

# Development Committee

Wednesday, 15th September, 2010

## MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor C. Maskey (Chairman);  
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Humphrey); and  
Councillors M. Browne, Bostock, Campbell, B. Kelly,  
Kirkpatrick, Kyle, Mallon, McCausland, Mullaghan,  
J. 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; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Ekin and Lavery.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 11th and 20th August 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 September, subject to the omission of the minute of 11th August under the heading "Creative Industries – Blick Shared Studios" which, at the request of Councillor Stoker, had been taken back for further consideration.

### Councillor M. Bostock

The Chairman, on behalf of the Members, welcomed Councillor Bostock to her first meeting of the Committee.

### Belfast Music Week – Sir James Galway

The Chairman reminded the Committee that, as part of the Belfast Music Week, it had agreed to hold a special reception to honour Sir James Galway and mark his 70th Birthday. The event was due to be held later that evening from 7.30 p.m. till 9.00 p.m. in the Group Space, Ulster Hall.

Noted.

### **Creative Industries – Blick Shared Studios**

The Committee considered further the undernoted minute of the meeting of 11th August, together with an additional report in relation to the “Creative Industries – Blick Shared Studios”:

*“The Committee was reminded that, since 2005, the Council had invested in the Creative Industries as part of its programme of support for the local economy. One of the projects in which the Council had invested previously was Blick Shared Studios, which was a business incubation project for the creative sector. The business was based on the Malone Road in a property which has been let by the private sector at favourable rates. The building currently housed twelve companies across a range of disciplines, including fashion, textiles, graphic/web design, jewellery, television production, photography, game development, motion graphics, magazine production and feature film development. The company had developed a structured programme of business growth for its tenant companies which comprised of a number of elements:*

- *a year long mentoring programme for tenant companies which linked them with industry experts;*
- *monthly business growth events – this incorporated networking sessions, workshops and seminars and the topics to be covered were likely to include intellectual property, copyright, patenting, product development and procurement;*
- *quarterly business growth clinics – those would be full-day/half-day workshops relevant to creative businesses on a range of topics such as public relations, sales and marketing, accessing funding and legal issues.*

*The Head of Economic Initiatives stated that the aim of the programme was to enhance the business skills of participating companies and subsequently support them in improving their productivity and competitiveness. She advised the Members that Blick Shared Studios had submitted a request for funding of £30,000 to support the work. She pointed out that match funding of £15,000 was available from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment under the European Unions Structural Funds programme.*

*The Committee agreed to allocate £30,000 for the delivery of the project, of which £15,000 would be made available from the Council’s funds and £15,000 of grant-aid which had been secured from the European Unions Structural Funds Programme.”*

Councillor Stoker, at whose request the minute had been taken back to the Committee, stated that he was content with the additional information which had been contained in the updated report.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to affirm its decision of 11th August to allocate £30,000 for the delivery of the project, of which £15,000 would be made available from the Council's funds and £15,000 grant-aid which had been secured from the European Union's Structural Funds Programme.

#### **Legacy Trust and Land of Giants Proposal**

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of a report in respect of the Legacy Trust and Land of Giants project to enable a further detailed report in relation to the proposal to be submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

#### **Support for Sport – Event Funding**

The Committee was reminded that the Support for Sport scheme had, for the past seven years, funded clubs and organisations throughout the City. The scheme had four main elements, that is, Development Grants, Large Development Grants and Hospitality funding, which were allocated by the Parks and Leisure Committee, and Events Funding, which was allocated by the Events Unit through the Development Committee.

The Head of Civic Events and Venues reminded the Members that currently the Events Unit provided two publicly advertised and promoted opportunities each year for groups to apply for funding for the Support for Sport Scheme Event funding. Those tranches provided funding for two distinct periods, mainly, spring/summer and autumn/winter. In the current financial year the budget allocated to sports events being organised in Belfast in 2010/2011 was £97,500.

It was reported that, following a public notice in January, 2010, a large number of Events Funding applications had been received, which referred to events taking place during the period from 1st April till 30th September, 2010. The applications had been assessed by officers using the pre-agreed criteria which had been approved by the Committee in March, 2008. The Head of City Events and Venues pointed out that, due to the unprecedented number of applications, a situation arose whereby, using the same criteria to judge the applications as had been the case in previous years, almost all of the £97,500 available would have been exhausted during the first tranche. To avoid that position and in order to ensure the integrity of the judging criteria, the Committee had agreed that the funding during that period would be subject to a 30% reduction (after assessment). That was to ensure that there would be sufficient funding available for the second tranche of events which were taking place between 1st October, 2010 and 31st March, 2011.

The Head of City Events and Venues explained that, although that process had been approved fully, some Members at that time had expressed concerns that some groups might be disadvantaged by the revised process. Taking those concerns into account in considering an appropriate process for the forthcoming year, 2011/2012, the Committee was now being requested to consider the introduction of a single annual public call from applicants seeking events funding. That concept would eradicate the

previous predicament as the scheme would be advertised and processed only once each year. All applicants, organising an event over the course of one year from 1st April, 2011 till 31st March, 2012 and subsequent years thereafter, would apply to meet the one deadline. Ideally, that advertising process would take place in late November each year with applications being assessed and approved well before the earliest of the events taking place in the new financial year commencing 1st April, 2011 onwards.

The Committee agreed to amend the Support for Sport – Event Funding Scheme with effect from 1st April, 2011 to provide that the call for applications for events funding take place once per annum only.

### **World Police and Firefighter Games 2013**

The Committee agreed that a special meeting, to which all Members of Council would be invited, be held to receive from representatives of the World Police and Firefighter Games 2013 Stakeholder Group a presentation on the current status of the organisation and governance arrangements for the games. The Committee agreed also that a composite report on all events to be held in 2012 and associated funding be submitted to the special meeting.

### **Departmental Plan - Quarterly Update**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided a quarterly update on the Development Departmental Plan 2010/2011 and noted that the monitoring process and format of the Departmental Plan update would change from the next quarter due to the Council's new Corporate Monitoring System being put in place.

### **Financial Reporting – Quarter 1 2010/11**

(Mrs. J. Thompson, Head of Finance and Resources, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“Relevant Background Information**

**It was agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 18 June 2010 that financial reporting packs would be produced for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and each Standing Committee on a quarterly basis and following discussion, that the first reports for the quarter ended June 2010 would be available for Committees in September. Monthly financial updates were also agreed to be provided to the Budget and Transformation Panel, if there were any significant issues to report.**

**The reporting pack contains a summary dashboard of the financial indicators and an executive summary explaining the financial performance of Development Committee in the context of the financial performance of the overall Council (Appendix 1). It also provides a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators covering the year to date and forecast financial position.**

As was advised in the 18 June 2010 Strategic Policy and Resources Committee report, the reporting pack should be viewed as still under development and the style and information in the reports will continue to evolve, in liaison with Members.

The information within these financial reporting packs has been developed through collaboration between central finance and departmental management teams. The information for Standing Committees has therefore been reviewed and endorsed by central finance. As was outlined in the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee report of 18 June 2010, a number of practical issues have been resolved in the development of the reports. In particular, Members are asked to note the following:

- (i) the original 2010/11 rates setting exercise included a budget for a pay rise of 1.5%. The pay position of the council is determined by national negotiations and currently no pay rise has been offered for 2010/11, which is causing significant trade union concern. The budget of £1.1m has therefore been removed from departmental budgets, for reporting purposes, so that the true departmental variances can be identified. The current unutilised pay rise budget underspend has been logged centrally;
- (ii) demand led internal charges have also been removed from the budgets and expenditure of service users and applied to the budgets of service providers (eg ISB, facilities management etc) for reporting purposes which keeps the budgetary treatment for 2010/11 in line with that agreed by Members on 18 June 2010 for 2011/12.
- (iii) capital charges are non cash items which have been removed from departmental budgets so that accurate variances can be identified.

### Key Issues

#### A. Current and Forecast Financial Position 2010/11

The current year to date financial position for Development Committee is an underspend of some £0.3m (5%) with a forecast end of year underspend of some £0.5m (3%). The reasons for this underspend relate to underspends in Community Services and Directorate Support. The financial reporting pack contains more detail on both the overall council position and the financial performance in each of the Services within the Department.

It should be emphasised that it is very early in the financial year and therefore it is difficult to make an accurate forecast of the end of year financial position. There are considerable uncertainties which could impact on the forecast. Nonetheless, an early forecast is helpful to Members in making financial decisions for the remainder of 2010/11 and in advance of the 2011/12 rates setting exercise.

As already stated, it is difficult to make an accurate financial forecast so early in the year. It is recommended that the use of the forecast underspend is considered corporately by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

#### **B. Training**

As was agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 18 June 2010, to provide training in financial management for Members. It is currently planned that this will be provided in liaison with the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DEA) and will take place in three sessions on 27 September. Members have already been advised of this training and attendance is encouraged, wherever possible.

#### **C. Links to performance management**

Members should note that officers are currently working on the development of performance management reporting packs which in time will become available for Members' consideration alongside the financial reporting packs. Further updates will be brought to Members as the work progresses.

#### **Resource Implications**

There is a year to date underspend of £0.3m and a forecast underspend of some £0.5m.

