

Development Committee

Tuesday, 9th March, 2010

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Humphrey (Chairman); and
Councillors M. Browne, Convery, Ekin, N. Kelly, Kirkpatrick,
Kyle, C. Maskey, Mac Giolla Mhín, Mhic Giolla Mhín,
O'Reilly, Rodgers, Rodway and Stoker.

In attendance: Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Ms. S. McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives;
Mr. T. Husbands, Head of City Events and Venues;
Ms. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager;
Mr. S. McCrory, Principal Committee Administrator; and
Mr. N. Malcolm, Committee Administrator.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Lavery) and Councillors Campbell and Mullaghan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 8th and 10th February 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 March.

Mr. John McGrillen

The Chairman welcomed Mr. McGrillen to his first meeting as Director of Development and, on behalf of the Committee, wished him well in his new post.

Presentation from the Lyric Theatre

(Mr. P. McNaney, Chief Executive, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

At a meeting of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 14 December 2007 Members agreed to provide £1.25m of funding from the City Investment Fund to the Lyric Theatre, subject to ‘detailed negotiations and final approval by the Council on the schedule of payments, full recognition being given to the Council in respect of its contribution, the Lyric Theatre being requested to consider Council representation on its Board and a commitment from the Lyric Theatre to undertake an outreach programme in the wider Belfast community’.

The Development Department has taken forward discussions with the Lyric Theatre on the funding conditions and briefed Legal Services which has completed the draft legal agreements which are now ready for signature.

The purpose of this report is to brief Members on the progress which has been made and to receive a presentation from Ciaran McAuley, the Chief Executive of the Lyric Theatre, on its education and outreach work, the progress with fundraising and the present state of construction work.

The Committee will then be requested to make a recommendation to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee, which will have to be briefed by the Director of Finance & Resources in relation to the schedule of payments and the release of funding.

Currently, BCC provides funding to the Lyric through the multi-annual funding scheme to the value of £37,971 for the financial year 2010-2011 to cover programming costs.

Key Issues

The total cost of the Lyric project is £18m. Funding support is coming from a number of sources including:

- Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure £9.4m
- Lottery Funding sourced through the Arts Council £2.4m
- Belfast City Council contribution of £1.25m.

This is 73% of the total funding of the project.

The remaining 27% of funding is being raised by the Lyric themselves.

This 27% amounts to almost £5m. The Lyric have now confirmed that £4.75m of this amount has now been sourced from private donations and philanthropic trusts.

A schedule of payments has been agreed through Legal Services and the Director of Finance and Resources and the first Council payment would be due in April 2010 subject to final Council approval. This money is required to maintain the cash flow required for the construction project.

**CONDITIONS – Full recognition for
Council contributions**

The Lyric Theatre has provided full recognition of the Council's contribution to the project in all its promotional material since the Council funding decision in January 2008. Since that time the Council has been recognised as one of the foundation supporters of the rebuild project and the Council's logo has been prominently displayed on promotional material produced by the Lyric Theatre in relation to the project. The Council was represented by the Lord Mayor at the unveiling of the foundation stone of the new Theatre in September 2009 and the Lord Mayor wrote the foreword to the event programme. The Lyric has committed to giving full credit to the Council as one of the foundation partners and the Council will be so credited at the opening of the new Theatre and in all the promotional material associated with the opening.

**CONDITIONS - Representation on the
Board of the Lyric Theatre**

Following the Council decision to provide funding, Council officers relayed to the Board of the Lyric Theatre the Council's wish to have representation on the Board. In response the Lyric has advised us that since its foundation 50 years ago the Board has never included representatives of any corporation, funder or collective interest. A full scale review of the governance of the Board was conducted 2 years ago which resulted in the drawing up of a new memorandum and articles of association (the legal document which forms a limited company). These memorandum and articles of association for the Lyric expressly forbid corporations to be members or trustees of the Board which is constituted as a charity. As a constituted charity the Lyric will not pay VAT on the construction contract for the new build. It is normal practice in such circumstances for funding bodies not to be represented on a charitable organisation claiming such relief from construction projects. Other funders such as the Arts Council are also not represented on the Board, they operate 'on the arms length principle' which follows good governance advice in not placing representatives of funding organisations on the board of arts organisations to avoid conflicts of interest. The Lyric has indicated that, unlike other arts organisations in Northern Ireland, it is a producing Theatre which commissions and works with new artists to produce pieces for performance in the Theatre.

The Lyric recognises the Council's need as a funder to be reassured on how the construction of the new building is proceeding. To this end the Council has been offered representation on the Project Board which is overseeing the project which comprises all the investment decision makers, currently the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, DCAL and the Council. The Lyric also

recognises the Council's concern on its education and outreach activities and to this end has agreed to set up an Education and Outreach Advisory Committee which will be served by the Lyric Education Officer. The job of the Committee will be to provide advice on education and outreach activities. The Lyric would be pleased to have 2 Council representatives on this Panel and have further offered to update the Council on an annual basis of its outreach and education activities by attendance at a meeting of the Development Committee.

It should be noted that, at the Council meeting on 5 January, 2010, it was agreed that the Chief Executive of the Lyric Theatre be advised that the Committee will wish to raise with him during his presentation to the Committee the refusal of the Board to agree to the Council's request to be represented on the Board and that the Council finds this position entirely unacceptable, given the level of financial support which has been provided to the Lyric Theatre.

The Chief Executive has been so advised.

Education and Outreach

As outlined above the Lyric Theatre has recently appointed an Education Officer whose job will be to further develop an education and outreach programme during the time the Theatre is being built and to develop a full programme of activities once the Theatre is in full operation. The commitment by the present Chairman of the Theatre to its education programme is available on the Lyric's website, together with details of the recent education programmes such as the Boatyard programme which was an initiative involving 6 local primary schools in North and East Belfast and related the history of Belfast's shipbuilding past. The Theatre is presently developing its Pat and Plane project with 12 primary schools throughout Northern Ireland looking at the development of the linen industry. The Theatre also run schools for aspiring actors in the 18-24 age range and a whole range of individual projects. The Lyric Theatre has recently appointed a new Education Officer from 1 March 2010 and the Chief Executive of the Theatre, Ciaran McAuley, will further update the Committee on the education programme. The Theatre has committed, in the legal agreement, to undertake an education and outreach programme in the City.

Recommendations

Committee are requested:

1. To note the information provided and receive a presentation from the Chief Executive of the Lyric Theatre.

2. To note the proposal by the Lyric Theatre that the Council be represented on the Education and Outreach Advisory Committee and the Construction Project Board.
3. To make a recommendation to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on whether the funding conditions have been satisfied.

Decision Tracking

There is no decision tracking attached to this report as it is for notation only.”

The Chief Executive stated that if the Committee decided to support the Lyric Theatre project then a report would be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in connection with the development of a funding agreement between the Council and the Theatre. He advised the Committee that the Lyric had raised privately almost £5 million, which equated to 27% of the overall costs of constructing the new Theatre.

The Committee was advised that Messrs. Ciaran McAuley, Chief Executive, and Dan Gordon, Board Member, were in attendance to address the Committee. Accordingly, the deputation was admitted to the meeting and welcomed by the Chairman.

Mr. McAuley thanked the Committee for the opportunity of addressing it and, with the assistance of visual aids, advised the Committee that the Lyric Theatre, which had been established in 1951, was Northern Ireland's only full-time producing theatre and was the largest employer of professional theatre practitioners in the Province. He informed the Committee that:

- (i) the Theatre attracted audiences in excess of 50,000 per annum, half of which came from Belfast;
- (ii) the Theatre held an average of 250 performances per annum and, on average, operated at 66% capacity; and
- (iii) research which had been undertaken had established that less than 10% of its audiences lived in the BT9 postcode area, 12% of its customers earned less than £7,500 per annum and 8% of its audiences lived in the 100 most deprived areas of Northern Ireland, thus demonstrating that the Theatre's attraction was widespread both geographically and across all income groups.

He informed the Committee that the Theatre's strategic objectives included:

- providing a centre of excellence for the local theatre and arts communities;
- enhancing the quality of life in the City;

- building key partnerships in Belfast and beyond; and
- meeting the needs of major stakeholders, particularly the Arts Council for Northern Ireland, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Belfast City Council.

Mr. McAuley displayed artists impressions of the new building and informed the Committee that the new Lyric Theatre would provide the City with an £18 million state-of-the-art facility which would have a 390 seater auditorium and a 110-150 seater second space, an education and outreach suite, a rehearsal room and spacious foyers. It was intended that the artistic programme of the new Theatre would involve both repertory and studio productions, an education and creative learning programme and artistic partnerships and co-productions.

