the meeting of 10th December under the heading "Economic Development" which referred to the World Trade Centre Belfast which had been taken back at the Council meeting on 5th January at the request of Councillor McCarthy. An extract of the meeting in this regard is set out hereunder:

"The Committee considered the undernoted report:

'Relevant Background Information

World Trade Centre Belfast Business Plan

Belfast City Council acquired the World Trade Centre Belfast licence in 2002 in partnership with Multi Development. In 2007, the Council purchased back Multi Development's 50% of the licence. Since the appointment of the WTC Officer in March 2007, work has been undertaken to develop WTC Belfast activities. This has included a WTC Belfast Export Excellence Seminar Series for local companies this year as well as managing inward investment activities. To determine the longer term plans for WTC Belfast services, a business plan has been developed.

Key Issues

World Trade Centre Belfast

The strategies outlined by Programme for Government, DETI and Invest NI emphasise the need to support more companies to become exporters. Invest NI currently supports approximately only 5% of local companies and one of their priorities is to attract more client companies. The WTC business plan highlights the trade barriers and needs of local companies, the current assistance available and gaps in provision which WTC Belfast can fill. The business plan also details the commercial opportunities for WTC Belfast to secure income in order to secure the sustainability and growth of the service activities.

It proposes the following services:

- WTC Belfast Membership – target of 200 member companies established*
- WTC Global Skills Workshops – introducing companies to the practicalities of trading internationally*
- WTC Belfast Trade Missions – linking in with current providers (NICCI, Invest NI), we will undertake a small number of trade missions to target markets*
- WTC Global Supply Chain Management Programmes – helping companies improve their global supply chain management by looking at how they buy, sell or make products internationally*

- **WTC Belfast Local Networking Events – series of breakfast events on key topics of interest to local businesses**
- **WTC Belfast Investor Gateway Service – promoting Belfast as a city in which to invest and do business, linking with the key public and private sector agencies that can support potential investors.**

WTC Belfast will adopt the following principles in terms of service delivery:

- **Commercial approach: Services will be charged and income generated**
- **Regional approach: Membership and services will be offered to companies both regionally and internationally in cases where income can be generated or potential investment can be brought to the City. A regional approach also serves to attract co-funding for projects delivered on behalf of other organisations such as Invest NI. Participation costs by companies located outside of Belfast will be higher than those for Belfast businesses.**
- **Partnership approach: WTC Belfast will work in partnership with other local delivery organisations as well as the wider WTC network.**

Further details on the proposed activities can be found on Modern.gov.

Resource Implications

World Trade Centre Belfast

The cost to deliver the identified services for the period January 2009 – March 2010 will be £160,000. The budget for operations in the financial year 2008-2009 (£60,000) was approved as part of the Departmental Plan in May 2008; £100,000 will be required for the financial year 2009-2010. An application was submitted to DETI for 50% funding for WTC Belfast activities for this period and this has been approved. Invest NI have also agreed to co-fund the first WTC Belfast trade mission to Doha, Qatar. Further opportunities for private sector sponsorship will be explored.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

- ***Agree the proposed activities to be delivered as part of the World Trade Centre Belfast activity plan for the period 2009-2010 and approve a budget of £100,000 for activities to be undertaken in the financial year 2009-2010***

Key to Abbreviations

WTC – World Trade Centre'

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to adopt the recommendations contained within the report."

In response to a series of questions, the Head of Economic Initiatives informed the Committee that:

- (i) a number of developers had indicated to the Council that they would be interested in tendering for the World Trade Centre project, although, as no tender had yet been advertised, no formal bids had been received;
- (ii) twenty small or medium-sized businesses from Belfast would be participating in the trade mission to Qatar, accompanied by one member of staff. It was anticipated that the companies participating would obtain contracts from companies in the Middle East and would meet with venture capitalists who would be able to assist in the development of those companies. This visit had resulted from the Council's contacts within the World Trade Centre organisation and would be a business to business, private sector-oriented event. Invest Northern Ireland had been so impressed with the likely benefits from the Qatar trip that it had included it within the organisation's Trade Programme for 2009;
- (iii) no other outward missions were planned for the current year;
- (iv) the programmes which would be offered by World Trade Centre Belfast would not overlap with any other programmes being undertaken by any other organisation; and
- (v) whilst no companies had yet agreed to participate in World Trade Centre programmes, a number had expressed an interest in so doing.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Committee agreed to adhere to its decision of 10th December regarding the World Trade Centre Belfast.