#### **Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- (A) Note the above report and associated financial reporting pack;
- (B) Agree to the recommended proposal that the utilisation of the forecast underspend be considered corporately by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee; and
- (C) Note that financial training is to be provided to Members on 27 September and attendance, wherever possible, is to be encouraged."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Summer Play Scheme Awards 2010**

The Community Development Manager reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 13th January, it had agreed that funding for community-organised summer play schemes be allocated to qualifying community groups in the voluntary sector following assessment based on the agreed criteria. She pointed out that such grants were awarded at amounts of either £1,000, £1,800 or £3,000.

The Committee was advised that a total of 86 applications had been received and that funding had been awarded to the undernoted 82 groups which had met the criteria:

<b>APPENDIX 1</b>	
<b>SUMMER SCHEME AWARDS 2010: Community Managed Schemes</b>	
<b>NAME</b>	<b>Award</b>
<b>NORTH</b>	
<b>Ardoyne Afterschools Club</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<b>Ardoyne Fleadh Cheoil</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Artillery Young Mothers Group</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Ashton Community Trust</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Ballysillan Youth For Christ Community Drop In Centre</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Basement Youth Club</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Bodybuilders Summer Scheme</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Carrickhill Residents Association</b>	<b>£2,500</b>
<b>Club Oige Mhachaire Bothain</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Donegall Park Avenue Community Ass</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Glenbank Community Association</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Kinderkids Daycare</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Ligoniel Family Centre</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Lower Oldpark Community Association</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Manor St/Cliftonville Community Group</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Marrowbone Community Association</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Mount Vernon Community Dev Forum</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>North Belfast Play Forum</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<b>North Belfast Womens Initiative &amp; Support Project</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<b>Polish Community Centre Cooltura</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<b>Shore Crescent Residents Association</b>	<b>£1,800</b>
<b>Star Neighbourhood Centre</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Tar Isteach</b>	<b>£1,700</b>
<b>The Hubb Rescue Centre</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<b>Vine Centre</b>	<b>£1,700</b>
<b>Whitecity Community Development Association</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Wishing Well Family Centre</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£52,700</b>

<b>NAME</b>	<b>Award</b>
<b>SOUTH</b>	
An Droichead	£1,800
Ballynafeigh CDA	£1,800
Empire Residents Association	£3,000
L.O.R.A.G.	£2,500
Sandy Row Residents Association	£500
Soughcity Resoure & Development Centre	£3,000
Whizz Kids(Chinese Welfare Association)	£1,500
Windsor Womens Centre	£3,000
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£17,100</b>
<b>EAST</b>	
Ardcarn Residents and Tenants Association	£1,800
Ballymac Centre	£3,000
Bloomfield Community Association	£3,000
Bridge Community Association	£3,000
Carew II Family & Training Centre	£2,000
Clarawood Community Association	£3,000
Inner East Youth Project	£2,510
KPC Youth	£1,800
Lower Woodstock Community Association	£1,800
Mountpottinger Afterschools Kids	£1,000
Oasis Caring In Action	£1,800
Walkway Community Association	£3,000
Wandsworth Community Association	£3,000
Connswater Community & Leisure	£2,500
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£33,210</b>
<b>WEST</b>	
Action on Disability Project	£1,800
An Munia Tober	£1,800
Ardmonagh Family & Community Group	£1,800
Blackie River Community Group	£3,000
Blackmountain Action Group	£2,900
Cairde Naomh Pol	£3,000
Clonard Parents Youth Group	£1,500
Conway Youth Centre	£1,500
Denmark Street Community Centre	£2,500
Divis Play Project	£2,500
Falls Residents Association	£1,000
Falls Womens Centre	£1,800
Falls Youth Providers	£3,000
Forthspring Inter Community Group	£1,570
Friends of Careers N Kids	£1,800



NAME	Award
Glencolin Residents Association	£1,800
Glen Parent Youth Group	£3,000
Glor Na Mona	£1,800
Gort Na Mona Historical Cultural Group	£1,000
Greater Turf Lodge Residents Association	£1,000
Hannahstown Community Association	£1,800
Horn Drive Drop In Centre	£1,800
Ionad Uibh Eachach	£1,800
Kids Together West Belfast	£1,800
Newhill Youth & Community Centre	£3,000
Roden St Community Development Group	£2,500
Shankill Women's Centre	£1,800
Stadium Projects	£1,000
St. Stephens Afterschools	£1,800
St. Vincent De Paul Mountainview Centre	£3,000
Upper Andersonstown Community Forum	£3,000
Westrock Parent & Youth	£1,800
Whiterock/Westrock Residents Association	£1,800
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£66,970</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>£169,980</b>

In addition, the following four groups had not been awarded any financial assistance as their applications had failed to meet the judging criteria:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Reason for Rejection</u>
174 Trust	No Annual General Meeting (AGM) clause in governing document. No Committee Election. Accounts not presented at AGM.
St. Paul's and St. Barnabus	Not a community development organisation. No AGM clause in governing document.
Belmont Playcare	Not a community development organisation.
East Belfast Mission	Not locally accountable, no local board election.

Noted.

### Community and Play Centre Committees

The Committee noted the contents of a report which had provided information on the current status of the Community and Playcentre Committees.

**Consultation Response –**  
**Department for Social Development's**  
**Regional Infrastructure Review**

The Committee was reminded that the Department for Social Development's Voluntary and Community Unit was seeking responses to its review of the Regional Infrastructure Programme for the Community and Voluntary Sectors. The consultation was running until 30th September, 2010, with the new framework for the programme to be finalised in November. The aims of the review were:

- That the programme remained relevant to Government objectives and the needs of the Department for Social Development;
- Priorities for support to the voluntary and community sectors were clearly identified and prioritised;
- That criteria for the programme were clearly stated; and
- Regional support was geared to help the voluntary and community sector improve its relationship with public bodies and maximise its public life in Northern Ireland.

The Programme had been running for twenty years and the current recipients of funding were:

Advice NI

Churches Community Work Alliance

Citizen's Advice

CO3 – Chief Officers Third Sector

Community Change

Community Evaluation NI

Law Centre NI

NI Council for Voluntary Action

Volunteer Now

Women's Centres Regional Partnership

As part of the Council's consultation process on the review, a briefing session for the Development Committee had been held on 30th August, the consultation document had been forwarded to Council Departments via the Policy Officer Group and Community Services had held a workshop for staff. Feedback from those consultation activities had been used to create a draft response.

Accordingly, the Committee approved the undernoted comments as the Council's response to the consultation document:

**“Belfast City Council’s response to the consultation on the Review of the Regional Infrastructure Programme”**

<b>OUR DETAILS</b>
<b>Name: Catherine Taggart</b>
<b>Job title or role: Community Development Manager</b>
<b>Address: Community Services, Development Department Belfast City Council, The Cecil Ward Building, 4-10 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BP</b>
<b>Telephone: 02890 320202 ext 3525</b>
<b>Email: <a href="mailto:taggartc@BelfastCity.gov.uk">taggartc@BelfastCity.gov.uk</a></b>
<b><i>Are you responding as an individual? No</i></b>
<b><i>If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please give the name of the organisation, a brief account of its membership and how the views of your colleagues were gathered.</i></b> <b>Belfast City Council. The consultation document was considered at a special briefing session with Members on 1 September 2010. Meetings were also held with officers to address the draft policy and questions in more detail. Recommendations were passed to the Development Committee for further comment and ratification.</b>
<b>OUR RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS:</b>
<b>3. Vision for a new programme</b>
<b>1. We would suggest that the draft text does not represent a clear vision statement. (It is actually a mission statement.) The vision for the Regional Infrastructure Programme (RIP) should instead present a straightforward (and short) description of the future possibilities engendered by a successful RIP programme.</b>
<b>2. Such a statement, we believe, should make reference to the government’s wider understanding of successful community development goals and the commitment to enhanced quality of life in communities across the region. We believe this would provide a much sharper focus for the mission of the RIP and its associated objectives.</b>

3. We would suggest that in order to fully articulate such a vision the programme should be viewed within the context of DSD's wider review of its Urban Regeneration and Community Development framework. We note that the quoted timescales for the RIP review do not appear to lend themselves to this approach and would suggest that such an alignment be considered.
4. Belfast City Council is currently developing its own strategy for community development work. We are keen to ensure that our strategy fully aligns with DSD's Urban Regeneration/Community Development framework review. It will be important for us that the vision for the RIP is likewise aligned to ensure that its relationship with local government is clear.
5. A more appropriate name for the programme might be Regional Infrastructure Support Programme – to identify that the programme is not the actual regional infrastructure but is a support service for the infrastructure.

#### 4. Taking stock

1. The council notes the important role that regional infrastructure organisations have played over the past twenty years. And we agree that there are skills and services required by the sector which are more efficiently and effectively delivered by organisations operating at the larger regional level. Economies of scale alone allow for greater efficiencies.
2. Page 6 makes reference to general observations about the impact of the VCS. However, we are surprised at the paucity of evaluation data that has been made available on the RIP as part of this consultation. It would have been helpful to describe the actual impact (or even the accumulated outputs) of the programme over the past twenty years. It's noted on page 7 that DSD have been gathering such evidence over the past three years. Access to this evidence would have allowed consultees to make a much more informed response to the consultation. As it stands, there is little data from which to gauge the success or otherwise of the RIP.