Mr. Gordon advised the Committee of the education and outreach work which the Theatre had undertaken in recent years and indicated that, in 2008, a project had been undertaken in 30 Belfast schools and that, currently, the Theatre was working with 4 Belfast schools and 8 schools outside the City. He informed the Committee that these projects had been well received by both the pupils and teachers and he reminded the Members that the Theatre had appointed recently an Education Officer who would be seeking to expand upon this education and outreach work.

Mr. McAuley indicated that he was aware of the Council's concern at not being represented on the Board of the Theatre but pointed out that the Theatre's Memorandum and Articles of Association prevented funding organisations such as the Council from becoming members or trustees of the Board as it was constituted as a charity. He explained that, as a charity, the Lyric Theatre would not be required to pay Valued Added Tax on the construction costs of the new facility and he was concerned that, if the Council were provided with a seat on the Board, this could be challenged and result in the Theatre having to pay this Tax. This would add considerably to the construction costs. He indicated that the Theatre was intending to establish an Educational and Outreach Advisory Committee and would be offering the Council two places on the Committee. He indicated also that he would be happy to appear before the Committee on an annual basis to update it on the work of the Theatre and, in particular, the outreach and education activities.

Messrs. McAuley and Gordon then answered questions which were put to them by the Members. During this discussion they indicated that:

- (i) the Theatre was already working in disadvantaged areas and was keen to work with Irish language schools;
- (ii) the recently appointed Education Officer would be co-ordinating the Theatre's education and outreach work to ensure that there was no duplication with other organisations;
- (iii) the Board of the Theatre was quietly confident that it would be able to raise the remaining £250,000 which was required to enable the construction costs to be met;

- (iv) the City's ratepayers would be obtaining a state-of-the-art £18 million theatre in return for the £1.25 million investment which the Council would be providing to the Theatre;
- (v) the new facility would be a world-class theatre which would attract visitors to Belfast;

The deputation thanked the Committee for the opportunity to address it and Messrs. McAuley and Gordon retired from the meeting.

During a lengthy discussion, the Chief Executive answered various questions and assured the Committee that advice would be obtained from the Director of Legal Services regarding any possible conflict of interest which Councillors might have in relation to their membership on organisations which were involved in new-build schemes, such as the Lyric Theatre and the Metropolitan Arts Centre, and that the Council's constitution, which was being prepared currently, would include guidance on those governance issues which had been raised during the meeting.

Following further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor M. Browne,
Seconded by Councillor C. Maskey,

That the Committee agrees:

- (i) to note the information provided by the deputation from the Lyric Theatre;
- (ii) to accept the offer from the Lyric Theatre that the Council be represented on the Education and Outreach Advisory Committee and the Construction Project Board and to receive an annual presentation from the Theatre on its work; and
- (iii) to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that, since the funding conditions had been satisfied, the amount of £1.25 million be awarded to the Theatre from the City Investment Fund.

On a vote by show of hands eleven Members voted for the proposal and one against and it was accordingly declared.

Departmental Plan Quarterly Update

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided information on the current status of projects and initiatives which had been carried out by the Department during the period from 1st October till 31st December, 2009.

Belfast Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan

The Committee deferred consideration of a report regarding the preparation of a Belfast Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan to enable those Party Groupings which so wished to receive briefings on the matter.

Economic Development Unit
Funding Requests

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

This report comprises a request for funding under the following programmes:

1. Smarter Procurement Programme
2. Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP)

1. **Smarter Procurement Programme**

Members will be aware, at the Development Committee of 13 May 2009, approval was given to develop and deliver initiatives to support enhanced access to public and private sector procurement opportunities. This was to be delivered through a number of activities, including the Smarter Procurement Programme.

Match-funding of these initiatives was sought from DETI to deliver 2 waves of the Smarter Procurement Programme over a 2 year period and this was subsequently approved.

In January 2010 wave 1 of the Smarter Procurement Programme was launched, targeting 10 small businesses and social enterprises in the Council area which wanted to look at how they could improve their chances of winning new business through tendering opportunities from both the public and private sectors.

2. **Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP)**

Members will be aware that, at the Development Committee of 14 November 2007, approval was given for Belfast City Council to cluster with Lisburn City Council and Castlereagh Borough Council for the delivery of Axis 3 of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP).

Axis 3 of the NIRDP contains a funding allocation (£1,240,000) for the delivery of a programme of Village Renewal for rural settlements across the eligible cluster area of Belfast, Castlereagh and Lisburn. The purpose of the measure is to support animation and capacity building within and between villages and their surrounding rural areas.

Key Issues

1. Smarter Procurement Programme

A total of 24 applications were received and, following a selection process, 11 businesses were awarded a place on the Programme with a further 6 businesses placed on a reserve list. An additional 6 businesses have also indicated an interest in participating on a future programme.

A Meet the Buyer event held in the Waterfront Hall in June 2009 has generated £300,000 worth of business to date for participating companies.

The December 2009 Belfast City Council survey of 500 businesses in the Council area highlights the demand for procurement initiatives, with 44% of respondents requesting support to improve their procurement processes. This, coupled with the demand already experienced for wave one of the Smarter Procurement Programme, supports the need to launch a second wave of the programme in May 2010 – earlier than initially planned.

Resource Implications

Each wave of the programme will cost £15,000 to run. The participating companies make a contribution of £100 towards the costs (10 companies = £1000 income) and the remainder is match-funded at a level of 50% by DETI. A contribution of £7,000 from Belfast City Council is therefore required to match-fund the second wave of the Smarter Procurement Programme, scheduled to commence in May 2010.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members approve the additional amount of £7,000 to match-fund wave 2 of the Smarter Procurement Programme, scheduled to start in May 2010, money for which is available within the budget.

Decision Tracking

If recommendation is accepted, an update on outputs will be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.

Time frame: December 2010 Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

2. Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP)

A total of 17 eligible villages/rural settlements exist within the three council areas. Within Belfast, the only eligible village/settlement is Hannahstown. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) has suggested that it will require potential village renewal projects to produce a village development plan, identifying priority projects which can be resourced from the available funds. This is a compulsory step required before any further funds can be drawn down. However, DARD funding for this activity is up to a maximum of 75% of costs incurred.

It is proposed that Lisburn City Council leads a funding bid (including Belfast and Castlereagh Councils) to DARD to draw down funding for the development of a discrete number of deliverable Village Renewal Plans. Following this process villages/rural settlements will then be able to make further applications for support from NIRDP and other funding sources. Villages can apply for up to £250,000 for agreed activities under this measure from NIRDP.

Resource Implications

It is expected that a village development plan will cost no more than £20,000. It is therefore recommended that Belfast City Council co-funds the village development plan in Belfast, up to a maximum of £5,000. This will allow the village to potentially draw down up to £250,000 towards development and renewal activity.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members agree to a resource allocation of up to £5,000 for match-funding of a development plan for the village in Belfast, with the remainder of the match funding (up to £15,000) to be provided by DARD.

Decision Tracking

If recommendation is accepted, an update will be presented to a future meeting of this committee.

Time frame: December 2010 Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

Key to Abbreviations

NIRDP – Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme
DARD – Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DETI – Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment
ERDF – European Regional Development Fund”

The Committee approved the incurring of expenditure in the sum of £7,000 in order to match-fund the second wave of the Smarter Procurement Programme and agreed to provide a sum of £5,000 to enable a development plan to be produced for Hannahstown under the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme.

Belfast Welcome Centre

(Mrs. P. Davison, Estates Surveyor, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

The Belfast Visitor and Connection Bureau occupies premises currently leased to Belfast City Council in Donegall Place. BVCB has been approached by Failte Ireland to consider moving their operation into the Belfast Welcome Centre premises in Donegall Place. Failte Ireland requested a meeting with BVCB on 14 January to discuss the possibility of a shared working space.

Failte Ireland has operated a walk in enquiry office in Belfast for over 42 years. They closed their premises in Castle Street just after Christmas 2009 as their lease was due to terminate and the building was unfit for purpose and presented significant health and safety issues for staff continuing to work there.

The service Failte Ireland currently operates is purely information provision and accommodation booking for the Republic of Ireland. After 42 years with a base in Belfast they have a loyal local customer base of regular customers who call in to pick up information and book short breaks, with an annual footfall of just over 20,000 visitors. This service is provided Monday – Friday during core office hours by three members of staff, sharing two full time posts.

BVCB have identified a space that could accommodate Failte Ireland. This space was used as an extra card sales point, however a new main counter was installed last year and extra tills and credit card machines behind the new counter mean the space is now redundant.