**Tender for the Provision of Café and
Bar Services at the Ulster Hall**

The Committee considered further the minute of the meeting of 10th December under the heading "Tender for the Provision of Café and Bar Services at the Ulster Hall" which had been taken back at the Council meeting on 5th January at the request of Councillor B. Kelly. An extract of the minute in this regard is set out hereunder:

"The Director informed the Committee that, in order to improve upon the range of services which would be offered to customers at the re-opened Ulster Hall, it was intended that a café be located in the main foyer during Monday to Saturday, which would operate in line with the box office opening hours and that a bar service would be available during each event. Accordingly, tenders had been sought for the provision of café and bar services at the facility. She pointed out that catering functions taking place within the Ulster Hall would not be considered as part of the catering franchise. She reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 10th September, concern had been expressed regarding a proposal to restrict the Ulster Hall catering outlet to provide only one brand of coffee. She informed the Members that this restriction had been removed from the tender documentation.

The Director recommended, in order to ensure that the franchisee could be appointed as quickly as possible, that authority be delegated to herself and the Chairman to accept the most advantageous tender received.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation."

Having been advised that the tendering process had been undertaken in accordance with the Council's normal procurement procedures, Councillor B. Kelly indicated that she was content for the minute to be agreed. Accordingly, the Committee agreed to adhere to its decision of 10th December regarding the tender for the provision of café and bar services at the Ulster Hall.

In view of the foregoing decision, the Manager of the Waterfront and Ulster Halls circulated a report regarding the result of the tendering process. This indicated that five submissions had been received and that, after evaluation, the three highest scoring tenderers had been interviewed. Following the interview and final evaluation, it had been ascertained that the tender, in the sum of £15,000 per annum, submitted by Shine Productions Limited, had scored the highest marks and represented the most advantageous financial offer to the Council. Accordingly, he recommended that the tender be awarded to Shine Productions Limited, Bankmore Square, Belfast, on a three-year basis commencing 1st March, 2009, with the potential to extend on the Council's part for a further period of two years.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Renewing the Routes Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

This report provides an update on the general progress of the Renewing the Routes programme and seeks endorsement of proposed amendments to identified projects within the agreed action plans.

The modification to the projects programme relates to the proposed reallocation of approved funding as a response to changed circumstances in respect of an environmental improvement project and a built heritage project. The projects at Wilton’s Funeral Parlour and for tree planting, which were approved as part of the Crumlin Road Integrated Development Fund (IDF) plan, are no longer feasible within the funding timescales.

Key Issues

Shankill Road

The main emphasis for the regeneration on Shankill Road remains the commercial frontage improvements. Over sixty premises have now taken part in the scheme, with a further fifty businesses in line to benefit in the New Year. The block-by-block approach means that businesses and residents can immediately see a significant impact from the improvements works along on the road, with enhanced, bright and attractive places to work and shop.

The ongoing complementary activity has seen the completion of additional public realm improvements, funded by Belfast Regeneration Office (BRO), at the Agnes Street and Lanark Way key junctions. This work, coordinated by the Unit on behalf of BRO, is continuing in the Woodvale Park area with improved pedestrian crossings and additional resurfacing. The project will also include feature embellishments to street lighting alongside the installation of several pedestrian benches, with the work being completed by February 2009.

Completed IDF funded projects include bespoke railings and granite entrance features at West Belfast Orange Hall, floodlighting to Woodvale Methodist Church and high quality railings at West Kirk Presbyterian Church. Projects delivered in partnership with other Council Departments include floral baskets, tourism signage and lighting to the Woodvale Park ‘Family Tree’ sculpture.

Early 2009 will see works on site to restore Shankill Rest Garden's listed perimeter wall, the cleaning of the stonework to Shankill Library and landscaping at Woodvale Presbyterian Church. Once restored it is proposed that the Shankill Rest Garden wall will be lit by recessed up-lighting, this project is currently at the design stage.