3. We would suggest that the two 'strengths' listed in the simple SWOT analysis (page 10) do not do justice to the programme. For example, strengths might also include the accumulation of skills, knowledge and expertise contained within these organisations which would not be available otherwise. It might also include the existence of a network linking public bodies to VCS organisations right across Northern Ireland.
4. Weaknesses: Many of the weaknesses described are not necessarily weaknesses of the programme. Instead they actually describe weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation model that has, to date, been applied to the programme. Therefore many of the weakness statements are suppositions in the absence of objective data, (eg. 'unclear outcomes', 'no overall map of need', 'unclear as to whether the VCS is getting proper support', etc.). We would suggest that a proper evaluation of the programme should be carried out before weaknesses can be identified and that this objective data be used to inform a new programme.
5. We would suggest that the 'Opportunities' include a proper examination of external changes that can contribute to a better, more effective programme. While not means exhaustive these could include:
  - The opportunity to align with DSD review of urban regeneration/community development frameworks
  - DSD's review of its advice and information strategy
  - The review of DSD's Community Support Programme – many aspects of which overlap with the aims of the RIP
  - The review of public administration - particularly the transfer of community development functions to local government. While the RPA is on hold there continues to be work at local government level – on community development, local area working, etc which would present opportunities for the programme
  - Recent theory and practice on the role and support of 'infrastructure' and how this could contribute to the programme – for example, the contribution of CFNI/CENI's social assets research project or Belfast City Council Strategic Neighbourhood Action Programme – particularly its work on measuring the level of service capacity at the local area level.

- **The challenge to the local VCS faced with reduced budgets and the drive for greater efficiencies and rationalisation. While this is in many ways a threat to the sector - it can also be considered as an opportunity for the programme.**

#### **5. Additional issues**

1. **There are a number of additional issues that need to be addressed while ‘taking stock’ of the programme. These include:**
  - **The equality impact of any re-organised programme. Will the changes have a detrimental effect on Section 75 groups?**
  - **What are the current needs of the sector? Are the current capacity needs of the sector understood? Are there gaps? Is there over provision? Are these geographical or thematic?**
  - **How does the programme directly impact on the quality of life of communities? Any analysis of its strengths and weaknesses should directly link its work with the sector right through to front line service delivery and the success of such delivery in contributing to quality of life.**
  - **The contribution to the review of the Taskforce report on resourcing the Voluntary and Community Sector.**

#### **6. Covering the region**

1. **While Section C examines the challenge to the RIP organisations in providing coverage to the entire VCS in Northern Ireland, we would suggest that this is neither entirely practical or desirable. Instead the programme should focus its resources based on the priorities and needs of the sector. This would require a more detailed understanding of the existing VCS infrastructure (in particular its weaknesses) and the sector’s ability to respond to the needs of communities across the region. As noted previously, for such an approach to work the RIP would need to be firmly embedded within shared government goals for community development.**

2. We would note the reference to sub-regional and local council level delivery. There is no reference to the role of local councils in contributing to community development goals through, for example, DSD's Community Support Programme (CSP). There is an opportunity here to align the infrastructure support provided by local councils with that of the RIP.

#### **7 & 8. Key functions of the new programme**

1. The definitions of 'generic' and 'thematic' functions are not clear and would need further explanation. The consultation document does not explain the advantages to the programme or the sector of making the division.
2. We would note that many of the generic functions listed overlap with other government strategies and programmes. For example government thinking on advice, information and volunteering are all influenced by other strategies. We believe it would be important to consider whether there is a risk of duplication of approaches or conversely, opportunities for joined up thinking on this generic work.
3. There is a continuing challenge to the voluntary and community sector to be able to demonstrate the impact of resource investment: this challenge is ever more relevant in the current financial climate. There is however no reference to sector support needs in relation to facilitating a new outcomes culture or for the related operational skills support, processes and tools.

#### **9. Outcomes**

1. While we welcome the emphasis of the evaluation on outcomes we would suggest that such a model is seriously flawed if the evaluation model does not have a focus on the impact of the programme's activities. This connects back to our earlier comment that the programme should have a much stronger vision of the future possibilities it is trying to engender.

2. We would suggest that the ultimate aim of the programme is to support organisations in impacting on quality of life of communities across the region. Unless there is a clear understanding of this impact then the programme will be challenged on its effectiveness. Measuring impact is of course much more difficult than measuring outcomes but there is certainly scope to begin to address this challenge with a revised programme.
3. We would agree with the importance of participating organisations participating in monitoring and evaluation and in the creation of an intelligence base. We would note however, that in measuring impact, wider societal measures would play a part in any evaluation model – and may be beyond the scope of the participants.

#### 10. PROGRAMME CRITERIA

1. While we agree with most of the draft criteria proposed in the consultation document we would suggest that potential participants in the programme should not be solely responsible for the identification and targeting of need.
2. As previously noted, if there is a clear understanding of the needs of the sector – based on its ability to deliver service required by communities, then the programme should be able to construct a ‘menu’ of infrastructure support needs. As part of the criteria of the programme, eligible organisations should demonstrate their ability to deliver these support needs to client organisations.

#### 11. Options for a new approach

1. Option A – Renew and Enhance: While creating least disruption we believe this option would perpetuate the current weaknesses in the programme and would not be an effective or efficient approach.
2. Option B – Renew and supplement: We believe this would exacerbate the current weaknesses in the programme and would not address the long term problems around clarity of focus and lack of evidence about the impact of the programme.



**3. Option C – Clean sheet and development period: This would have serious implications for those organisations currently supported by the programme and would threaten to undermine the significant support that many of them deliver to the CVS. At a time of uncertainty within the sector, we would suggest that the continued existence of support organisations is vital. However, we would suggest that there are fundamental flaws at the heart of the programme and that a fundamental development period is required.**

**12. Suggestions for a new programme**

- 1. We would suggest that an alternative option should be considered - 'Option D'. This would take the best aspects of option A and option C. In this option, existing groups would be funded under current arrangements for a pre-defined period of time. During this period, a comprehensive review would take place and a new structure created. This would allow time for participating organisations to prepare for any new demands from the programmes. It would also allow time for parallel policy developments across Government to inform the review (including, for example, the CSR and DSD' review of urban regeneration and community development framework)."**

**East Belfast Neighbourhood Office Lease**

The Committee was reminded that the East Belfast Neighbourhood Office had been established by the Council in order to address the absence of Council Community Centre provision in the Pottinger Electoral Area and to stimulate community development activity.

The Community Development Manager explained that the office, which was situated on the Beersbridge Road, was leased currently on a month to month basis and was staffed by a Community Development Worker. As a consequence of limited passing footfall and the need to close the premises when the officer was away on business, usage of the premises had been low. The Community Development Worker had, however, worked across the area and had contributed to an increase in the number and the capacity of the voluntary community organisations which had been established. Those included the Willowfield Parish Community Association, Lower Woodstock Community Association, Lower Castlereagh Community Group and Mountpottinger Presbyterian Youth Outreach.

She explained further that the Council had agreed to the restructuring of Community Services which would see the creation of specific Units to support community facilities and area development. Within that new structure, staff had been allocated accommodation in line with their new duties and within community centre premises. That new approach meant that there was no further service need for the East Belfast Neighbourhood Office premises. Those groups which regularly used the office could be accommodated within the Council's Dee Street Community Centre. In addition,

the community development work in support of the Pottinger Electoral area would be subsumed into the role of the Community Development Officer within the East Area Support Unit. Accordingly, it was recommended that the Council ends the lease for the East Belfast Neighbourhood Office.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

### **Markets Update**

#### **Unit Lettings at Smithfield Market**

In accordance with the authority delegated to him, it was reported that the Director had let the following units at Smithfield Market:

- Unit 1 – Desmond McKenna, 2 Mulroy Park, Belfast, at a cost of £240 per month for the purposes of retailing watch repairs and sales; and
- Unit 30/31 – Alan Copeland, 12 Pear Tree Hill, Dundonald, at a cost of £1,000 per month for retailing personalised products.

Noted.

#### **Sunday Market Review – St. George's Market**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th May, it had granted approval to the opening of a Sunday Market in St. George's on a three month trial basis which would end on 26th September.

The Head of Economic Initiatives reported that, although having started at a traditionally quiet period for markets in Northern Ireland due to summer holidays and other summer events held throughout the region, the market had performed comparatively well. She then highlighted the following points:

- A recent footfall count had shown that an average of 2,000 people visited each Sunday Market;
- The stalls allocated each Sunday had been above the required number to cover operational costs, with an average weekly income of £2,000;
- The Sunday traders believed that the Sunday visitors and customers were mainly new clients, including a large turnout of tourists, to the market;
- The new Sunday Market had not had any effect on the current customer/visitor numbers at the Friday or Saturday markets;
- As part of an independent survey recently undertaken at the Sunday Market, the average spend at the market had been £19.54 and 86% of those visiting had felt it was important for the Sunday Market to continue; and

- The Traders' representatives had also carried out a survey, the results of which had shown that the traders had had concerns about the lack of advertising for the Sunday Market; the majority of traders had been content with the services which had been provided; and had highlighted that live music had created a good atmosphere and had been a vital component in the success of the Sunday Market.

Accordingly, it was recommended that the Committee continue to support a Sunday Market in St. George's for a further six months' trial period from October, 2010 till March, 2011 at the current opening hours of 10.00 a.m. till 4.00 p.m.

During discussion, several Members expressed the view that, whilst they were supportive of the extension to the trial period for the opening of the Sunday Market, it should be for a shorter time period. The Members accepted also the need to promote the opening of the Sunday Market more proactively and have it included in more of the Council's literature and the wider tourism industry package.

#### **Proposal**

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor M. Browne,  
Seconded by Councillor Mullaghan,

That the Committee agrees to the opening of a Sunday Market in St. George's for a further six month trial basis from October, 2010 till March, 2011 during the hours of 10.00 a.m. till 4.00 p.m.