Key Issues

BVCB point out that the concept of shared space in Tourist Information Centres and visitor attractions is not new. Failte Ireland has shared office space in the Derry/Londonderry T.I.C. since it opened and more recently NITB have moved into Dublin Tourism Offices.

BVCB have identified the benefits to this shared space approach:

Financial Benefit:

BVCB has proposed a licence fee of £25,000 per annum plus vat. The only additional payments by Failte Ireland would be for separate phone and broadband lines.

In the current economic climate, additional income to BVCB is welcomed when funding is decreasing and generating commercial income is more challenging.

Customer Focused:

The shared space further promotes the 'one stop' approach – Belfast Welcome Centre regularly gets enquiries from customers requesting information on the Republic of Ireland and BWC refer them to the Castle Street premises.

New customer base:

In facilitating Failte Ireland customers in the BWC, the BWC can avail of a new market. The current price differential between the euro and the pound means Belfast will benefit with the local customer base attracted by deals in Northern Ireland as opposed to the Republic of Ireland.

The request for shared space was discussed at the BVCB Board. While there was general support for the proposal, there was concern from Board members that a Failte Ireland section within the BWC could dissuade visitors from visiting areas in and around Belfast, drawing their attention to the South of Ireland instead.

BCC's lease on the Donegall Place premises terminates on 31 July 2010. The landlord has offered a ten year lease on the existing terms and no decision by BCC has been taken on the renewal of the lease due to the ongoing consideration of alternative options.

BCC's current lease does permit the possibility of granting of a licence to Failte Ireland to enable them to occupy the premises alongside BVCB. The licence would end either upon expiration of the term of BCC's lease on 31 July 2010, or sooner. If BCC were to renew their existing lease, Failte Ireland's occupation may be continued subject to terms of BCC's lease.

The BVCB Board recommended that, subject to BCC approval, a nine month licence agreement be granted to Failte Ireland. During this period BVCB could monitor the situation to ensure there were no adverse impacts from the shared space to Belfast and the wider region.

Resource Implications

Financial:

BVCB receives a pro-rata contribution of £25,000 p.a. from Failte Ireland towards their operating costs.

Physical:

Failte Ireland would plan to undertake minor works to the service desk in order that it could accommodate two people and to the slat wall area to make it more suitable for brochure racking. They would also install an overhead canopy for internal signage. Work would be required on external signage so both parties could benefit. None of the above costs will be borne by BCC.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Committee agree a licence is granted by BCC to Failte Ireland to occupy the premises of Belfast Welcome Centre alongside BVCB until the lease ends on 31 July 2010.

Decision Tracking

Further to agreement, Legal Services will be instructed to complete the appropriate documentation.

Timeline: March 2010 Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

Key to Abbreviations

BVCB – Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau
BCC - Belfast City Council
BWC – Belfast Welcome Centre
TIC – Tourist Information Centre
NITB- Northern Ireland Tourist Board”

In answer to Members' questions, the Estates Surveyor indicated that the money received from Failte Ireland would not come to the Council but rather would be retained by the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau to off-set its running costs. She pointed out that this would ultimately benefit the Council. The Head of Economic Initiatives stated that, on occasions, other organisations had rented space from the Bureau for short periods of time in connection with forthcoming events and that, since the Bureau had a target of achieving £1 million in income in the current financial year, the money from Failte Ireland would assist in this regard. She also pointed out that the rental figure had been decided following negotiations between Failte Ireland and the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that a Licence be granted by the Council to Failte Ireland to occupy a portion of the premises within the Belfast Welcome Centre alongside the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau until the lease on the building ended on 31st July.

Bank Square

The Head of Economic Initiatives reminded the Committee that the most important element of the Forum for an Alternative Belfast's proposals for the redevelopment of Bank Square was a commitment from Westfield Shoppingtowns Limited, the owners of Castlecourt, to permit development on part of its service yard. The Committee was reminded further that it had been invited to a presentation by RPS, the consultants appointed by the Department for Social Development to produce designs for the redevelopment of Bank Square. The Members who had attended that presentation had made the point that it would be preferable for the development scheme to complement the plans of the adjoining landowners and to resolve the blight on the area caused by the Castlecourt service yard. They had also been of the view that a meeting involving representatives from the Department for Social Development, Westfield, the Council and the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce should be held as soon as possible in order to ascertain Westfield's commitment to the regeneration of Bank Square.

The Head of Economic Initiatives advised the Committee that the Department for Social Development's proposals for the area would be ready for submission to the Planning Service by 31st March. The Department had therefore indicated that, whilst it was willing to be involved in such a round table discussion, the meeting would need to be held before 23rd March. Accordingly, she recommended that an All-Party deputation from the Development Committee meet with the Department for Social Development, Westfield and the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce to discuss the regeneration of Bank Square in the context of the proposals prepared by the Forum for an Alternative Belfast and RPS.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Royal Exchange Regeneration Scheme

The Head of Economic Initiatives reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 16th November, 2009, it had received a presentation from William Ewart Properties Limited regarding its proposals for the Royal Exchange scheme and that the developer was required to submit a planning application by 31st October, 2010.

She reported that Mr. Nick Reid of Ewarts had suggested that, in order to continue the engagement between the Council and the developers, the Committee should visit the site of the project. She also pointed out that the Minister for Social Development had agreed to meet with the deputation from the Committee to discuss the Scheme. However, on two occasions this meeting had been cancelled by the Minister and no new date had yet been arranged.

The Committee noted the information provided by the Head of Economic Initiatives and agreed to undertake a visit to the location of the Royal Exchange scheme.

Sprucefield Public Inquiry – Update

The Head of Economic Initiatives advised the Committee that, following the failure of the applicant, Sprucefield Centre Limited, to submit information regarding the Environmental Impact Assessment of the scheme within the required period in connection with its proposed retail development at Sprucefield, the Planning Appeals Commission had announced in October, 2009 the postponement of the associated Public Inquiry. She reported that Sprucefield Centre Limited had subsequently resubmitted an application for the significant retail development which was unchanged from the previous application. The Department of the Environment had applied Article 31 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 to the resubmitted application and had written to all objectors and consultees. Accordingly, the Council had resubmitted in November, 2009, its original letter of objection.

She reported that the Council's objection reiterated the previously articulated position that the application would be considered contrary to both the current Regional Development Strategy and the proposed Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan by virtue of the adverse implications for existing retail centres and the future regeneration of Belfast and other adjoining locations.

In February, the Planning Appeals Commission had notified objectors of the intention to conduct an Article 31 Public Inquiry for the purposes of considering the implications which arose from the Sprucefield Centre Limited application. The Inquiry was scheduled to commence on 7th June. However, in advance of the Public Inquiry, the Planning Appeals Commission would require objectors to resubmit by 1st April a statement of case which outlined the basis of the objections. Following the exchange of statements, the Council would have the opportunity up to 7th May to comment through the rebuttal process on the opposing statements.

The Head of Economic Initiatives pointed out that the Council's previous statement of case and rebuttal statement remained relevant as the details of the application remained unchanged. However, minor clarifications or updates might be required to take account of any changes in the information provided. Preparation for, and participation in, the Public Inquiry would be co-ordinated by the Legal Services Department using internal resources supported by Dr. Tony Quinn, the Retail Planning Expert who had previously been commissioned by the Council to provide specialist evidence.

Noted.

Transfer of the Funding for Local Arts Organisations under the Review of Public Administration

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure wrote to Belfast City Council on 18 January 2010, regarding the transfer of local arts to the new councils under RPA. In summary, their proposal is as follows:

- Funding for local arts to be transferred to the new district council by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland
- Allocations for Belfast and Derry to be weighted to take account of their strategic positions; however, it is also the intention to disburse funding for local arts more equitably across the new councils
- A potential requirement from new councils to match allocation of funding for local arts as per the Community Festivals Fund
- ACNI current allocation in 2009–2010 for local arts in Belfast is £628,024 and the proposed allocation under RPA is £322,372 (a 50% reduction). This figure is based on allocation by population with a 10% deprivation weighting to Belfast and Londonderry/Strabane.

DCAL's proposed definitions for local, regional and national arts are as follows:

- Local arts is operating within its own boundary
- Regional is operating beyond its own council boundary but within Northern Ireland
- National is operating within Northern Ireland and touring/offering programmes to the rest of the United Kingdom and/or Republic of Ireland

DCAL is recommending that the Arts Council of Northern Ireland will lead on regional and national arts.

Key Issues

Belfast's unique position is not addressed in this proposal.

