

Development Committee

Wednesday, 16th March, 2011

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Maskey (Chairman);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Humphrey); and
Councillors M. Campbell, Crozier, Garrett, Groves,
Hargey, B. Kelly, Kyle, Lavery, Mac Giolla Mhín,
Mallon, McKee, Mullaghan, P. Robinson, Rodway and
Stoker.

In attendance: Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Mr. T. Husbands, Head of City Events and Venues;
Ms. S. McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives;
Ms. C. Taggart, Community Services Manager;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services officer; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

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

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 3rd, 15th and 22nd February were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st March, subject to:

- (i) the amendment of that portion of the minute of the meeting of 22nd February under the heading "Relocation of Belfast Welcome Centre – Economic Appraisal" to provide that further sites within the City be considered as options for the relocation of the Belfast Welcome Centre;
- (ii) the amendment of the minute of 15th February under the heading "Options for Development of Conference Facilities in Belfast" to provide that other parts of the City, particularly the North Belfast Foreshore, be considered as options for the development of future conference facilities; and
- (iii) the variation of the minute of 22nd February under the heading "Presentation by Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau" to provide that a letter be forwarded to the Minister with Responsibility for Enterprise, Trade and Investment expressing concern in relation to the increase in air duty taxes, which had become effective on 1st March, and the subsequent effect that this increase would have on the number of tourists choosing Belfast as a destination.

Agenda

The Committee agreed, given the number of items due for consideration at the meeting, to consider only the first eleven items on the agenda and to adjourn to a date later in the month.

Employability Support – Proposals Received

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 22nd February, it had noted that requests for financial support had been received from both the Employers' Forum and the Employment Services Board. The Director of Development reminded the Members that the Employers' Forum, which had been established in 2003 and which operated within the West Belfast and Greater Shankill areas, was seeking financial assistance in the sum of £40,000 from the Council towards the establishment of a City-wide Employers' Forum. Regarding the Employment Services Board, the Director reminded the Committee that its funding from the Department of Employment and Learning was due to cease in March, 2011 and that the organisation was seeking assistance, in the sum of approximately £60,000, from the Council to enable it to continue operating. It was pointed out that the Committee had agreed, at its meeting on 22nd February, to defer consideration of the matter to enable presentations to be provided by representatives of both organisations. Accordingly, it was reported that Mr. T. Mervyn, Employment Services Board, Mr. N. Gray, representing the Henderson Group and Ms. D. Timony representing the Employers' Forum, were in attendance to provide presentations in this regard.

Mr. Mervyn provided an overview of the work of the Employment Services Board and provided information on its membership and its achievements to date. He gave an insight into the key work and initiatives which the Board had undertaken and explained that it aimed to provide a high quality service to individuals who had experienced unemployment on a long-term basis. He added that the organisation faced a number of challenges given the economic downturn and that North and West Belfast, together with the Greater Shankill, would be affected disproportionately should the services provided cease to exist.

Ms. Timony then gave an overview of the work of the Employers' Forum and gave a number of examples of how the Forum had enabled individuals to secure long-term employment and outlined the benefits that would be accrued in extending the work of the Forum across the City. She indicated that such a move would complement the Council's desire to address employability and skills and to encourage further private sector growth across Belfast to assist in the project.

In response to a Member's question, Mr. Mervyn agreed to circulate attendance figures for recent meetings of the Employment Services Board and he acknowledged that the membership list circulated required updating. Further Members expressed concerns regarding the types of jobs which had been created and indicated that their long-term viability was questionable given the limited skill-base which they addressed. Mr Mervyn agreed also to provide a breakdown on the average duration of the jobs created, in addition to the age and gender breakdown of those persons who had secured employment through the organisation. The deputation thanked the Committee for receiving them and they retired from the meeting.

A prolonged discussion ensued, during which a number of Members pointed out that no provision had been made within the Department's budgets which could enable the Council to consider the requests for financial assistance. The point was made that should the Committee accede to these requests, a precedent would be set which could encourage other organisations, which provided similar services in Belfast, to request Council assistance. It was stated also that the Committee should be mindful that the Council had no criteria to deal with requests of this nature and that a legal opinion should be sought prior to the Committee agreeing to consider the matter further.

After discussion, it was agreed that the matter be deferred to the Committee's meeting on 28th March, at which a legal opinion would be presented regarding the Council's options.