On a vote by show of hands five Members voted for the proposal and six against and it was accordingly declared lost.

#### **Further Proposal**

Moved by Councillor J. Rodgers,  
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Humphrey),

That the Committee agrees to extend the opening of a Sunday Market in St. George's for a further four month trial basis from October, 2010 till the end of January, 2011 and that a further report on the trial period be submitted to the Committee's meeting in January, 2011.

On a vote by show of hands ten Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was accordingly declared carried.

### **Markets Policy Update**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th June, it had agreed to the formulation of a Belfast City Council Markets Policy. Officers from the Legal Services Section had been in consultation with staff from other Council Departments and had drafted a policy document which required further development, after which, it would be submitted to the Committee for its consideration.

Noted.

### **MIPIM 2011**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“Relevant Background Information**

**MIPIM is the largest real estate exhibition in Europe. It takes place in March each year in Cannes, France and generally attracts up to 20,000 delegates. Since 2000, various partners from Belfast have participated in the event and have contributed towards the costs of a joint stand in the exhibition area.**

**At MIPIM 2010, Belfast City Council was represented on a partner stand with Derry City Council, Ilex (the Urban Regeneration Company (URC) in the city, Lisburn City Council and the Department for Social Development (DSD). A range of private sector partners were also involved and representatives from the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) attended for the first time.**

**Members will be aware that, at the Development Committee of 9 June 2010, a budget of up to £20,000 towards participation in MIPIM 2011 was approved. Members also approved the request from SIB that they be formally supported by the Council to lead on MIPIM 2011. In addition, Members requested that officers investigate the financial implications of a Belfast-only stand at MIPIM 2011 and report back on this at a future Committee meeting.**

#### **Key Issues**

**Following the 2010 MIPIM event, a feedback meeting was organised with participating organisations. This took place on 23 June, 2010. Organisations in attendance included DSD, Derry City Council, Lisburn City Council, Patton Group and Carvill Group. Although not in attendance, representatives from Delap and Waller, Ilex and the SIB also forwarded their comments for note.**

**The comments made included the following:**

- Private sector partners confirmed that they had benefited from participation – strong leads had been generated and they were now following up on these. They would be keen to be involved in MIPIM 2011**

- Participants welcomed the development and preparatory work undertaken by Belfast City Council – a range of pre-MIPIM meetings had ensured that participants were in a position to draw maximum benefit from their involvement in the event
- Events at the stand presented a cost-effective mechanism of promoting key projects. Looking to next year's event, it may be useful to consider whether high profile political figures could be invited as a 'draw' to highlight specific schemes
- Need for partners to be aware of what each other is 'selling' and need to define and refine our message: there was a lot on offer – need to consider how this can be presented
- Partners were entirely supportive of the wider partnership approach (i.e. not just Belfast) and felt that this allowed them to promote a wider range of schemes and initiatives and enhanced the overall offering.

Comments were also presented with regard to logistical and programming issues and these will be fed through to future planning for next year's event.

In 2011, the UK is the country of honour at MIPIM. This means that the UK property market will be highlighted, both through the exhibition and the conference programme. There is an opportunity to build on this enhanced profile, particularly if Belfast is to maintain a link with the city of Derry, given that they are to be UK capital of culture in 2013.

We understand that the city of Dublin is also likely to be represented at MIPIM this year. This is the first time in a number of years that there has been representation by Dublin at the event.

Initial discussions with our partners in Lisburn and Derry City Council have indicated that they intend to invite their Committee Chair to attend the event. It is recommended that The Chair of the Development Committee be invited to participate in MIPIM 2011.

With regard to the request to explore the financial implications of a Belfast-only stand, a number of options are presented below.

These include:

- Option 1: Belfast-only stand
- Option 2: Collaborative stand, based on last year's event
- Option 3: Involvement in Showcase UK stand – a wider partnership stand located near the existing exhibition location.

**Option 1: Belfast-only stand**

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated Cost</u></b>	<b><u>Note</u></b>
Stand and multimedia re-design and production	£50,000	Stand would need to be re-done, given that previous graphics were based on partnership
Hire of exhibition space	£15,000	Set cost
Event at the stand	£6,000	Based on one event; cost includes invitations
Hospitality	£500	On Stand
Sub-total	£71,500	

This would focus on Belfast-only projects, as was the case at previous events, prior to 2010.

However, given the partners' comments at the feedback meeting, it is highly unlikely that we could anticipate any match-funding from private sector partners, were we to choose this option. Those Belfast-based companies with a national presence would be likely to join the London stand, which is currently promoting its participant packages to would-be partners. Equally, DSD has indicated its preference for a wider partnership approach and would be likely to fund us on that basis only. We could not expect public sector contributions from Ilex, Derry City Council or Lisburn City Council.

This financial commitment required exceeds the provisional budget of up to £20,000 approved by the Committee for MIPIM 2011.

**Option 2: Collaborative stand, based on last year's event**

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated Cost</u></b>	<b><u>Note</u></b>
Stand and multimedia updating and production	£35,000	Need for some updating, particularly multi-media, to reflect new projects and potentially new partners
Hire of exhibition space	£15,000	This cost has already been incurred, and it was based on a surplus from last year's income. Partners agreed that this could be rolled forward to this year.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>	<u>Note</u>
Events at the stand	£17,000	Based on three events, one each day; cost includes invitations Estimate, based on last year's costs. These are additional delegate places that have to be purchased and that are offered to participants as part of the partner package
Delegate fees	£10,000	
Hospitality	£500	On Stand
Sub-total	£77,500	
Total minus hire of exhibition space (cost already incurred)	£62,500	

Lisburn and Derry City Councils have both confirmed that they have had their budgets for MIPIM 2011 approved by their respective committees. The private sector partners represented at last year's event have indicated that a collaborative presence is their preferred approach and they have provisionally committed to attending MIPIM 2011 if it proceeds on this basis. No approach for support has yet been made to DSD but they too have indicated their support for a joint presence. SIB is proposing a Northern Ireland approach if they are to be involved.

If all of these partners were to come forward with financial contributions, it is likely that up to £50,000 of external finance could be raised towards the event. This would mean that the Belfast commitment could be less than £20,000.

**Option 3: Involvement in Showcase UK stand – a wider partnership stand located near the existing exhibition location**

We have been offered an opportunity to get involved in a Showcase UK stand at MIPIM 2011.

This is a collective stand involving a range of public and private sector partners based in UK. For a financial contribution of £9,800, Belfast City Council could avail of:

- Four delegate places at MIPIM 2011
- Council logo on stand
- One graphic panel to cover Council activity
- 60 second loop presentation on stand, as part of the multimedia package
- Opportunity to display literature on the stand.

While this would be a relatively cost-effective method of participation in MIPIM 2011, the profile of the Council would be significantly less than with options 1 and 2. Equally, at this stage, it is not clear from the organisers what other partners will be involved in the stand.

#### Resource Implications

Option 1 would cost Belfast City Council up to £71,500  
Option 2 would cost Belfast City Council up to £20,000  
Option 3 would cost Belfast City Council £9,800

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that;

- The Committee agree to support Option 2: collaborative presence at MIPIM 2011 and
- That the Chair of Development Committee be invited to participate in MIPIM 2011.

#### Decision Tracking

Further to participation at MIPIM 2011 a report on outputs will be presented to Committee.

Time frame: May 2011

Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

#### Key to Abbreviations

DSD – Department for Social Development  
SIB – Strategic Investment Board  
URC – Urban Regeneration Company”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

#### QUESTOR Centre Membership

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### “Relevant Background Information

Established in 1989 at Queen's University Belfast, the QUESTOR Centre is Europe's only Industry University Co-operative Research Centre (I/UCRC). The I/UCRC concept is a highly successful model developed by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the United States where more than 30 such centres have been operating successfully for more than 20 years. QUESTOR has been formally linked to the NSF Programme since its formation in 1989.



The QUESTOR Centre provides member companies and organisations with a world class environmental research programme focussed on their specific needs. In addition the Centre has developed a unique model for the transfer of technology and knowledge to member organisations and for the commercial exploitation of research conducted. The centre serves a select membership made up of environmental regulators and environmentally responsible companies, ranging in size from large multi-national corporations through to forward looking Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). Members include BP, Exxon Mobil, Chevron North Sea Limited, Bombardier, Coca Cola Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Water and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

The Members vote on project proposals at Industry Advisory Board (IAB) meetings which are held twice yearly. Typically there are in the region of 14-15 funding proposals submitted at each IAB Meeting and, depending on funding, approximately 8 of these are approved for funding.

QUESTOR have developed their work along the lines of 4 priority areas and have established associated research clusters in each of these areas:

- Waste Management and Remediation;
- Environmental Monitoring;
- Water and wastewater treatment; and,
- Renewable energy technologies.

Belfast City Council officers have been involved in the establishment of and are currently represented on both the Waste Management and Remediation and the Renewable Energy clusters.

As part of Council's environmental industries action plan developed in 2007, Belfast City Council agreed to take an introductory two-year trial Associate Membership (2008 and 2009) of QUESTOR. As an Associate Member, Council is currently represented on QUESTOR's Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) and can have a direct influence in determining the strategic direction of the annual research programme. The IAB votes on and selects all research proposals and monitors progress on active research projects. Additionally, the Council has access to the research conducted and, on completion, receives recommendations for technology transfer and commercial exploitation opportunities. Finally, the Associate Membership enables the Council to represent the interests of small businesses from within Belfast as the current level of SME membership of £5,000 has proven to be quite prohibitive for small businesses. This will allow the SME sector to gain access through Belfast City Council's Associate Membership to the new technologies, knowledge and prototypes that are developed as part of the research programme.