Belfast City Council plays a unique role in Northern Ireland's culture and arts infrastructure as many of the regional and national arts are based in the City and are currently supported by both Belfast City Council and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Belfast City Council invests £1.3 million per annum into approximately 73 culture and arts organisations. This funding sustains 295 full-time jobs; 134 part-time jobs; 1278 freelance; and 553 voluntary posts. The Council's subvention accounts for an average 11.7% of the organisations' annual income which represents a return on investment of 1:7. The total audience and participation figure for funded organisations is 6,184,305. Most other councils across Northern Ireland invest in the arts through purpose-built council-owned venues – the majority do not tend to operate culture and arts funding programmes.

Whilst Belfast-based arts organisations run programmes in Belfast, they also extend these across Northern Ireland (in the case of theatre productions and other performances, this means that they often pay other councils for the use of their local arts centre). In many instances, the audience attracted to Belfast-based events are from outside of the Belfast area. This is reflected in the annual audience/participant figures of over 6million. A list of organisations that we support through Annual and Multi-annual Funding is available on Modern.gov. This highlights which organisations are local, regional or national based on the definitions provided by DCAL.

In relation to local arts, while the move to assign this responsibility to Belfast City Council is welcome, the level of funding should remain consistent with that previously given to the local arts sector in the city, i.e. £628,024, not £322,372. Given the considerable investment that Belfast City Council makes already, we would have no additional funding to address any reductions in support to local arts unless the Arts Council increases its investment in regional/national arts, allowing the Council to redirect its funding.

Belfast City Council is also making considerable investment in capital projects, such as the Lyric (£1.25m) and MAC (£550k) to develop the cultural infrastructure of the City. This is not recognised within this proposal.

Resource Implications

Financial

None

Human Resources

This will be covered within the work programme of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and agree that the Outline Response in Appendix 3 be forwarded to DCAL.

Decision Tracking

DCAL will receive a response to its proposals by letter following Committee approval.

Timeframe: March 2010

Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - Outline Response to DCAL

Appendix 1

Outline Response to DCAL

Overall, Belfast City Council does not believe that Belfast's unique position is addressed in this proposal.

Belfast City Council plays a unique role in Northern Ireland's culture and arts infrastructure as many of the regional and national arts are based in the city and are currently supported by both Belfast City Council and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Belfast City Council invests £1.3 million per annum into approximately 73 culture and arts organisations through the following programmes:

Development and Outreach Programme – this fund aims to increase community participation and access to culture and arts activity in Belfast. Grants range from £2,000 to £20,000 and culture and arts applicants must demonstrate a partnership approach with community organisations. Approximately 13 applicants are funded.

Annual/Multi Annual Funding Scheme – This scheme helps arts, culture and heritage organisations in Belfast carry out their work and to create programmes which benefit people that live in and visit Belfast. Grants range from £3,000 to £30,000.

16 organisations receive annual funding on a multi annual basis. These organisations are selected on the basis of their strategic role within the culture and arts sector in Belfast.

Rolling Programme – This fund provides small grants to support innovation in arts and heritage. Grants range from £500 to £3,000.

These funding programmes sustain 295 full-time jobs; 134 part-time jobs; 1278 freelance; and 553 voluntary posts. The Council's subvention represents a return of investment of 1:7. The total audience and participation figure for funded organisations is 6,184,305.

A list of organisations that we support is attached. This highlights which organisations are local, regional or national based on the definitions provided. These definitions do not capture the complexity of Belfast's situation.

We welcome the move to assign the responsibility of local arts to Belfast City Council as this complements our current investment into Culture & Arts and in particular our Development and Outreach Programme. We strongly agree that any allocation of funding should be weighted to take account of Belfast's strategic position. This should ensure that the level of funding remains consistent with, if not increased upon, that previously given to the local arts sector in Belfast, i.e. £628,024, not £322,372. Any review of the funding against outputs should take place within an agreed timescale that allows the new funding processes, monitoring and evaluation systems to be firmly established.

We agree that the Arts Council of Northern Ireland is the preferred funding transfer mechanism, and we have developed a good working relationship with ACNI over the last number of years. In 2007 we launched the Belfast Integrated Cultural Strategy, a partnership approach between both organisations. We are now in the process of discussing the development of a new strategy with the Arts Council, to be developed during the course of this year. This fits well with the proposed local arts and cultural plans.

Given the considerable investment that Belfast City Council makes already, we would have no additional funding to address any reductions in support to local arts unless the Arts Council increases its investment in regional/national arts (e.g. Ulster Orchestra), allowing the Council to redirect its funding.

Strategically, Belfast City Council recognises the significant contribution that local, regional and national Belfast based culture and arts organisations make to the social and economic fabric of the city. Any proposal for local arts delivery and funding in Belfast must be developed within the context of, and not in isolation of, a wider Belfast cultural strategy and its impact on the success of the city."

Several Members expressed concern at the proposals from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure as outlined in the report. It was suggested that the response be amended to indicate that "the Council welcomed in principle the proposal for it to become responsible for local arts, subject to the necessary funding being provided" to ensure that this new power would not result in a burden on the ratepayers. It was suggested also that, given the Committee's concern at the proposal, the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure be requested to attend a meeting of the Committee to discuss this matter.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the response be amended as outlined and submitted to the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. The Committee agreed also that the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure be requested to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the matter.

MTV Belfast Music Week

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Tourism, Culture and Arts – Music Tourism

Members will be aware that the final draft Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism 2010-2015 identifies high profile events as a development lever to establish a strong reputation as a vibrant capital city with unique and exciting experiences that, once visited and enjoyed, will compel return visits time and time again. The Strategy’s new product development highlights that music tourism should be developed, packaged and promoted as an authentic experience to ensure that Belfast has a competitive edge.

At a Development Committee Meeting held on 10 December 2008, Members noted that Visit Britain’s research shows that 21% of potential visitors are inspired to choose a destination because of the music or bands of that country and approved a Music Tourism Action Plan in order to celebrate Belfast’s rich musical heritage. Belfast’s music receives high international praise and our latest generation of musicians are playing a crucial role in revitalising the City. The series of products included the Belfast Music Coach Tour, the Belfast Music Exhibition at the Oh Yeah Centre, a new music listings website Belfastmusic.org, the first ever i-phone application for music, and international showcasing and marketing of Belfast’s musicians in Nashville and SxSW (South by South West). The Plan has been significantly enhanced through the successful application to NITB’s (Northern Ireland Tourist Board) Tourism Innovation Fund which contributed a further £138,750 and new partnerships that have been formed with ACNI (Arts Council of Northern Ireland), BBC and Tourism Ireland.

A recent report ‘Exploring the Music Festival Tourism Market’, commissioned by NITB using Mintel, highlighted that music is a key part of our cultural offering, and foreign and domestic tourists now spend in excess of £100 million on cultural and recreational events in NI each year.

This includes domestic tourists spend of over £32 million on tickets to concerts and music festivals. Tourism Ireland launched their 2010 Marketing Plans in Belfast in December 2009 and identified Music Tourism as a key driver for Belfast.

Creative Industries – Music Development

Members will be aware that BCC's current Local Economic Development Plan includes the following key themes: Business Competitiveness, Talent and Community Economic Regeneration. The new Local Economic Development Plan states that, in order for Belfast to stay competitive, it must nurture those sectors which can create high value-added products and bring new wealth to the City. The Creative Industries is one of major significance for Belfast as it is one of the most rapidly growing sectors. After extensive consultation from the private sector, BCC identified that there needs to be increased emphasis placed on the key sectors of Film & Television, Digital Media, Music and Design. Priority areas for BCC include the provision of tailored information, guidance and mentoring with regard to business start-up and business development. Other key areas identified include access to finance, sales and international marketing, infrastructure and export development.

The music sector in Belfast has grown significantly over the past three years and now plays a key role in the overall economic development of the City. With a rise in musicians and bands making waves in the international marketplace and new and innovative music businesses based in Belfast, BCC is playing a supportive role for this industry.

With the demise of the Northern Ireland Music Industry Commission in November 2009, BCC has been playing a crucial supportive role for the music sector in Belfast, specifically with participation at the prestigious South by Southwest Media Conference and showcase. The SxSW project is deemed as one of the most ambitious and successful showcasing events to date in relation to the creative industries and returns of over \$500,000 are leveraged each year for participating artists.

Key Issues

The Tourism, Culture and Arts, Creative Industries and Events Units have been investigating the opportunity to partner with MTV in order to deliver a Belfast Music Week with a final A-List Concert to showcase Belfast's talent on the world stage and promote Belfast as a world-class music destination. MTV is the world's largest television network, the leading multimedia brand for youth and are experts at staging international events. It reaches over 213 million households in Europe through 28 different MTV channels and they receive 8 million unique visitors each month to MTVN Music websites. 65% of MTV's adult viewers in Europe are aged 15-34.