Upper Springfield Road

The designs are now being finalised for an environmental project to improve the road frontage and reclaim an area of green space from anti-social behaviour and misuse at Springhill Park 'funnel'. Renewing the Routes, Parks & Leisure and Groundwork NI have worked with the local community over the last year and works are scheduled to begin on site in January 2009. New railings, paths, landscaping, planting and future artworks from the community will bring this green space back into use in time for the summer.

Commercial improvements have now been designed to complement previous schemes in the area and will be presented to owners/occupiers for final approval in February 2009 with work scheduled to commence in March 2009. DRD Roads Service has approved the installation of street lighting embellishments for installation in the new year.

An artist is currently being appointed to make a feature of the highly visible wall on this main arterial road at the JP Corry Ltd, near the entrance to Sliabh Dubh estate. The artist will work with the residents to produce a mosaic style piece on Industrial Heritage, Natural Environment or Families & Stories. The piece will be installed by April 2009.

Planting and boundary improvements are due to take place at Whiterock Orange Hall in January 2009. Additional complementary public realm and landscaping works at other local sites are also at the design stage.

Completed projects include a new Panoramic Viewpoint at Monagh Road and a major public realm scheme at the main junction of Springfield Rd and Whiterock Road.

Crumlin Road

Phase 1, commercial improvements to six properties at Lower Crumlin Road, is almost complete and should be fully completed by early January 2009. The second phase of the commercial improvements at Glenbank is also nearing completion, anticipated for mid-January. It is anticipated that the third phase of the Crumlin Road commercial improvements, covering 24 properties at the Ardoyne shops, will commence at the end of January, subject to the agreement of the individual owners.

The project to refurbish the Belfast Orange Hall has commenced on-site at Clifton Street with works that include blocking up of ground floor windows, removal of high cage and augmentation of boundary railings.

Draft proposals have been developed for landscaping schemes in Lower Crumlin (Oldpark/Clifton Park Avenue junction) and Glenbank alongside public realm proposals at the Carlisle Circus and Ardoyne roundabouts. Detailed public consultation has taken place at Lower Crumlin where final agreement has been attained and at Ardoyne Roundabout where it is expected to have final agreement early in the new year.

Update Antrim Road & York Road / North Queen Street

The additional projects, linked to the Urban II uplift in funding, including the installation of tourism signage, hanging baskets, flower trees and feature lighting have been completed and other projects including street lighting embellishments and gable wall improvements will be implemented in early 2009. The commercial improvements to four additional properties on these routes will be completed by end of January 2009.

Falls Update

The first phase of the Lower Falls commercial improvement to 23 properties is nearing completion, with a further 44 properties on site as part of the second phase (lower Springfield Road). The consultations in respect of a further 40 properties (Phase III - mid Falls) are currently underway, with an anticipated start date for the phased construction planned for the end of January 2009.

In conjunction with the Iveagh Residents' Group and local residents on Broadway, the 'Soffits and Sills' project was successfully completed at the end of November 2008. The soffits and sills of each residential property were painted to provide a simple but effective environmental enhancement for this busy thoroughfare.

Electrical work is currently underway on Carnegie Library for the illumination of the building and prominent façade which is planned to be launched on completion in mid- January 2009. Final concept lighting design drawings are currently undergoing consultation with St Mary's University College and construction work is scheduled for the end of January 2009. Designs are also being finalised for International Wall for a projected start date in February 2009.

The refurbishment works to the designated category B1 listed railings at the St Comgall's site is due to commence at the end of January 2009. A conservation architect has also been appointed to carry out investigatory works at the entrance of Milltown Cemetery.

The work to the entrance of Falls Park is in progress with all re-pointing elements already completed. Specialist refurbishment/repairs to the stonework will be carried out in January 2009 including reinstating the ornate finials on the pillars. Willowbank Youth Club Environmental Scheme has also been programmed for commencement in early 2009.

The second stage selection process for the appointment of the artist for the Gaeltacht Quarter art piece, 'An Ceilirudah/ Celebration' will convene at the end of January 2009.