Departmental Plan - Quarterly Update

The Committee considered the contents of a report which provided a quarterly update on various projects and initiatives as agreed within the 2010/2011 Departmental Plan. The Director of Development referred to a project which the Council would deliver, in conjunction with the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau, regarding the provision of promotional banners throughout the City centre. He pointed out that, since the financial year was due to end on 31st March and, given that there had been a delay in the commencement of the project, it may be necessary to transfer £100,000 from the 2010/2011 Departmental budget to the Bureau to enable it to utilise the money on the Council's behalf and oversee the project. He stated that he had consulted with the Director of Finance and Resources who had indicated that such a step would be feasible and he requested the Committee's authority to, if necessary, transfer £100,000, prior to the end of the financial year, from the Departmental budget to the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau so as the project outlined could be delivered on the Council's behalf.

The Committee noted the information provided and granted the authority sought. It was agreed that an All Party Working Group be established to consider the design work carried out to date on the project and make recommendations thereon to Committee.

Quarterly Financial Report - Quarter 3 2010/2011

The Committee noted a report which contained a summary of financial indicators regarding the Department's financial performance during the third quarter of 2010/2011.

Renewing the Routes Initiative

At the request of Councillor Stoker, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of this matter to enable Party Group Briefings to be provided prior to the Committee's meeting on 13th April.

Digital Infrastructure Developments and Opportunities

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

1. **Relevant Background Information**
 - 1.1 **Belfast and the wider region have the potential to win new investment and business opportunities due to a number of investments in the digital infrastructure in recent years, most notably Project Kelvin and British Telecom's 'Next Generation Broadband' Programme.**

1.2 The city of Derry/Londonderry recently started to develop a digital strategy in light of the potential opportunities on offer as stated in the Digital Northern Ireland 2020 interim report. Funded by Derry City Council, Interreg and ILEX, the Digital Derry Strategy aims to:

1. Raise awareness of the digital media sector
2. Implement local initiatives to support business growth
3. Animate digital content networks
4. Raise the profile of the sector in the city.

1.3 The bandwidth capacities and speeds are already being used as a selling point in promoting the region as a potential investment location. A recently commissioned report entitled 'Digital NI 2020' focuses on identifying new opportunities for the local economy arising from this investment. A copy of this report is attached as Appendix 1.

This infrastructure investment is also being used as a platform for establishing and developing a range of business support mechanisms, focused on helping hi-tech companies to start-up, develop international contacts and increase access to investment.

2 Key Issues

2.1 The consultation exercise carried out in developing the Digital Northern Ireland 2020 strategy confirmed that there was significant potential to capitalise on opportunities in a number of areas. These include:

1. The use of advanced communications for our key business sectors.
2. The use of advanced communications for community and social development.
3. The foreign direct investment (FDI) opportunities in our ICT and Digital Media sectors.

2.2 It identified the key selling points which put Northern Ireland in 'pole position' in terms of economic growth and provide a unique local and regional offering in terms of business development and inward investment compared to other parts of the UK and Europe. These are:

1. Fibre coverage across Northern Ireland to all major urban and business centres.
2. Dual links to North America from the island of Ireland, with full interconnection between the fibre networks in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
3. Opportunity for a large number of businesses to have direct fibre access, thereby giving them access to very high speed communications of 1gigabyte and beyond.

4. Opportunity for fibre networks to extend into residential accommodation providing higher speeds to interactive services and social activity.
 5. Availability of research expertise through high quality universities and research centres.
 6. Shortest latency across the Atlantic, resulting in faster and larger communications between Northern Ireland and USA.
- 2.3 There are significant opportunities for Belfast City Council as well as businesses located within the council area. These opportunities will be captured through the Belfast Masterplan and Integrated Economic Strategy for Belfast although practical action needs to commence in the short term.
- 2.4 Belfast City Council currently runs a series of initiatives and programmes to support the development of the creative industries in Belfast, with a focus on Digital Media, Film and TV, Music and Design. Our creative industries plan is similar to that of the Derry Digital strategy in that projects are aimed at supporting business growth, raising awareness of the sector, facilitating networks and encouraging inward investment into the city. Further development of our creative industries plan can be tailored to lay the foundation for the development of a 'Digital Strategy' for Belfast, however, additional work would need to be carried out to examine what opportunities are available for the wider council and its services and the city as a whole, in terms of the technical infrastructures outlined in the Digital Northern Ireland 2020 document.
- 2.5 In this regard, Belfast City Council has been approached by both Northern Ireland Science Park and global technology company IBM, to help facilitate two new initiatives to help stimulate entrepreneurship, economic growth and inward investment in to the city.
- 2.6 The Northern Ireland Science Park initiative is an Enterprise Forum which creates an opportunity for science and technology sector leaders across all industries to network and develop collaborative initiatives to support new business start-ups and to enhance technology commercialisation. The first event to be organised by the forum is the 'NASDAQ versus AIM: Smackdown!' due to take place on Wednesday 25 May 2011. This event will bring together NASDAQ Board Member Tom O'Neill and Marcus Stuttard, Head of AIM, London Stock Exchange's international market for smaller growing companies. The speakers will provide perspectives on where Northern Ireland's hottest entrepreneurs might hope to float their company and to look at whether a NASDAQ listing a realistic goal. Council officers have been invited to join the Steering Group for this work.