The aims of the initiative are:

- To host a world-class music event in September 2010 in partnership with MTV.
- To attract an audience of 6000, 1500 of which are out-of-state, to generate an overall direct income of £719,360 to Belfast.
- To gain the equivalent of £9million media coverage for Belfast aimed at actively travelling young adults.
- To showcase and strengthen Belfast's position on the world stage as a primary destination for music, entertainment and culture.
- To increase the profile of Belfast as an exciting weekend break destination to actively travelling young adults across UK, ROI and Europe.
- To establish Belfast on all new media platforms via MTV.
- To increase visitor satisfaction levels of Belfast's cultural offer from 39% to 45%
- To promote and enhance a confident, positive, exciting image of Belfast through delivering world-class events
- To host the MTV EMA's in 2012.
- To bring together all sectors of the community from Belfast and across the region whilst improving community cohesion

Satellite gigs would take place in music venues across Belfast leading up to a free ticketed A list event in the grounds of City Hall. This is the first year of a three year event plan. The key objective is to put Belfast on everyone's destination wish list, ahead of our competitors. MTV's industry knowledge, experience to maximize an event of this nature and their connections will ensure that top level talent can be secured that will garner the most interest and media coverage.

This event will profile Belfast as a world-class music destination, a place which has a new, modern and exciting future. We will concentrate on the promotion of our indigenous musicians to show our rich musical heritage, thriving contemporary musical scene and promote and highlight our distinctiveness.

Through our Creative Industries programme, we will continue to showcase Northern Ireland's music talent in the international marketplace to highlight Belfast and its artists to the widest international audience, and contribute to creative industries by increasing the number of Belfast musicians doing business internationally.

This event offers the opportunity to leverage an internationally recognized brand and build a relationship with MTV. The brand recognition associated with MTV will provide a global marketing reach coupled with a kudos that is taken seriously by the target audience and key consumer groups.

This event and the surrounding programming that will be broadcast on the MTV network will provide the opportunity to show that NI is a modern and young destination that is 'confidently moving on'. Our audience is 'authentic' and planned programming including a rock history of Belfast and vignettes of locals will be broadcast which will demonstrate all of the above and our authenticity. Such programming and vignettes will allow us to uncover our stories and let others experience our awakening.

The prestige associated with the MTV brand means that we can reach demographics both internationally and locally that we have not had the opportunity to reach before. This is key to developing the youth market, especially in terms of Europe and easily reaching an international market with an event of international stand out appeal.

We will focus on the 15 – 34 years market and any consumer across Europe with an interest in contemporary music.

Resource Implications

Finance

The overall budget for this project is £500,000. MTV have confirmed they will secure £250,000 through commercial sponsorship. The remaining budget will be committed from the Events budget (£80,000 was approved at February's Development Committee) and £170,000 has been applied for from DCAL's Major Events Fund. A decision on this will be made in March 2010.

Recommendations

Subject to DCAL's Major Events Funding being secured, it is recommended that Members note the contents of the report and agree to:

- Endorse the event
- Approach the P & R Committee for use of the City Hall grounds on 18 September 2010

- Officers approaching further partners, including DETI, ACNI, NITB, Tourism Ireland, NI Screen and commercial sponsors, in order to leverage further funding for Belfast Music Week.

Decision Tracking

Further to ratification, an update will be brought to Committee regarding the outcome of the application to DCAL's Major Events Fund.

Time line: April 2010

Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

Key to Abbreviations

NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board

SxSW – South by South West

ACNI – Arts Council of Northern Ireland”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Culture Night

The Committee agreed to defer for one month consideration of a report regarding Culture Night 2010 to enable the officers to discuss with the organisers the Council's position that the event should be delivered across the City and in particular on the arterial routes rather than being restricted to the City centre.

Conference Subvention Policy

Aggression – From Fantasy to Action Conference

The Committee agreed, under the terms of the Council's Subvention Policy, that £1,000 be allocated to assist with the costs of the foregoing Conference which would be held within the City during the period from 5th till 7th May.

Private Equity Conference 2010

The Committee agreed, under the terms of the Conference Subvention Policy, to award funding of £500 towards the costs of the Private Equity Conference due to be held in Belfast on 26th May.

The Ulster Society of Magicians 60th Annual International Brotherhood of Magicians Irish Ring Convention

The Committee agreed, under the terms of the Council's Subvention Policy, not to provide funding to the above-mentioned event due to the small number of delegates who would be attending, the majority of which would be from Northern Ireland.

Conference Subvention Scheme

The Head of Economic Initiatives reminded the Committee that officers had been liaising with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Invest Northern Ireland regarding the development of a new Conference Subvention Scheme for Belfast and Northern Ireland. She pointed out that an amount of £70,000 had been included within the Department's budget for this initiative. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board had indicated that it would provide a similar amount. It was intended that, when an agreement had been reached with both the Tourist Board and Invest Northern Ireland, a new Conference Subvention Scheme would be developed and the Council's existing scheme would cease to operate. She pointed out that it was proposed that the new Scheme would commence in June and that the current one would close on 31st May, although commitments made previously for events to be held after that date would be honoured.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided by the Head of Economic Initiatives and agreed that the existing Conference Subvention Scheme be closed on 31st May and that a new system, which would involve funding from both the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Invest Northern Ireland operate from 1st June.

Arising from discussion in this matter, a Member pointed out that, unlike reports received at other Council Committees, those presented to the Development Committee frequently dealt with more than one item, which, he believed, caused confusion for Members. He pointed out that the report which had just been considered involved the awarding of funding for two conferences, asked the Committee not to provide funding to another conference and provided information regarding the closure of the existing Conference Subvention Scheme and the introduction of a new one. He expressed concern at this and suggested that each of these topics should have been the subject of a separate report. Accordingly, he requested that, in future, reports presented to the Development Committee deal with only one item so that Members could be clear regarding the matters to be considered and the decisions to be taken.

The Head of Economic Initiatives indicated that she would take these comments into consideration for future Committee reports.

Support for Sport - Event Funding

The Head of City Events and Venues advised the Committee that an extremely large number of applications had been received for events due to be held between April and September. These had been assessed using the criteria which had been agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 7th March, 2008. Due to the number of applications, he recommended that the funding to be awarded to the events be subjected to a 30% reduction in order to ensure that an adequate amount of money would be available for those events due to be held between October, 2010 and March, 2011.

He reminded the Committee that it had considered applications for event funding at its meeting on 10th February and recommended that, on the basis of fairness, they be subjected also to the 30% reduction. He pointed out that one of these applications had been withdrawn by the event organisers subsequent to the February meeting.

During discussion in the matter, a Member enquired as to whether or not checks were undertaken to validate claims made by organisations regarding previous year's events when a subsequent application was made. He pointed out that, since organisers sought funding from both the Development and the Parks and Leisure Committees for assistance towards the holding of events, it was important that staff within each Department discussed the applications which were submitted.

In response, the Head of City Events and Venues informed the Committee that every attempt was made to verify information provided regarding events which had been held the previous year.

Another Member expressed concern at the proposed 30% reduction and indicated that this would disadvantage those events which were to be held in the first half of the year and enquired as to whether or not this reduction would be applied to those events which would be seeking assistance later in the year. He proposed that no reduction in the amount of funding to be awarded be made. However, this proposal did not achieve a Secunder.

In response to these comments, the Head of City Events and Venues indicated that twenty-five applications had been received for assistance for the first half of the financial year compared to eight in the same period the previous year. He assured the Committee that a similar reduction would be applied to those events which sought funding in the second half of the year. He pointed out that, given the large number of applications which had been received, the Department was considering having only one call for applications each year in order to ensure that the process was seen to be fair to all potential applicants.