Programme Variations

Members are asked to approve the proposed variations resulting from the continued review of activity and refinement of the final project implementation for the renewing the routes programme. The variations proposed are in respect of two previously agreed projects for Wilton's Funeral Parlour boundary enhancements and Tree Planting.

Wilton's Funeral Parlour

The potential for boundary enhancements to the external brick and sandstone wall at the historic archway at Wilton's Funeral Parlour/Brian Barret property was identified under the built heritage theme. During the further detailed developmental activity it was established that there is increasing uncertainty in relation to future development plans for both properties. This uncertainty and the potential for significant changes combined with the more limited environmental works budget has contributed to a situation where it is no longer feasible to develop detailed proposals for the property.

Tree Planting

The Belfast Regeneration Office is currently working alongside the Council's Parks & Leisure Department to deliver an enhanced tree planting scheme for the Crumlin Road. This additional funding for what had been an approved project will have the effect of releasing Renewing the Routes Integrated Development Fund resources for additional works in the Crumlin Road area.

In order to progress the continued implementation of the programme it is proposed that consideration be given to the reallocation of a combined budget of £40,000 towards additional environmental improvement works across the Crumlin Road area, specifically street lighting projects that could benefit the entire length of the route.

Resource Implications

There are no additional financial implications arising from the reallocation.

Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- Note the updates set out within the report; and
- Approve the reallocations of the previously agreed budgets of £10,000 in respect of the Wilton's Funeral Parlour property and £30,000 for tree planting towards an enhanced street lighting scheme and feature lighting for buildings of heritage and architectural merit."

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.

Arising from discussion in the matter, the Committee agreed that it would undertake a tour of the arterial routes which had benefited from the Renewing the Routes Initiative.

European Unit Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that the European Unit brings regular progress reports to Members. The purpose of this report is to advise Members of progress with respect to:

- OPENCities project
- Interreg IVA programme
- Comet Brussels visit
- Opportunity Europe 2008
- European Year of Intercultural Dialogue: Closing Conference

Key Issues

1. OPENCities Project

Members will recall their decision on 21 March 2007 to allow Belfast City Council's European Unit to develop a proposal to secure funding within the European Urbact II programme. Members will also recall that a proposal was successfully developed to address the issues around economic migration in Belfast and to identify best practise economic migration tools in cities elsewhere in Europe. The project was granted €75,000 for a development phase to recruit partner cities and their respective managing authorities and plan the 30 month phase II programme.

At this stage the project was awarded a new EU Commission Fast Track label, this means that the EU Commission views the project as a flagship project and will assign Commission staff from relevant departments to work with the project and ensure that any findings are considered when developing future European policies relating to economic migration.

On 24 November 2008, Belfast City Council as lead partner was informed that the Stage II application had been successful, securing a further €635,000 funding.

The programme funding under Urbact II is provided at 70% and will mean in practice that Belfast City Council will contribute approximately €30,000 over the 30 month period but will in turn secure two full time posts to manage the project.

The OPENCities project involves the following partners; Dublin, Sofia, Bilbao, Vienna, Düsseldorf, Bucharest, Gdansk, Nitra, Cardiff, Madrid and the British Council Madrid.

The OPENCities project will produce a number of outputs including an openness index, best practice exchanges and reports, local action plans and toolkits.

2. Interreg IVA

Members will be aware that on 14 December 2007 the Comet Interreg partnership submitted a multi-annual plan for funding to the Special EU Programmes Body. The plan was developed over 14 months following extensive awareness raising, promotion and project development throughout the metropolitan area. The plan contained 18 (out of an original 54) projects across the themes of enterprise, tourism and public sector collaboration totalling £18 million. At the same time the other four Interreg Partnerships

across NI and the border region submitted competing bids for the Interreg IVA funding of €258 million. Although Comet has not received a formal letter of offer, the partnership board has been told that, to date, it has secured €5.5 million to deliver seven projects across the border and Comet regions.

Details of the seven projects are available on Modern.gov. Members should however note that Belfast City Council and its stakeholders will benefit in particular from:

A business development programme led by the NITC

A NI Chamber of Commerce collaboration project

The Council carbon footprint analysis

The capital build support for the Oh Yea creative industries project, and

The Gaeltacht Quarter cultural tourism projects.