Through the two-year trial membership, representatives from both Economic Development and Waste Management have been developing both our understanding of the QUESTOR process and relationships with the academic and industrial partners from within the QUESTOR membership. In both November 2007 and May 2010, Council hosted the IAB meeting in City Hall. Council have also been approached in order to champion a project at the IAB meeting in November 2010 concerning the development of new technologies aimed at promoting sustainable renewable energy solutions which is a large and growing global market. Additionally, officers have engaged with businesses from within the environmental sector in order to facilitate their introduction to the (Research and Development) R&D capabilities within the QUESTOR Centre.

### Key Issues

It is envisaged that the world market for low carbon and environmental goods and services will be in the region of £3,000billion this year and growing by an estimated 5% year on year despite the impacts of the recession. In Northern Ireland, the sector is worth £3.3billion with 1,620 businesses employing 30,600 people. It is further anticipated that the promotion of environmental technologies and the development of renewable energy will assist with addressing the impacts of the economic downturn.

QUESTOR is at the leading edge of research into these technologies and provides access to the research undertaken to their member companies. This will ensure that relevant Council sections have access to the latest research on waste management and remediation, pollution control and renewable energy but will also enable officers to play an advocacy role on behalf of Belfast based SMEs and facilitate linkages into the R&D process.

At present only 1% of Northern Ireland's energy usage is provided for by indigenous renewable sources with the other 99% being imported. By 2020 at least 15% of the total UK energy consumption must come from renewable sources. QUESTOR has been successful in the early stages of a competitive process to establish a competence centre for sustainable energy. Invest Northern Ireland, who administer the programme, have awarded QUESTOR early stage funding for the project definition stage and the development of a business plan for the proposed Centre. The full proposal, if funded, could lead to an investment of up to £10million over a 5 year period into research into renewable energy technologies.

The Director of QUESTOR has initiated discussions with officers in relation to the establishment of this centre and has indicated a desire not only to locate the proposed centre in Belfast, but also to engage with the Council in relation to the potential for locating the Centre on the North Foreshore site. This would be hugely significant in terms of the potential to create and sustain high value employment opportunities in emerging technologies in Belfast. Further, the centre will be firmly focused on research with proposals requiring a compelling commercialisation plan which in turn could create new business ventures.

#### Resource Implications

Membership would cost £10,000 for a further year.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee approves a further year's membership for the QUESTOR centre and that officers continue to sit on QUESTOR's IAB. This will enable officers the opportunity to continue championing project proposals at the IAB meeting and to assist QUESTOR with the development of the proposal for the Competence Centre in Sustainable Energies.

#### Decision Tracking

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

Time frame: September 2011      Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

#### Key Abbreviations

I/UCRC – Industry University Co-operative Research Centre  
SME – Small to Medium Sized Enterprise  
NSF – National Science Foundation  
QUB – Queen's University Belfast  
IAB – Industrial Advisory Board  
R&D – Research and Development"

Moved by Councillor Rodway,  
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Humphrey),

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendation and approve a further year's membership for the QUESTOR Centre and that Council officers continue to sit on its Industrial Advisory Board.

**Amendment**

Moved by Councillor Stoker,  
Seconded by Councillor Rodgers,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of membership of the QUESTOR Centre for a period of one month to enable a further report to be submitted providing information on the benefits to the Council; the information which was disseminated to Small to Medium Sized Enterprises; and what benefits were experienced by Small to Medium Sized Enterprises located in the City.

On a vote by show of hands ten Members voted for the amendment and three against and it was accordingly declared carried.

The amendment was thereupon put as the substantive motion when ten Members voted for and three against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**Enterprising Britain – Northern Ireland  
Regional Award Winners**

The Committee was advised that the Council had been declared as the winner of the Northern Ireland heat of Enterprising Britain 2010, which was a nationwide competition delivered locally by Invest Northern Ireland. The competition recognised and rewarded the town, city, place or area which was successfully creating jobs, boosting local business and nurturing entrepreneurial talent as the United Kingdom emerged from the recession.

The Director reported that the Council's award was for work in improving employability and developing business competitiveness through a range of business programmes and events as well as employment initiatives. Twelve regional winners had been identified from across the United Kingdom and those had now been shortlisted to six. The Belfast submission was amongst those which had been shortlisted. The next stage in the process was that all those who had been shortlisted would be required to make a presentation to a panel of experts in London in late September. The overall winner would be announced in October and would progress to the European Enterprise Awards later in the year. The organisers had invited up to five people to attend the presentation session. At that time, presenters would be requested to provide greater detail on the submission, including partnerships linkages with wider economic development activity and funding issues.

In order to make a robust presentation, it was recommended that up to two officers from the Council be authorized to attend the event and, given the strong partnership elements of the bid, it might be appropriate also to invite up to three key representatives from a number of the partner agencies involved in the submission.

Examples of the types of initiatives which the judges felt were particularly innovative and effective included:

- The "My Wok Rules!" competition, whereby teams of four students would undergo intensive business training before being selected to take over the running of the "Oodles Loves Noodles" restaurant on Botanic Avenue for a day during February, 2011;

- “Spinning the Wheel”, which required the use of the Belfast Wheel, where budding entrepreneurs had been matched with business advisors. They had been given the time that one rotation of the wheel had taken in order to discuss their business idea and find out what course of action they should take to bring it to fruition; and
- The HARTE “Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment” Programme – through that initiative the Council had taken almost two hundred unemployed people and gave them specialised training on customer service, bar-tending, barista skills and cheffing skills to help them find employment in the hospitality and retail sector.

A range of new business development ideas were commencing in Autumn, 2010 and those were being promoted through City Matters as well as through targeted email campaigns and other promotional initiatives.

The total cost for a maximum of five people attending the presentation in London was approximately £1,000.

The Committee approved the attendance at the presentation in London of two officers and three representatives from key partner organizations.

**Northern Ireland Local Economic Development Forum and the  
Northern Ireland Local Government Association  
Economic Development Working Group**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which outlined the work of the Local Economic Development Forum and its association with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association’s Economic Development Working Group.

**Royal Exchange Regeneration Project –  
Deramore Property Group**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on the 21st June, representatives of the Deramore Property Group had provided a presentation on their plans for 41/51 Royal Avenue. The Group had submitted a planning application to re-develop their premises which was currently going through the consultation process. The planning application sought to provide 20,000 square foot of retail floor space over the ground and three upper floors. The intention was to provide accommodation for one multiple operator similar to the New Look operation in Donegall Place where a completely new shop had been built behind the original front façade. The Deramore Property Group’s property had a double frontage on Royal Avenue and Rosemary Street and had been planned to complement any future Royal Exchange Scheme.

At the aforementioned meeting, the Group had advised the Members that it was seeking to deliver local investment in Belfast City Centre by obtaining support for the removal of 41/51 Royal Avenue from the Royal Exchange Masterplan. The Department for Social Development would not at this stage confirm whether or not the premises would be excluded from the overall Development Scheme. The Group’s view was that the scheme would prevent other developments being progressed due to the uncertainty as to when the scheme would be delivered and that was further evidenced by the high level of vacant properties in the area.

Following the presentation and discussion with representatives of Deramore Property Group on 21st June, the Committee had agreed:

- (i) that the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman (or their nominees), together with one representative from each of the other Party Groupings on the Council, facilitate a meeting between representatives of the Royal Exchange (Belfast) Limited, the Consortium which would be undertaking the Royal Exchange Regeneration project, and the Deramore Property Group in order to ascertain whether a solution could be arrived at which would facilitate all parties; and
- (ii) that a further letter be forwarded to the Minister for Social Development requesting that he meet with an All-Party Deputation from the Council to discuss the Royal Exchange Scheme.

The Head of Economic Initiatives reported that, subsequently, the Deramore Property Group had held separate meetings with the Director of the Belfast Regeneration Office and a representative of Ewarts Plc, which were part of the development consortium for the Royal Exchange Scheme. Neither meeting had resulted in Deramore securing the exclusion of their premises from the scheme, the planning application for which was due for submission by 31st October and at which point the development boundary would be in the public domain. In addition, a further letter had been forwarded to the Minister and a meeting had been arranged for 30th September. That meeting would afford Members the opportunity to raise with the Minister Deramore's concerns regarding their own premises and how the development agreement between the Department for Social Development and the Royal Exchange (Belfast) Limited was impacting on other businesses in that part of the City Centre.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **Conference Subvention**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **"Relevant Background Information**

##### **Conference Subvention**

**Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has a Conference Subvention policy which is utilised to secure and support national and international conferences to Belfast and to build the City's profile as a conference destination. It was agreed at Development Committee of 10 March 2010 that the existing scheme would close on 31 May 2010 and that current commitments under this scheme would be honoured.**

**Members will also be aware that officers have been liaising with Northern Ireland Tourism Board (NITB) and Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) to develop a new Conference Subvention Scheme for Belfast.**

Aligned to priorities in the draft Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework, NITB, BVCB and Belfast City Council have developed a new Conference Subvention Scheme with a total funding budget of £435,000 over three years. Belfast City Council will contribute £70,000 per annum and NITB will contribute £75,000 per annum. Funding of £70,000 is available in the current 2010/2011 Tourism, Culture and Arts budget and additional details of the new subvention scheme are in Appendix 1.