Following further discussion the Committee agreed to rescind its decision of 10th February regarding the awarding of event funding under the Support for Sport Scheme and agreed further that a 30% reduction be applied to those applications for events scheduled to be held between April and September. Accordingly, the Committee agreed to adopt the undernoted recommendations for requests for assistance which had been received under the Support for Sport Scheme in relation to events and promotions:

<u>Applications Considered on 10th February</u>		
<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Northern Ireland Cycling Federation/P&O Tour of the North Cycle Race	Funding in the sum of £2,500 in relation to the holding on 2nd April of the launch of the event at Stormont	£1,050
Youth Soccer Tournaments Northern Ireland/Belfast Invitational Cup	Funding in the sum of £7,790 in relation to the holding between 6th and 8th April of a football competition at Queen's Playing Fields involving 48 teams from England, Wales, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland	£3,817

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Malone Mini Rugby/Malone Under 13 International Festival of Rugby	Funding in the sum of £5,000 in relation to the holding on 10th and 11th April of a rugby competition involving 16 teams from England, Scotland, Wales, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland	Application withdrawn

New Applications

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
European Highland Dance Festival/European and Ulster Highland Dance Championships	Funding in the sum of £6,000 in relation to the holding in the Ulster Hall on 9th and 10th April of this event which should attract 320 competitors from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Europe	£2,825.90
St. Galls Gaelic Athletic Club/St. Galls Belfast Centenary Year Inter Club Tournament	Funding in the sum of £4,670 in relation to the holding on 1st and 2nd May of this event which will involve 12 teams from throughout Ireland	£2,615.20
Mountaineering Ireland/National Bouldering Championship	Funding in the sum of £2,170 in relation to the holding at the climbing wall in the Ozone Leisure Complex on 8th May of this event which will involve 40 competitors from Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales and Europe	£959.00
Peace Players International – Northern Ireland/Spring Jam	Funding in the sum of £1,150 in relation to the holding of this basketball event on 8th May which will bring primary school children together to play on mixed teams as a cross-community exercise	No grant as the event does not meet the necessary criteria
Northern Ireland Schools Football Association/British Isles under 14 Schools Championships	Funding in the sum of £5,000 in relation to the holding at Ulidia Playing Fields on 20th, 21st and 22nd May of this event which will involve schools from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland	£2,450.00

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
City of Belfast Archers/All Ireland Championships	Funding in the sum of £9,500 in relation to the holding on 22nd and 23rd May of this event which will involve 150 participants	£2,450.00
Zapcat Racing Club/Belfast Maritime Festival Grand Prix	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding on 4th, 5th and 6th June of this event which will involve a Home Nations and City Championship event as well as the United Kingdom Championships. Previous events have attracted between 20,000 and 75,000 spectators	£7,000.00
Ulster Ladies Gaelic Football /Year 9 Blitz	Funding in the sum of £3,325 in relation to the holding at Cherryvale Playing Fields on 4th June of this event which is targeted at Year 9 primary school girls and will involve a minimum of 400 participants	No grant as the event does not meet the necessary criteria
Queen's University Boat Club/The Irish University Boat Race	Funding in the sum of £7,000 in relation to the holding on 5th June of the event which is based on the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race and will involve 72 rowers from Queen's University Belfast and Trinity College Dublin and should attract 500 spectators	£3,606.75
Co-operation Ireland/Maracycle	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding on 26th and 27th June of this event which it is anticipated will involve 1,000 persons cycling between Belfast and Dublin	£4,900.00
National Balmoral Championships/National Balmoral Show Jumping Championships	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding in July of the 25th running of this event which should involve 200 participants and attract 5,000 spectators	£6,300.00

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
George Best Community Cup	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding of this cross-community, cross-border event which will involve 520 players from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Scotland and England	£6,300.00
Left Field/Belfast 24 Hour Race	Funding in the sum of £2,925 in relation to the holding of this event on 30th and 31st July which will involve 50 international and local people running round the Mary Peters Track for up to 24 hours	£1,830.50
Crossover Basketball Northern Ireland/Crossover Youth Basketball Tournament	Funding in the sum of £6,000 in relation to the holding of this event in August which will be open to young people aged between 7 and 18	£1,330.00
Newmill Football Association/The Christopher Shaw Cup	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding of this event on 20th, 21st and 22nd August which will involve 48 male and 8 female teams from Derry, Donegal, Belfast and Wales	£2,149.00
Belfast Urban Sports/Bridges Action Sports Festival Belfast	Funding in the sum of £9,400 in relation to the holding of this event on 27th, 28th and 29th August which will involve skateboarding, BMX and inline rollerblading competitions. 500 participants and 5,000 spectators are anticipated	£5,267.50
Newington Football Club/Belfast Youth Cup 2010	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding at Grove Playing Fields on 28th August of this event which will involve 16 teams from North Belfast	£3,937.50
Irish Strength Association/Ultimate Strength Challenge Belfast 2010	Funding in the sum of £10,000 in relation to the holding on 28th, 29th and 30th August of this event which will involve 16 competitors from throughout the United Kingdom and Europe. It will receive considerable media coverage on Sky	£6,300.00

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Spokes in Motion/The Belfast 2010 International Wheelchair Tennis Tournament	Funding in the sum of £5,837.50 in relation to the holding of this event on 17th, 18th and 19th September at the Ozone Complex which will involve 32 participants from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland	£2,852.50
St. Pauls Gaelic Athletic Club/All Ireland Golden Gloves	Funding in the sum of £2,000 in relation to the holding of this handball event on 24th, 25th and 26th September which should involve 30 participants and attract 500 spectators	£945.00
SCA Limited/Race to Embrace	Funding in the sum of £4,000 in relation to the holding of this event in September which will involve 150 participants from Protestant and Catholic communities in North and West Belfast	No grant as the event does not meet the necessary criteria
Belfast Tropics Basketball Club/Belfast Tropics Invitational Basketball Tournament	Funding in the sum of £4,000 in relation to the holding of the event in September which will involve teams from America, Cyprus, France, London and the Republic of Ireland and should attract between 3,000 and 4,000 spectators	No grant as the event does not meet the necessary criteria

Play Resource Warehouse

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Play Resource Warehouse was set up in 1983 by community workers from Belfast City Council working with other community activists involved in play development throughout the City. An initial grant from the Council, under the Belfast Areas of Need Scheme, enabled them to set up Play Resource’s first home in an old warehouse in Tomb Street.

When this grant came to an end in 1986, Belfast City Council entered into a tri-partite agreement with the Department of Education and the DHSS to continue to fund Play Resource on a longer term basis through the Community Services Section. In April 2009,

funding moved to a service level agreement which covered initially the period from 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010. It was anticipated that, subject to satisfactory performance on the part of the organisation and with the approval of Council, the service level agreement would be renewed on an annual basis.

The Play Resource Warehouse has grown over the years to the point where it is now the largest and most successful play resource centre of its kind in the UK and Ireland. At the end of its first year of operation Play Resource had approximately 300 community groups as members. Today that figure is over 2,500 groups, with approximately 60% of those being in the Belfast City Council area.

In operating as a successful social economy model, the organisation employs 12 staff (8 full time equivalents) as well as 20 artists on a freelance basis, and meets 50% of its costs through generated income. Other major funders include the Arts Council and the Youth Council.

Key Issues

Play Resource is a unique, City-wide, cross-community, organisation whose core purpose is to improve the quality of life for children and young people, particularly those experiencing disadvantage. It operates a successful social economy model and as such represents an effective organisational role model which is widely associated with the City Council through the latter's support. The organisation's Mission Statement is set out below:

'To create the opportunities to develop the creative potential of children and young people in Northern Ireland and thereby to enhance their quality of life and strengthen their ability to express themselves fully and freely.'

In 2008/09 Play Resource had expenditure of £426,000 and income of £380,000. Funding received from BCC in this period was £30,000. This is equal to 7.9% of the total income. Play Resource generated £191,000 income from membership fees, hire of a training room, training and gift aid from the art and play shop. This is just over 50% of the total income.

At a time of recession Play Resource has seen its membership-derived income increase from £66,000 in 07/08 to £80,000 in 08/09. This is an increase of 21% and reflects the demand for Play Resource's services to community and play organisations which are now looking for alternatives to reduce costs. Play Resource also employs 20 artists on a freelance basis, spending approximately £45,000 on artist fees, hence contributing to the local economy.

The model demonstrates excellent value for money in providing a much needed and unique service which is consistent with the Council's development objectives, particularly in regard to play development, recycling, community development and as a flagship social economy organisational model.

Play development:

Already established as a high priority for the Council, Play Resource enhances and supports play development throughout the City. It provides, under one roof, low cost resources, training, ideas and information which will support any future play development strategies. At a time when infant mental health is becoming recognised as a major government priority, the need for good quality play opportunities to support the development of children and young people, has become more relevant than ever.

In this Play Resource will continue to work in partnership with the most relevant play organisations in the City, in particular, Playboard and the Council.

Reduce, re-use, recycle

In line with the Council's ongoing recycling campaign and its 'Waste - it's not rubbish' message, Play Resource has an important role to contribute to raising awareness of recycling and re-using with children, young people and community groups in general. The fact that Play Resource's main function is to supply safe non-toxic waste materials from commerce and industry for use in children's play and art means that this message is a fundamental and genuine part of the ethos of the organisation.