Members will be aware that Belfast City Council is represented on the Comet board by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Development Committee, Councillor Michael Browne and Councillor William Humphrey. The role of both Members will be enhanced through the implementation of Interreg IVA as Belfast City Council, as lead partner of the application, will be fully responsible and accountable for the implementation and management of the funding during the period 2008-2011.

The Comet Councils and stakeholders will have an opportunity throughout the Interreg IVA programme to develop and submit new project bids as new calls open under enterprise, collaboration, creative industries and environment. Due to over subscription it is not expected that there will be a further tourism call. Members are asked to note the allocation of Interreg IVA funding.

3. Comet Brussels visit 2009

Members will be aware that the six Comet Councils namely; Lisburn, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, North Down, Newtownabbey and Belfast, collaborate on a number of levels including:

- Policy dissemination
- Plato programme for small businesses
- Interreg IIIA and IVA funding
- Hosting inward study visits

The Comet officers' group comprises the Economic Development Managers of the six Councils and meets once a month to oversee collaborative projects and develop new activity. They operate under a Service Level Agreement, with Belfast City Council's European Unit providing the secretariat. The Councils have an annual project development budget of £30,000 contributed by the six Councils on a pro-rata basis based on population.

The officers' group has identified the opportunity to make a focused study visit to Brussels on 17-19 February 2009 to meet with the key senior figures from the European institutions and to meet selected regional offices with a view to developing new transnational projects. This is particularly in the context of Interreg B and C and the Rural Development programme for NI that dictates that 5% of RDP cluster funding is spent on transnational activity.

Members are asked to agree to the attendance of the Chairman of Development Committee and the Economic Development Manager (or their nominees) to join counterparts from the other five Comet Councils to visit Brussels on 17-19 February 2009. The cost of this trip will be covered under the Comet Service Level Agreement 2008/2009.

4. Opportunity Europe 2008

Members will be aware that one of the objectives of the European Unit is to bring Europe closer to the citizens of Belfast. To this end the Unit hosts an annual European Fest in St George's Market each October. In 2008 the event was aimed at all NI post primary school children. Attendance by the schools and the general public cumulated in 7,000 people attending the event on 21-22 October 2008.

In addition to the two day event two off-shoot events were held:

- A schools workshop
- A Belfast Telegraph schools competition

A great deal of publicity was generated for Belfast City Council in relation to Opportunity 2008.

5. European Year of Intercultural Dialogue: Closing Conference

2008 was dedicated by the European Commission as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID). To mark the year, a number of transnational partnerships were supported to encourage intercultural dialogue. Belfast was one of 23 cities partnering under the EURO CITIES umbrella in a series of best practice exchange visits. As part of this programme, a delegation undertook a visit to the Berlin Festival in May 2008 and hosted Turin visitors during the Belfast City Carnival later in the summer.

A final conference and a meeting of the Eurocities Culture Forum is being held in Amsterdam on 5 March 2009 to launch the project's publication and associated recommendations. Participants from the 23 cities, the wider EUROCITIES Culture Forum and key European networks will be expected to attend. It is requested that the attendees from each participating city include a youth representative, one Council officer and one Elected Member.

As a member of the project's Steering Group, Belfast will also present a case study under the 'Youth' theme in the afternoon workshops.

Members are asked to agree the participation of the Chairman of the Development Committee (or his nominee) and the previous project participants i.e. the youth representative, the Culture & Arts Manager and the European Officer (who has acted as contact point and co-ordinator) at the closing conference. The total cost is indicated at a maximum of £3,700.

Resource Implications

1. £22,000 maximum for the study visit to Brussels to be funded through the Comet Service Level Agreement annual budget.
2. £3,700 maximum for four delegates to attend the final EYID conference, this amount is included in the current European budget.

Recommendations

Members are asked to -

- Note the success of the Open Cities application.
- Note the success of the Interreg IVA multi-annual plan and projects for Belfast and the Comet region.
- Approve the attendance of the Chairman or nominee and Economic Development Manager or nominees at the Comet Brussels Study visit in February 2009 to be funded through the Comet Service Level Agreement budget 08/09 at a maximum cost of £22,000.
- To note the success of the Opportunity Europe event 2008.
- To approve the attendance of the Chairman, the Arts and Culture Officer, a European Officer or their nominees and a Belfast Youth Representative to be nominated by the Belfast Youth Forum at the EYID closing conference in Amsterdam at a maximum cost of £3,700.