The Conference Subvention Scheme has been revised and the main objectives are;

- To raise the profile of Belfast and Northern Ireland as a leading business and conference destination
- To consolidate existing investment in Belfast and Northern Ireland hotel and conference infrastructure
- To increase the contribution of Business and Conference Tourism to Belfast and Northern Ireland economy
- To change the international perception of Belfast and Northern Ireland
- To encourage inward investment to Belfast and Northern Ireland
- To grow the number of leisure visitors by encouraging conferences to run partner and extender programmes
- To develop a partnership approach to promoting Northern Ireland as a business and conference destination

Belfast City Council commissioned a Report on a new Conference Subvention Scheme for Belfast in November 2008. Prepared by Sally Greenhill Associates, this report outlines that all major cities throughout the UK operate subvention schemes. For example, Birmingham - £650,000 per annum, Manchester - £6million over 3 years, Glasgow – £1 million and Liverpool, Blackpool, Bournemouth and Brighton all have pots of £1million each. The majority of subvention schemes are funded by respective City Councils.

In terms of total impact of a new Conference Subvention Scheme for the city, it is estimated that an International Association Delegate spends £386.06 per day and a multi-day Domestic Association spends £488.94 per day. In 2003/4 NITB established a similar scheme with the International Fund for Ireland worth £663,000 over 3 years. The total value of conferences secured with this fund was £6.8million in economic benefit producing a return on subvention funding of over 12:1. It is estimated that this new scheme will produce similar economic benefits to the City.

## Key Issues

### Criteria

The main eligibility criteria for Conference Subvention are summarised below;

- The conference should be based in Belfast and include use of overnight accommodation in the Belfast area.
- The conference should preferably have a minimum of 300 out of state delegates and accompanying partners staying for two nights in the Belfast area. However a conference with a smaller number of out of state delegates staying for multiple nights will be considered if there is evidence that this conference will lead to a larger associated conference coming to Belfast within the next 8 years. The level of subvention being sought against the potential economic benefit will be taken into consideration
- The conference should have an impact on and/or a potential for local businesses and organisations by providing opportunities for developing industry/sector links or to showcase local products, cultural, sporting or intellectual fields.
- The subject areas of the conference should relate to local economic and tourism strategies or specific priority areas for Belfast or Northern Ireland.
- The event, by locating in Belfast should enhance the areas international profile and as such the prestige value of the event will be taken into account i.e. media coverage, speaker profile
- Conferences must demonstrate strict financial project management, cash flows and projected income and expenditure account.

### Delivery

NITB, BVCB and Belfast City Council have assessed the options for delivery of the new scheme and agreed that the most appropriate vehicle is BVCB however, a separate panel including representatives from NITB and Belfast City Council will approve all applications. Quarterly reports will be presented to Development Committee on progress of the scheme and BVCB will be required to administer the scheme within current administrative budgets. BVCB will establish clear governance arrangements to be agreed by NITB and BCC to ensure transparent and effective delivery of the scheme on behalf of both funders.



Whilst approaches were made to Invest Northern Ireland to contribute to the scheme, they have agreed to consider individual requests to support subvention against those conferences that best support the economic priorities for Northern Ireland as opposed to contributing to the wider pot. This position will be reviewed once the scheme is fully established.

#### Resource Implications

Funding of £70,000 is available in the current 2010/2011 Tourism Culture and Arts Budget and commitment of £70,000 in 2011/2012 and £70,000 in 2012/2013.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee approves:

- the new Conference Subvention Scheme

#### Decision Tracking

##### Timeline

- A New Conference Subvention Scheme is to be in operation by October 2010
- BVCB to produce quarterly reports

Timeframe: October 2010    Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

#### Key to Abbreviations

BVCB    Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau  
NITB    Northern Ireland Tourist Board

#### Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Additional details of the new subvention scheme

Appendix 1

#### Objectives of the Scheme:

- To raise the profile of Belfast and Northern Ireland as a leading business and conference destination
- To consolidate existing investment in Belfast and Northern Ireland hotel and conference infrastructure
- To increase the contribution of Business and Conference Tourism to Belfast and Northern Ireland economy

- To change the international perception of Belfast and Northern Ireland
- To encourage inward investment to Belfast and Northern Ireland
- To grow the number of leisure visitors by encouraging conferences to run partner and extender programmes
- To develop a partnership approach to promoting Northern Ireland as a business and conference destination

**Criteria for eligibility:**

- The conference should be based in Belfast and include use of overnight accommodation in the Belfast area.
- The conference should preferably have a minimum of 300 out of state delegates and accompanying partners staying for two nights in the Belfast area. However a conference with a smaller number of out of state delegates staying for multiple nights will be considered if it relates to the Belfast Integrated Tourism Strategy or if there is evidence that this conference will lead to a larger associated conference coming to Belfast within the next 8 years. The level of subvention being sought against the potential economic benefit will be taken into consideration
- Demonstrate that the conference would not come to Belfast or Northern Ireland unless support is provided
- The conference should demonstrate that it will provide economic benefit to or be likely to have a positive impact on the local economy.
- The applicant should demonstrate that it is not-for-profit organisation.
- The conference should have an impact on and/or a potential for local businesses and organisations by providing opportunities for developing industry/sector links or to showcase local products, cultural, sporting or intellectual fields.
- The subject areas of the conference should relate to local economic and tourism strategies or specific priority areas for Belfast or Northern Ireland.
- The event, by locating in Belfast should enhance the areas international profile and as such the prestige value of the event will be taken into account i.e. media coverage, high profile speakers

- As part of the agreement in accepting subvention Belfast City Council requires that if required, our tourism researchers will be allowed to interview the conference organiser and a sample of the conference delegates on the day(s) of the conference. This will allow the researchers to assess the economic value that the conference can contribute to tourism in Belfast and provide feedback on tourism products and services.
- A post conference report is required from the organiser to provide a further evaluation of the success and impact of this particular conference. This information is published in our 'Tourism facts and figures' each year.
- In addition the Belfast City Brand and NITB logo, are to be used on all literature / websites designed for the conference. The Brand guidelines can be found at [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/brand](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/brand) and the NITB logo at [www.nitb.com](http://www.nitb.com)
- An application for conference support cannot be considered without evidence of strict financial project management, cash flows and projected income and expenditure account.
- At the time of submission of the application form, subvention will not be made available if the conference is taking place/confirmed within the following 6 months period.

**Eligible Costs:**

The following costs will be deemed eligible for consideration for assistance;

- Certain eligible conference organisation costs e.g. venue costs.
- Pre conference marketing costs to ensure maximum delegate attendance.

**Non Eligible Costs:**

The following areas will not be considered eligible for assistance;

- Event Management Fees.
- Food, beverage and entertainment (conference organisers can be encouraged to approach Belfast City Council for civic receptions and other support)
- Loose fittings and fixtures i.e. items which can be used at future conferences.
- Retrospective support cannot be given for activity undertaken before application is approved and Letter of Offer received.

**Governance:**

Applications will be assessed against the Scheme criteria and only conferences deemed to most closely match the objectives of the Scheme will be considered for support.

The assessment panel, made up of representatives from NITB and Belfast City Council will approve all applications and make decisions on the percentage and timing of funding to be allocated. The panel will withhold 25% of funding until completion of a Post Project Evaluation by the conference organiser, whereupon the final funding will be released.

A Service Level agreement will be established between Belfast City Council and BVCB and NITB to identify roles and expectations between each of the organisations.”

The Committee approved the new Conference and Subvention Scheme.

**Updated Integrated Cultural Strategy**

The Committee considered the under noted report:

**“Relevant Background Information**

Members will be aware that at the Development Committee meeting held on 12 May 2010, Committee agreed the development of a new Integrated Cultural Strategy for Belfast 2011–2014 and a review of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit’s Multi-annual and Annual Funding schemes.

Work on the Integrated Cultural Strategy has commenced with baseline research and preliminary meetings with key stakeholders, including the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Multi-annually Funded (MAF) clients. Work on the review and assessment of the MAF and Annual Fund funding schemes is also underway, and a quotation to procure the services of an independent evaluator has been issued.

**Key Issues**

Approval is sought from the Committee to extend the completion date for the new Integrated Cultural Strategy from February to June 2011. This will enable the strategy to be fully aligned with the Council’s new Corporate Plan and optimise opportunities for culture and arts to meaningfully contribute to the strategic development of the city. In addition, the current workload of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit makes the development of a robust Integrated Cultural Strategy by February 2010 untenable.

An update on the development of the strategy, including baseline research and an outline draft strategy with aims, objectives and key performance indicators will be brought to Committee for consideration in January 2011. This information will form the basis for formal consultation.

#### Annual Funding

Approval is also sought to extend the current Integrated Cultural Strategy 2007–10. The criteria for assessing applications to Annual Funding which is drawn from the existing Integrated Cultural Strategy, would also remain the same for 2011–12.

Applications for Annual Funding for 2011–12 will open in October, with a closing date in November 2010.

#### Multi-annual Funding

It is also recommended that the current funding agreement for the existing MAF clients be extended until March 2012. As in previous years, the continuation of funding will be subject to receipt of a satisfactory monitoring report for 2010–11 and of a one-year plan, including programme and budget, for 2011–12. A list of the organisations currently funded through MAF has been circulated.

The assessment and review of MAF and Annual Funding over the past three years will be brought to Committee in January 2011.

#### Resource Implications

##### Financial

A budget of £35,000 has been included and approved within the Departmental estimates for 2010–11.