There appear to be opportunities for Play Resource and the Council's Waste Management team to work together on projects promoting the value of recycling and re-using, particularly as Play Resource has access to such a huge community-based membership.

This has been identified in the Business Plan and is an area of priority for the Development Manager and Waste Team in 2010. Part of this will also be to form stronger links with Bryson House.

Community development

All of Play Resource's services are directed towards the most disadvantaged community groups and the organisation has a long and excellent track record of supporting community development through arts.

Play Resource was developed as a grass roots community organisation by local community workers who identified the need for support services for play and community development. It has worked hard over the years to ensure that that community ethos is continued. The fact that the vast majority of community-based groups have been members of Play Resource for most of its twenty six years is evidence of the value placed on the service by the community. Many community arts events throughout the City rely on Play Resource in some part – whether it is through materials, advice or training.

Flagship for the City

Play Resource is now recognised as the largest and most successful play resource centre in the UK and Ireland. It is seen as the Centre for Arts, Play and Education and as such provides an excellent range of relevant services which together meet the current and expressed needs of communities and children and young people in particular. It now regularly hosts visits from others wishing to set up similar projects elsewhere in the UK and Ireland.

Recent Developments

Since 2002, the organisation has been operating from modern purpose-built premises and during that time its capacity to generate income through membership fees, arts programmes, the rental of art room / training facilities and shop sales has increased by 32%.

The move to new premises enabled a huge shift in the organisation's ability to cope with expansion and development. It also meant that Play Resource took on a new level of challenge to take the service through a second stage of development – the move from that of a community project to that of being taken seriously as a major arts infrastructure organisation.

More recently, Play Resource has looked to its internal structures and processes to place itself in a strong position to plan for the next stage of growth and development. As detailed in the Business Plan 2007-2010, the objectives in terms of governance were to develop an exemplary model of good practice policies; to have a well trained and highly motivated staff team and to review the Board structure – all of which has now largely been achieved. A new staff structure was created with the recruitment of a Deputy Director and the formation of a senior management team. A highly effective system of project management has also been introduced which enables the Senior Management Team to match the operational plans to the aims and objectives of the Business Plan.

Plans for the Future

Play Resource plans to extend its current building, a modern purpose-built centre completed in 2002, to ensure the facilities and the additional space to cope with planned future growth and strategic development.

The aim is to develop Play Resource's wider capacity to expand and deliver services which support the development of creative activities for children and young people throughout Northern Ireland.

In order to ensure that services and programmes remain innovative and forward thinking and that it continues to meet real and current needs of children and young people, the organisation is concentrating its future strategic development in the four key areas of arts, play, education and youth. It is believed this will enable it to develop and deliver play and arts programmes to ensure maximum impact in improving the well being and personal development of children and young people and helping them to achieve their full potential.

The aim will be to work with the most relevant organisations and agencies in each of these areas to contribute to the strategic priorities of those departments and bodies responsible for children and young people.

Summary

For 26 years Play Resource has been at the heart of the community infrastructure - undoubtedly contributing to the sustainability, growth and empowerment of many community groups throughout Belfast. This has been demonstrated by the huge growth in membership, the high frequency of use on a daily basis and the support of a range of funding bodies including central government, trusts and private sector donors. The work of the organisation has been recognized also through various awards bestowed upon the organisation and, notably, being named as Lord Mayor's Charity of the Year 2003.

The organisation's track record has been based on providing creative and innovative activities, free resources, training, advice and support for the development of children and young people. It helps also to develop the skills and abilities of youth, play and community workers thereby contributing to the development of their communities.

The organisation has requested that Council consider the renewal of the service level agreement, at an increased level of £40,000 for the 2010/11 financial year. Monitoring of the organisation has confirmed that it has adhered to the conditions attached to the 2009/10 funding agreement as well as providing a range of developmental support, training and programmes as specified.

Resource Implications

Although the organisation has requested £40,000 for the renewal of the SLA, only £31,000 has been allowed for in the budget for the financial year 2010/11, which is in line with the previous year's allocation.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

1. Agree to the renewal of the service level agreement for the 2010/11 financial year at a level of £31,000.

Decision Tracking

Further to agreement the SLA will be renewed at a cost of £31,000.

Time line: April 10 Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Belfast City Council Youth Forum

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

The Belfast City Council Youth Forum was established in March 2006 and sits within the Community Services Section of the Development Department. It was set up as a vehicle whereby the Council could consult with young people on their views of Council issues and policies, as well as offering a conduit through which young people could raise issues of importance to them. In turn, each of the Political Parties within Council has a designated ‘Youth Champion’ who engages with the members of the Youth Forum.

The current membership of 36 young people will serve until June 2010. Members are drawn from different areas of the City and reflect the diversity of the City in regard to religions, social backgrounds and cultures. The vision and mission statement, as formulated by the members of the Youth Forum, are set out below.

Youth Forum Vision

'We are a changing City – this is recognised by Belfast City Council Youth Forum as we prioritise our Young Citizens and build a future together.'

Youth Forum Mission Statement

'Belfast City Council's Youth Forum seeks to represent the issues of Young People in Belfast. It will consult young people and all stakeholders who are responsible for the needs of young people in the City. The Youth Forum will seek out opportunities to inform Council policy and improve service provision so that Belfast becomes a better place for Young People to live.'

The Youth Forum is divided into 3 sub-groups: each of these groups consists of members tasked with performing a piece of work and reporting to the political party Youth Champions and officers within the Community Services Section of the Development Department. It is part of the responsibilities of a Children and Young People's Co-ordinator to manage the Forum.

Key Issues

Since being established, the Youth Forum has been involved in a wide range of developmental, participatory and representative activities. In breaking new ground, the operation of the Youth Forum has served as a model of best practice and, as such, has brought significant recognition to the Council as well as attracting widespread interest, including that of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, in regard to the setting up of a NI Youth Parliament.

Previously, in 2008, the Council endorsed the findings of an independent review of the Youth Forum in regard to the need for such a mechanism, its operation and its value for money. Since then, further political commitment has been given to the positioning of the Youth Forum as an integral aspect of a Children and Young People's Unit within Community Services. Key areas of work and major achievements since January 2009 are available on Modern.gov.

The term of the current Youth Forum expires at the end of June 2010. In planning for the future, several contextual issues should be noted.

1. **Belfast remains a young City, with approximately 24% of the population aged 18 and under. The importance of this group has been recognised by Members in regard to consideration of their needs and better engaging with them in the formulation and delivery of a broad range of services. There exists, consequently, strong cross-Party political support for children and young people as a key group of interest.**
2. **The broad theme of children and young people has emerged as an increasingly important policy area with policy frameworks now cascading from international, European, national and regional levels. It is vital therefore that the Council continues to lead from the front in terms of local authority initiatives, alongside young people, promoting themes of participation, inclusion and citizenship, in offering ‘voice and choice’ to young people.**
3. **A shared responsibility to introduce efficiencies across the public sector points to the imperatives of greater integration and better targeting of resources. The principle holds internally, across Council, as well as externally, with a range of key stakeholders. The Youth Forum, in providing a vehicle for engagement and consultation, offers a mechanism that can assist in better formulation and delivery of policies and programmes not only by Council but by other public bodies.**

The confluence of political, policy and financial interests points to an area of growing importance and in which Council is recognised as being a leader in the field. It is vital therefore that Council build on the success of the initial phase of the Youth Forum and give impetus to the next phase of development through a planned and comprehensive programme.

From the outset, the role of Young People’s Co-ordinator has been pivotal to the success of the Youth Forum. Key achievements have included:

- **raising the profile of the Youth Forum at regional and national levels**
- **liaising with OFMDFM in regard to the proposed operation of a NI Youth Parliament**
- **promoting improved service delivery with outside bodies such as DOE, NIHE, Council for the Homeless**
- **influencing policy development through participative consultation workshops and written responses**

- promoting improved co-ordination and co-operation across City Council departments
- commissioning and managing independent evaluations of the contribution of the Youth Forum and its effectiveness.

To date, the post has been supported on a fixed term basis. The current post holder is seconded on a temporary basis until 31st March, 2010. This secondment will be extended to enable a review of the job description in order to ensure alignment within the new Children & Young Persons Unit within Community Services.

The co-ordinator would lead the process beyond the recruitment and induction of new Youth Forum members, and engage at a strategic level to ensure alignment and complementarity with the operation of the NI Youth Parliament. Critically also, the role will explore how to develop and nurture systematic linkages at neighbourhood level through existing structures such as Neighbourhood Renewal and Area Based Partnerships, to ensure that opportunities for engagement and participation are accessible to all young people across the city.