Abbreviations

NITC – NI Technology Centre at Queens
RDP – Rural Development Programme
EYID – European Year of Intercultural Dialogue”

The Committee adopted the foregoing recommendations.

Community Archives Process

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

In January 2007 the former Development (Arts) Sub-Committee agreed a proposal for the use of a database system and digital sound recorders to facilitate groups involved in the community archive process. This was to be used as a mechanism to capture the value of Belfast’s heritage and deliver benefit to citizens.

Community archives is an established and still developing methodology which enables communities to capture, preserve, communicate and retain ownership of their heritage. Material collected as part of the scheme includes oral histories, photographs and connections to other archives. Further advantages of Community Archives are the application of professional standards in a voluntary context, skills development and social cohesion.

Since the report in January 2007 a number of key activities have taken place which have validated the Community Archive approach.

An initial £50,000 from the Department of Finance and Personnel has enabled the design and set-up of the overall NI Community Archive website. Resources in kind have also been provided by the BBC, the Causeway Museum Service and Belfast City Council. This new NI Community Archive website is locally specific to conditions in Northern Ireland and is of the highest international quality standard.

Key Issues

The NI Community Archive website has been developed to the highest standards which will ensure that material, once collected, will be preserved and available, including audio, video, photographs and written records. The project will provide technical services, specialist training and support.

The Community Archive process supports Aim 2.2 of the Integrated Cultural Strategy to 'provide support and creative responses to the social and political challenges in the City', and Objective G to 'build capacity through work with arts and heritage organizations and practitioners'.

The project answers a real need for a joined-up approach and delivers on key strategic goals, including:

- enabling as many people as possible to experience and appreciate the excellence of our cultural assets
- promoting creativity and innovation and lifelong learning
- encouraging respect for and celebration of diversity
- ensuring the sustainable management of our cultural infrastructure
- develop and deliver quality cultural products and services
- reform and modernise service delivery.

To ensure continuity, a steering group is actively seeking Central Government support. The Public Record Office is very positive about the process and, as well as providing limited support from revenue budgets in the new year, may facilitate a development worker.

The quality, practical support and cross-cutting nature of the NI Community Archive means that it has the potential to deliver cost-effectively on a wide range of heritage objectives within Belfast, especially when certain core costs are carried externally.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has suggested that it would be acceptable to include costs associated with community archive service provision in projects they fund, and they would welcome the opportunity to support such projects, given that the process provides some guarantee of proper procedure.

It is therefore proposed that Members agree to continued involvement in the process with a projected spend of £15,000 in the year 2009-2010.

Resource Implications

Financial

£15,000 which is included in the draft revenue estimates for 2009-2010 of the Culture and Arts Unit.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note:

Continued approval for the Community Archive process and engagement with the NI Community Archive group.

It is further recommended that Members agree:

Approval of the allocation of £15,000 from the 2009-10 Culture and Arts Budget (subject to approval of the draft revenue estimates)

Abbreviations

DCAL Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure”

The Committee adopted the recommendations contained within the foregoing report.

Tourism Unit Update

Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework

The Director advised the Committee that TTC International, the company which had been awarded the tender to develop, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, an Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework for Belfast was keen to undertake in February a workshop for Members in order to hear their views on the matter.

She informed the Members that the Tourist Board had indicated that it wished to be allocated two seats on the Steering Group which would be established to manage the implementation of the Framework and that it was considered that the Committee should have equal representation on the Group. Accordingly, she recommended that the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman be appointed to represent the Committee on the Steering Group.

The Committee adopted the recommendation and agreed that those Members of the Committee who so wished be authorised to attend the workshop which TTC International would be holding in February.

Fourth Annual All Island Infrastructure Investment Conference

The Committee agreed, under the terms of the Council's Subvention Policy, that £1,500 be allocated to assist with the costs of the holding of the Fourth Annual All Island Infrastructure Investment Conference to be held in March.