##### Human Resources

An independent evaluator will be appointed to carry out the review of the MAF and Annual Funding schemes. The remainder of the work will be covered within the work programme of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee approves;

1. the extension of the development of the new Integrated Cultural Strategy for Belfast 2011–2014 until June 2011;

2. **the extension of the current Integrated Cultural Strategy and associated funding criteria; and**
3. **the extension of the existing MAF funding agreements until March 2012.**

#### **Decision Tracking**

**The review of the Multi-annual and Annual Funding scheme and an update on the development of the new Integrated Cultural Strategy will be presented to the Committee in January 2011.**

**Timeframe: January 2011**

**Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney**

#### **Key Abbreviations**

##### **MAF – Multi-annual Funding”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

#### **Campaign for Tourism – One Voice One Team**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th May, it had approved the Council’s response to the draft Northern Ireland Tourism Strategy 2010 – 2020, which had been commissioned and led by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment. The vision for the strategy was to “create the new Northern Ireland experience and get it on everyone’s destination wishlist”. The overall target associated with that vision was to double the income earned from tourism by 2020. The new strategy reinforced, aligned and complemented the Draft Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 – 2014.

The Head of Economic Initiatives reported that, in order to support the strategy, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board had produced a booklet entitled “Campaigning for Tourism One Voice One Team”, which was due to be published at the beginning of September. The publication identified how the Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland 2010 – 2020 must be underpinned by the right resources and a new, shared approach adopted across the sector. In addition, it assessed the current total tourism profile, identified what that was and what tourism delivered today and what the future opportunities were. It focused also on key themes which needed collaborative support. In this regard, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board had requested that the Council endorse the publication.

The Committee agreed to note the receipt of the publication.

#### **Clare Tourism Conference**

The Committee was advised that the 21st National Clare Tourism Conference would be held in the Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, County Clare on 26th and 27th February. The theme of this year’s conference was “Achieving World Class Tourism”.

The event was being organised by the Clare Tourist Council, in conjunction with Clare County Council, and was open to tourism industry officials and members of local authorities, county enterprise boards, partnerships and all public and private bodies involved in the promotion of tourism in Ireland. The total cost of attending the conference was approximately £600 per delegate. The Council was advised that it had been represented at the conference in 2008 but had agreed not to be represented in previous years.

The Committee agreed that it not be represented at this year's Clare's Tourism Conference.

### **Belfast at Venice**

The Committee considered the under noted report:

#### **“Relevant Background Information**

**A number of Council Officers were approached by Ard Architects in association with PLACE, the Council supported design centre and Forum for Alternative Belfast (FAB) the City planning and design lobby group in June 2010 to consider supporting a city design promotion event due to take place on 27-30 October in Venice.**

**The event ‘Urban Promo’ is a high profile event attended by over 1000 key European architects and investors which brings together some of the most successful European Cities to both exhibit and discuss key regeneration projects and strategies now being delivered.**

**Due to connection with an Italian architecture lecturer at the University of Ulster the organisers have agreed to make Belfast the case study City providing an opportunity to showcase regeneration projects to date such as Falls and Grove Centres, refurbishment of existing buildings such as the Ulster Museum, Ulster Hall and City Hall as well as new community based projects such as Connswater Greenway, Gaeltacht Quarter and more commercial projects such as those at Victoria Square, Titanic Quarter and the Lyric and MAC theatres.**

**Ard Architects were informed that they were too late to meet the Committee cycle in June and while Committee could consider a proposal in August or September the Council could not give any guarantees of support. If they wished to book the Urban Promo event they would be doing so at their own risk.**

**Key Issues**

Ard Architects submitted a written proposal for support in August and also sought the Lord Mayors participation in the event. The Lord Mayors office has since declined the invitation. The following key points in terms of the submission include:

- (i) The group behind this have persuaded the Urban Promo organisers to use Belfast as a case study at a nil charge for Belfast; in effect contributing £38000 to the project. Urban Promo are now promoting the event with Belfast as centre piece.
- (ii) The exhibition is to consist of thirty A0 size panels featuring various projects include drawings, photographs and supporting text.
- (iii) A full day of the exhibition will be dedicated to speakers representing Belfast who will tell the story of regeneration in Belfast via the projects illustrated.
- (iv) Belfast speakers would then host a panel discussion on the conference theme which is 'Delivering projects in the current economic crisis with restricted government funding' using Belfast experiences but also hearing from other parts of Europe.
- (v) Besides the immediate City promotion impact a highly acclaimed academic journal urbanistica will feature Belfast in a number of articles highlighting various City projects. Both Belfast universities have contributed papers as well as other City organisations such as PLACE, FAB, Cathedral Quarter Steering Group and Gaeltacht Quarter.
- (vi) The final element of the project is a publication based on the materials and research created for the exhibition which will be a permanent asset in terms of telling part of the Belfast story in a highly graphic medium which can be used in the 2012 preparations or other documents such as a Belfast prospectus for investment.
- (vii) The organisers have sought support from a number of organisations and have received support in either cash or kind eg the event fee has been negotiated at nil cost; Ard Architects have committed to producing exhibition materials and are awaiting further responses from DSD, DRD and SIB subject to BCC's position. All those so far attending are funding their own travel and accommodation.



- (viii) **The British Council is contributing £4000 as this event is happening alongside the British Biennale Pavilion which is part of the Venice Biennale a major cultural event that takes place annually in Venice.**

#### **Resource Implications**

**The organisers would like Belfast City Council to:**

- **To provide a speaker and panel representative. The cost would be approximately £2160.00. (£300 flights, £480.00 for accommodation and £300 for subsistence for two officers)**
- **To contribute to the costs of the exhibition materials and conference installation and to the production of a final publication (£10,000).**

**Council has approximately £10000 in its 'Showcasing Belfast in Europe' budget which is currently unallocated and this event would meet the objectives of the European Unit's business plan in terms of showcasing Europe as endorsed by Committee. Our Eurocities network can also be used to promote Belfast in this event.**

**In the event of a shortfall in funding some aspects of the project will need to be curtailed.**

#### **Recommendations**

**It is recommended that Committee agree:**

- (i) **To approval to use the Showcasing Belfast in Europe budget to support this project**
- (ii) **Approve that two officers attend to speak on behalf of the Belfast projects as nominated by Director of Development."**

After discussion, the Committee agreed to approve the use of the Showcase in Belfast in Europe Budget to support the project and agreed that it be represented at the event by the Chairman (or his nominee), together with one officer.

### **Retail Northern Ireland Conference**

The Committee was advised that the above-mentioned conference was being held on 30th September in the Stormont Hotel, Belfast. It was reported that the event, which was being organised by the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce, would address a range of issues such as devolution, retailing forecasts, town centre shopping, funding and planning and would include both plenary sessions with keynote speakers and workshops.

The Head of Economic Initiatives reported that the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, in their capacity as Members of the Board of Belfast City Centre Management, had been invited to attend the conference, the cost of which would be £129 per person.

The Committee authorised the attendance of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman (or their nominees), together with one officer, at the Retail Northern Ireland Conference.

### **European Union Unit Update**

The Committee was reminded that delivering and participating in information seminars and support for business events were actions detailed within the European and Economic Development Unit's 2010-11 Business Plan, which had been approved by the Committee. Support had been provided already this year for two successful Council events which had encouraged entrepreneurship and promoted export marketing. Those events had been organised jointly by the Economic Development and European Units and had been well attended and the evaluations had demonstrated a demand for further support.

The Committee was informed that a request had been received to provide input into two external business events which were being led by the Sinn Féin Party, which had been working with a range of partners and businesses in North and West Belfast. Input at the events would entail presentations on business support and opportunities provided by the Council's European, Economic and Procurement Units, with the European Unit further supporting the event by bringing in speakers from Invest Northern Ireland and the Belfast Metropolitan College. Details of the events were as follows:-

#### **Small Business Information Seminar**

Date: 17th September, 2010, 9.30 a.m. – 1.30 a.m.  
Venue: Balmoral Hotel  
Event supported by the West Belfast Partnership Board

#### **Small Business Information Seminar**

Date: 15th October, 2010, 1.00 p.m. – 3.00 p.m.  
Venue: NICVA premises  
Event supported by the North Belfast Partnership Board

The Committee approved the involvement of staff from the Council's European, Economic and Procurement Units in supporting the above-mentioned events.

**Consultation Response – Proposed Amendments to the  
Gas (Applications for Licence and Extensions) Regulations**

The Committee was advised that the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment was undertaking a consultation exercise in relation to proposed amendments to the Gas (Applications for Licence and Extensions) Regulations. The proposed change was to bring the Regulations in line with European Union Legislation and those Regulations which were already in place for the Northern Ireland Electricity Licensing. The proposed change would remove the requirement for a Gas Provider to have a contact address in Northern Ireland for the duration of its initial application for a licence.

The Committee agreed not to submit any comments to the proposed changes.

**Consultation Response –  
Support Owner Occupiers in Redevelopment Areas**

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of a response to the Department for Social Development's consultation on a new policy to support owner occupiers living in areas undergoing major redevelopment in order to enable those Councillors who so wished to be consulted for their views in order to formulate a response to the document.