Resource Implications

Excluding salaries, the Youth Forum represents an annual developmental investment of some £50,000 by the City Council. In return, some 3,750 volunteer hours have been derived annually from the participation of young members.

Recommendations

Members are asked to endorse the following recommendations:

1. To approve the operation of the BCC Youth Forum for the period 1st July, 2010 to 30th June, 2012
2. To agree to the ongoing nomination within each political party of a Young People's Champion to act as a key point of contact for Youth Forum members.

Decision Tracking

Further to approval the recommended actions to be completed.

Time line: June 10

Reporting Officer: C Taggart

Key Abbreviations

DOE – Department of Education

NIHE – Northern Ireland Housing Executive”

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the Belfast City Council Youth Forum continue to operate until 30th June, 2012 and agreed further that each Party Groupings represented on the Council nominate a Young People's Champion who would act as a key point of contact for members of the Youth Forum.

Climate Change Conference

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

In 2009 The European Unit recognised the need to develop a series of seminars reflecting key issues affecting European cities. Climate change was deemed to be one of the most important issues both in terms of the environment and economics affecting cities across Europe.

From an EU Member State perspective, the 2006 Stern Review concluded that the scientific evidence for climate change is now overwhelming and climate change should be regarded as a serious global threat demanding urgent global action. Lord Stern's views have been echoed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) whose Fourth Assessment Report concluded that global atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide have increased markedly as a result of human activities and now far exceed pre-industrial values.

Recognising the Stern Review's call for prompt action, Belfast City Council's 2008-2011 Corporate Plan has identified reducing the City's impact on climate change as a key priority within the strategic theme of 'Better care for Belfast's environment - a clean, green city now and for the future'. Moreover, the Council has as a key performance indicator the tonnage of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted from its premises.

In terms of indicative actions supporting this key priority, the Council committed to the adoption of a European Declaration on Climate Change for the City and to the subsequent development of a prioritised action plan to address the causes and consequences of climate change within Belfast in collaboration with outside bodies and local communities.

The Council formally subscribed to the Eurocities' Declaration on Climate Change at the Eurocities' Annual General Meeting in Stockholm on 28 November, 2009.

On 22 January 2010, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee endorsed a proposal to establish an inter-agency group working group on climate change for the City. This group will seek to address key climate change issues currently affecting Belfast, via the development of a Climate Change Action Plan.

The Council's anticipated role in the development of a Climate Change Action Plan will be to act initially as a convening body and to then function as a co-ordinating and managing organisation for implementation and monitoring. Accordingly, it is considered that a climate change educational event could serve as a suitable formal launch for the working group and help to prioritise its work programme.

Key Issues

It is proposed that the Council agree to host a Climate Change Conference in Belfast. The conference would address political objectives agreed by the Council around the climate change agenda and inform on the key objectives of the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change. It is proposed that the conference take place in Autumn 2010, probably September. The programme is yet to be finalised due to the necessity to involve the inter-agency working group on Climate Change. There will, however, be a European element to the programme as well as central and local government.

It is anticipated that approximately 100 delegates will attend the conference.

Resource Implications

Finance:

The conference will cost approximately £10,000. This is included in the European Unit's 2009-2010 budget.

Human Resources:

The European Officer for Health and Environmental Services – Sarah Jayne Smith and the Sustainable Development Manager – Alastair Curran, will organise the conference.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members agree to host the City Conference on Climate Change at a cost of approximately £10,000.

Decision Tracking

Following approval and subsequent ratification, planning for the proposed conference will proceed.

Timeline: April 2010

Reporting Officer: Laura Leonard"

The Committee agreed to host the Climate Change Conference at a cost of approximately £10,000.

Neighbourhood Renewal – Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that, in June 2003, the DSD published ‘People and Place: A Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal’, a document which aims to tackle the complex, multi-dimensional nature of Northern Ireland’s most disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods. In order to progress this agenda, DSD progressed the establishment of 12 Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships within the BCC area. Each Partnership was tasked with producing a Vision Framework (7-10 years) and Action Plan (3 years) for the Neighbourhood Renewal area. The 12 Partnerships are:

- Inner East Belfast
- South West Belfast
- Greater Falls
- Upper Springfield
- Inner North Belfast
- Ligoniel
- Inner South Belfast
- Greater Shankill
- Lenadoon
- Crumlin/Ardoyne
- Andersonstown
- Upper Ardoyne/Ballysillan

Each Partnership has developed its Action Plan which was submitted to DSD for consideration. These Plans proposed thousands of actions that would need to be delivered by a range of organisations in key areas such as housing, health, education, community safety, good relations, employability, community development, culture, tourism, leisure, children and young people, older people and environmental and physical improvement.

Key Issues

The Council has become a key participant in the neighbourhood renewal process and to date the following support has been provided:

- overall coordination of the Council’s response to Neighbourhood Renewal facilitated through SNAP.
- Neighbourhood Development Officers from the SNAP Team in place to co-ordinate the delivery of actions within each Plan.
- officer participation provided on all 12 Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships through Community Services.

- Action Plan responses prepared for each of the 12 Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships Action Plans.
- establishment of a Neighbourhood Renewal Working Group comprising Council Neighbourhood Renewal representatives and representatives from Council Departments.
- formal presentations and workshops delivered to the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships.
- creation of a Neighbourhood Renewal Database detailing all key actions and implications for the Council in the Neighbourhood Renewal process.
- commitment to deliver on Neighbourhood Renewal is embedded within the new Corporate Plan.
- provision of SNAP area-based intelligence to support the Neighbourhood Renewal process.
- development of the Neighbourhood Renewal section of the Council website, creating a central repository for all Action Plans and responses.
- integration of Neighbourhood Renewal within the Council's SNAP/Local Area Working agenda.
- Neighbourhood Renewal resource directories prepared for the Partnerships detailing Council services and key staff working in the local area.
- on-going work with BRO regarding the development of a pilot partnership approach to the implementation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan in Lenadoon. An update will be presented to Committee in due course.

Next steps

Whilst work is on-going with regard to the implementation of the Council's response to the Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans there are a number of pieces of work that are on-going that may have implications for future service delivery. These include the following:-

- the NRP's are all currently reviewing and updating their Action Plans. These plans may have implications for BCC services. The Plans will be made available in due course.
- the likely transfer of Neighbourhood Renewal to Councils through the Review of Public Administration.

- BRO is currently working to develop a Service Delivery model in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas which will have implications for how its services are delivered across these areas in future. They completed the first stage in this process which is to map the organisations and services currently funded.
- finally, DSD has recently appointed consultants to develop a policy framework on Urban Regeneration and Community Development. The role of Neighbourhood Renewal will be considered within this.

Updates will be provided to Members in due course.

Resource Implications

Coordinated by the SNAP Manager

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the content of the report and Appendix One.

Decision Tracking

None

Key Abbreviations

NR	Neighbourhood Renewal
NRPs	Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships
NRA	Neighbourhood Renewal Area
NRAP	Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan
NDO	Neighbourhood Development Officer
SNAP	Strategic Neighbourhood Action Programme
YENI	Young Enterprise Northern Ireland
DSD	Department for Social Development
BRO	Belfast Regeneration Office
LIAG	Local Implementation Action Group
MUGA	Multi-Use Games Area
ASB	Anti Social Behaviour
CC	Community Centre
PACT	Partners and Communities Together
LOTS	Living over the Shops
SRF	Strategic Regeneration Framework
HUB	Hybrid Use Building.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator"

The Committee noted the information provided and that a copy of the appendix referred to in the report was available on Modern.gov.

Bi-Monthly Departmental Briefing Document

The Head of Economic Initiatives reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 13th January, it had approved the format for the Departmental Briefing Document. The aim of the document was to enable the Department to keep Members informed on the progress of initiatives and projects within the Department, whilst reducing the number of items on the Development Committee agenda which were for notation purposes or which required no decision.

She advised the Committee of the topics included within the first such Briefing Document which had been recently circulated to all Members of Council.

The Principal Committee Administrator informed the Committee that, if Members found the Document to be beneficial, it was likely that the exercise would be extended across the Council, thereby reducing the number of items on agendas across the several Standing Committees.

Mr. Neil Malcolm

The Chairman informed the Committee that this would be the last meeting at which the Committee Administrator, Mr. Neil Malcolm, would be in attendance as he would be leaving the Council on 31st March. He pointed out that Mr. Malcolm had acted as Clerk to the Development Committee for most of the time it had been operating and thanked him for the work which he had undertaken during his 34 years of service. Members on behalf of their Party Groupings thanked Mr. Malcolm for the manner in which he had dealt with them and wished him well in the future.

Mr. Malcolm thanked the Members for their kind remarks.

Chairman