Human Security in the 21st Century Conference

The Committee agreed, under the terms of the Council's Subvention Policy, that £1,500 be allocated to assist with the costs of the organisation of the Human Security in the 21st Century Conference to be held in April.

Retail Conference 2009

The Director informed the Members that Belfast City Centre Management intended to organise in the Spring a Conference to discuss the current state of the retail sector in Belfast and its immediate and mid to long term future. Since the Company intended to keep the conference fee to a minimum in order to encourage delegates to attend, it had requested that the Committee provide a sum of £5,000 towards the cost of organising the Conference.

She reminded the Committee that the Council was supporting and developing actively the retail sector in the City. The Conference would, therefore, provide the Council with an opportunity to highlight the work which it was undertaking currently in this regard and to work with the retail sector to develop a response plan to the current economic crisis. Accordingly, she recommended that the Committee provide £5,000 to Belfast City Centre Management in connection with its Retail Conference 2009.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation.

Nashville Sister Cities Event

The Director reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 10th December, it had agreed to participate in a Sister Cities celebration event scheduled to be held in Nashville on 17th March.

She informed the Committee that the Queen's University of Belfast had advised the Council recently that, since it had a strategic relationship with Vanderbilt University in Nashville, it would be keen to be represented at the event. She pointed out that, as the Council was responsible for organising the event, it would be necessary for the Committee to agree to the University's participation.

The Committee agreed accordingly, on the understanding that this would be at no additional cost to the Council.

The Director reminded the Committee that the late Katherine Brick and her husband Ian had been instrumental in the creation of the Sister City link between Belfast and Nashville. To honour Katherine's memory, she suggested that the Council should provide for an annual "Katherine Brick" award which would be presented at the music event to be held in Nashville each year.

The Committee agreed with this suggestion.

Support for Sport - Event Funding

The Committee considered the following requests for assistance which had been received under the Support for Sport Scheme in relation to events and promotions:

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
P&O Irish Sea Tour of the North Cycle Race	Funding in the sum of £1,250 in relation to the holding in April of the Prologue Time Trial element of the Race	Offer support of £544.41
George Best Community Cup	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding in July of a cross-community and cross-border football tournament	Offer support of £9,000
Legends XI Belfast Cup 2009	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding in August of a football tournament	Offer support of £9,000
Belfast Rat Race 2009	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding in August of an urban adventure event	Offer support of £10,000
Ultimate Strength Challenge UK Strongman Belfast	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding in August of an event to find the United Kingdom's strongest man	Offer support of £9,000
Water Ski Belfast 2009	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding in August of an event designed to attract new participants to the sport of water skiing	Offer support of £7,605
Irish Arm Wrestling Championships	Funding in the sum of £2,500 in relation to the holding in August of the event	Offer support of £1,000

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Northern Bank Ulster Minor Club Football Tournament	Funding in the sum of £4,000 in relation to the holding between 29th November, 2009 and 1st January, 2010 of a gaelic football tournament for county club minor champions aged from 16-18	Offer support of £3,200

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Tender for Event and Deep Cleaning at the Ulster Hall - Evaluation Criteria

The Managing Director of the Waterfront and Ulster Halls reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 10th December, it had agreed that tenders be invited for the provision of event and deep cleaning services at the refurbished Ulster Hall. However, it would now be necessary for the Committee to agree the criteria which would be used to evaluate the various tenders received. Accordingly, he recommended that the following tender evaluation criteria be used:

- price;
- methodology;
- previous experience;
- calibre of the Project Manager and specific team members, including the reliability of the service team;
- health and safety implementation;
- quality of products, service, processes and controls; and
- financial standing.

In answer to a Member's question, the Managing Director informed the Committee that the cleaning company would only be used as and when required and that the successful company would be subject to performance management criteria which should ensure that satisfactory work was undertaken.

Following further discussion, the Committee agreed that the foregoing tender evaluation criteria be used to assess the tenders for the event and deep cleaning at the Ulster Hall.

**Ballymacarrett Leisure Centre/Connswater Community and
Leisure Limited - Lease Extension**

After discussion, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of a report concerning the lease which Connswater Community and Leisure Limited held for the Ballymacarrett Leisure Centre to enable further information to be obtained.

Chairman