**Consultation Response –  
Museums Policy for Northern Ireland**

The Committee was advised that the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure was undertaking a consultation exercise in relation to a proposed Museums Policy for Northern Ireland. Accordingly, the Director submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted comments as the suggested response to the consultation:

***If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please give the name of the organisation, a brief account of its membership and how the views of your colleagues were gathered.***

**Belfast City Council – the consultation document was distributed to staff for feedback. Meetings were held with appropriate staff to address the draft policy and questions in more detail. Recommendations were passed to the Development Committee for further comment and ratification.**

**DCAL may publish a summary of the responses to this consultation document. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the author are published along with the response. If you do not wish to be identified as the author of your response, or if there is any information in your response that you do not wish to be disclosed, please indicate here. Please see information relating to Freedom of Information at the bottom of this form.**

<b><u>General Questions:</u></b>
<i>Do you agree with the draft Museum Policy's overall themes? (please delete as appropriate)</i>
Yes
<i>If no, what should be included?</i>
<i>Does the draft Museum Policy cover the issues you would expect? (please delete as appropriate)</i>
Yes with some additions (see below)
<i>If no, what should be included?</i> There needs to be an overview of the current situation and resources to put the scale of achieving the goals into perspective. Consideration should also be given to how the success of the policy will be measured (in relation to the current baseline), how the required actions will be resourced and how the policy will achieve value for money.
Questions relating to the five strategic priorities:
1. <b><u>Developing Audiences</u></b>
<i>Do you agree with the identified issues and goals for this section? (please delete as appropriate)</i>
Yes with some additions (see below)
<i>If no, what should be included?</i> There should be greater recognition of the links to tourism and developing audiences and the consequent benefit to the local economy, which may in turn help to support museums.  Museums have a strong role to play, in terms of building a sense of inclusion and citizenship, as well as developing an understanding of our heritage, cultural diversity and dealing with conflict. It is critical that museums are seen as a public place for community interaction and accessible to all. We also believe there may be further possibilities for museums to act as 'gateways' for visitors to Northern Ireland. That is, to give them an appreciation of the history and culture before they develop a deeper understanding by experiencing the area personally.  We feel there may be benefit in including objectives relating to the 'quality' of the experience for visitors to museums. Defining quality may be difficult but it may relate to issues beyond the quality of the displays and information to other issues such as open spaces and the opportunity for visitors to 'see themselves' through museums.

***What actions would you suggest in order to achieve the goals?***

Joint working/collaboration, especially with regard to an integrated marketing strategy, may help to attract higher numbers for less resource. Appropriate agencies may include the NITB and ourselves via the Tourism Culture & Arts unit, the Belfast Visitors and Convention Bureau, the Welcome Centre and [www.gotobelfast.com](http://www.gotobelfast.com).

Reference to other frameworks such as the UK 'Manifesto for Museums' may help further refine objectives relating to 'quality.'

***Please identify how you or your organisation can contribute to implementing the goals of this strategic priority.***

Through collaboration, as above.

## **2. Education and Learning**

***Do you agree with the identified issues and goals for this section? (please delete as appropriate)***

Yes with some additions (see below)

***If no, what should be included?***

We suggest that the first bullet may benefit from widening the commitment from a 'learning' organisation to a 'knowledge and learning' organisation that provides scholarship and resource for education and self development. There may also need to be some consideration of the need to attract people into the museum (perhaps based on factors such as quality, fun and enjoyment) as a first step. Once they are in, then learning can occur as a result of the visit.

Delivering some of the goals in this section, particularly EL1 (museums as part of curriculum activity) and EL4 (engagement with education sector) may be very difficult to achieve without support from other agencies. Consideration is needed as to how Museums will be able to fund education visits and services.

We have some concerns that curriculum based study of local history may be difficult due to limited museum provision for schools.

***What actions would you suggest in order to achieve the goals?***

Clarify how DCAL will work with partners such as the Department for Employment and Learning.

***Please identify how you or your organisation can contribute to implementing the goals of this strategic priority.***

**3. Collections Development, Care, Management and Use**

*Do you agree with the identified issues and goals for this section?  
(please delete as appropriate)*

Yes with some additions (see below)

*If no, what should be included?*

There may be benefit in giving consideration to how specialist professional advice can be arranged to support collections in smaller museums. This specialist advice applies to how to create and care for collections as well as knowledge about the collections themselves. Economies of scale may make it difficult to employ such specialists in smaller museums.

A similar issue applies to smaller collections that are not in museums. These may also benefit from specialist support. For example, Belfast City Hall may benefit from advice and support about items that it holds and displays to the public.

Lack of specialist support may also have an equality impact in that specialist museums are likely to be smaller and hence unable to employ specialist support. They may also find it harder to find and acquire items for their collections.

Access to materials for collections generally may also need consideration as other regions enjoy larger economies of scale making it easier to share/loan collections between national, regional and smaller museums.

*What actions would you suggest in order to achieve the goals?*

There may be opportunities for further partnerships with academic institutions to provide access to specialist advice. Other solutions such as the Scottish SCRAN online 'portal' approach may be useful.

*Please identify how you or your organisation can contribute to implementing the goals of this strategic priority.*

**4. Infrastructure, Investment and Resources**

*Do you agree with the identified issues and goals for this section?  
(please delete as appropriate)*

Yes with some additions (see below)

*If no, what should be included?*

We wondered if the Policy should consider issues such as value for money, capital funding and partnerships issues under this theme. There also appears to be no indication of what it will cost to deliver the goals in the policy and where the resources will come from. Consideration should also be given to reviewing different opportunities for funding (private sector as well as public) and how funds are distributed.

We feel that the emphasis in the policy is on the 'bricks and mortar' element of infrastructure and resources. If it has not been already, perhaps a wider view such as the ICON definition could be considered - *organisations that are part of and in the service of society*. This would then include other sources of cultural and historic information local stories, places etc and experiences such as Belfast Taxi Tours, Belfast Literature Tours, Belfast Music Tours etc.

We are pleased to be considered within Goal IIR4 and can confirm that we consider that museums do contribute to our objectives. As a consequence, we feel that it would be useful if the guidance referred to in IIR5 was also available for Councils. As part of the policy development process (consultation), could a wider discussion ensue between central and local government in relation to relevant councils talking a more active role in overseeing or informing the activities and priorities of their local museums?

There needs to be consideration given to the future relationship between museums (particularly local museums) and councils. There is a need for a more integrated and rounded approach to supporting cultural development and achieving wider social, economic and regeneration priorities around 'PLACE'. As part of the RPA proposals, ownership and management responsibility for the Armagh County Museum was proposed to transfer from DCAL to the new Council area covering Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon. Even with the delay in the reform programme and the transfer of functions, it is understood that discussions are ongoing between central and local government in respects to enabling such transfer to happen. Given the uncertainty about the future of RPA, it will be necessary to form very fluid relationship between central (DCMS), regional (DCAL) and local government. Any potential implication of the transfer of powers to local authorities needs to be carefully considered as for example there has been a massive investment in 'Renaissance in the Regions' in England but not here.

*What actions would you suggest in order to achieve the goals?*

There may be opportunities for providing shared storage space for small museums especially where they may be in closer location to each other such as within Belfast.

Consideration could be give to making greater use of local suppliers from the creative industries to produce display materials. This may help to reduce costs as well as adding to the authentic local experience.

*Please identify how you or your organisation can contribute to implementing the goals of this strategic priority.*

We welcome dialogue with DCAL to discuss how we can work together for mutual benefit, especially with regard to IIR4 (clarify museums contribution).

**5. Cultural Rights**

*Do you agree with the identified issues and goals for this section?  
(please delete as appropriate)*

Yes with some additions (see below)

*If no, what should be included?*

We wonder if there needs to be a statement on international conventions and ethics relating to cultural property.

It may also be worth considering the Community Relations Council's response to the NIMC's Cultural Diversity Policy Review, which highlighted the following:

- The Cultural diversity policy should embrace all cultures and traditions in an equal fashion, and not seek to promote any culture or tradition over another. It is important that all exhibitions and projects are placed in context of how our society and communities have changed
- Relationships between the NIMC, local museums, other organisations e.g. private and statutory and communities need to be strengthened to ensure that museums become more relevant to local communities and consequently increase awareness and participation.

*What actions would you suggest in order to achieve the goals?*

The Code of Ethics on the Museums Association website may be useful:

<http://www.museumsassociation.org/ethics>

The following documents may also be of use 'Capturing Public Value of Heritage' and 'Museums and Galleries in Britain Economic, social and creative impacts' - Tony Travers, London School of Economics.

*Please identify how you or your organisation can contribute to implementing the goals of this strategic priority.*



**Any Other Comments**

*Please use this space to provide any other comments on the policy.*

The policy may want to consider the impact of the 2012 events and their potential to create interest in local museums. It is yet to be determined if the Titanic Signature Project will house original objects but its presence will create additional interest in Belfast's history. If it does hold original pieces it will benefit from relevant collection keeping support.

The policy would benefit from additional background information to clarify the current resources, situation and performance of museums. This background would also clarify the museum infrastructure in terms of associated departments, partnerships, alignment to accreditation standards, and how the overall structure works. This would make it easier to see how the goals and aspirations discussed are filling any perceived gaps. The recent consultation document 'A Museums Strategy for Wales 2010-2013' provides a useful comparison.

This background material may also make it easier to see how the policy has addressed the recommendations in the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure: Report on the Committee's Inquiry into the Development of a Museums Policy for Northern Ireland December 2008.

As mentioned previously we see many of the goals in the policy being complimentary to our own and we would welcome the opportunity to work in partnership to achieve them.

Finally we recognise that this is an initial policy statement and we look forward to seeing and consulting on the more detailed action plan suggested in section 10.1."

The Committee approved the draft response.

Chairman