2.8 In addition, IBM has recently made contact to discuss the possibility of developing closer linkages between the company and Belfast City Council. The company is considering introducing a number of initiatives in the region and is keen to engage with Belfast City Council in the research and development of these initiatives. The first initiative is the development of an IBM Smart Camp in the city. The Smart Camp is an IBM initiative to identify, encourage and support new hi-tech entrepreneurs working to tackle some of the pressing environmental and social challenges such as water provision, transportation development and healthcare delivery.

2.9 IBM wishes to host, in partnership with Belfast City Council, the first Smart Camp in Belfast to identify new entrepreneurs with the potential to become 'IBM Global Entrepreneur of the Year.' IBM have asked Belfast City Council to help support this initiative by hosting Smart Camp Belfast in City Hall, in May 2011, and with the marketing and identification of potential participants.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Costs associated with Smart Camp event in Belfast City Hall will not exceed £2,000.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 No specific good relations considerations. Participation in these events will be open to all interested companies.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

- Agree to establish a Members' Working Group to explore the opportunities for Belfast in relation to the Digital NI 2020 strategy.
- Agree to support the development of a Digital Strategy for Belfast up to a maximum of £10,000.
- Approve engagement with Northern Ireland Science Park on the NISP Connect enterprise forum.
- Agree to host the IBM Smart Camp event in Belfast City Hall in May 2011 at a cost not exceeding £2,000.
- Agree to engage in further discussions with IBM in the research and development of new initiatives of benefit to the Council and the city.

6 **Decision Tracking**

Updates on progress to be provided to Members following the May 2011 event.

7 **Key to Abbreviations**

FDI – Foreign Direct Investment
NISIP – Northern Ireland Science Park.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Draft Planning Policy Guidance 16 - Tourism

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 **Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 The Department of the Environment published a consultation document in November 2010 seeking views on the Draft Planning Policy Statement: PPS 16 Tourism. The proposed policy will introduce strategic planning guidance for tourism development in Northern Ireland.

Draft PPS 16 sets out the Department’s proposed planning policy for both tourism development and the safeguarding of tourism assets. The aim of the PPS is to manage the provision of sustainable and high quality tourism developments in appropriate locations within the built and natural environment.

The Planning and Transport Unit has drafted a response with input from Council Departments to provide Belfast City Council with the opportunity to influence new strategic planning policy guidance on tourism development. Consultation responses should be submitted to the Department on or before the 25 March 2011.

2 **Key Issues**

- 2.1 It is widely recognised that the tourist industry is of major importance both at a national and local level generating economic prosperity and employment. Belfast plays an important tourism role as a ‘gateway’ to Northern Ireland and a destination in its own right. In 2009 they were 9.3 million visitor trips to Belfast and the value of direct tourism spend in Belfast City during 2009 was calculated as £451 million.

- 2.2 The production of new planning policy guidance for this important sector of the economy offers the opportunity to ensure the Department provides clear planning policy to support tourism developments both in the main urban areas and where appropriate in the countryside.
- 2.3 A summary of the main objectives of the policy are as follows:
- To facilitate sustainable tourism development in an environmentally sensitive manner;
 - To safeguard tourism assets from inappropriate development;
 - To utilise and develop the tourism potential of settlements by facilitating tourism development of an appropriate nature, location and scale;
 - To sustain a vibrant rural community by supporting tourism development of an appropriate nature, location and scale in rural areas; and
 - To ensure a high standard of quality and design for all tourism development.
- 2.4 The proposed Council response is set out in Appendix 1 for consideration and a summary of the main issues are as follows:
- The objective to ensure a high standard of quality and design for all tourism development should be welcomed also the need to safe guard tourism assets from inappropriate development.
 - The emphasis of the draft policies outlined in PPS 16 is on the regulation of tourism development rather than adopting a balanced or more proactive approach to the facilitation of development and the promotion of quality tourism proposals. A more balanced approach may be considered more appropriate.

The role of the development plan in tourist development is considered in the policy. The Council made representations during draft BMAP process for the plan to have a more proactive policy approach to tourist development in the city. In the absence of tourism opportunities being included in the current development plans it may be appropriate for the planning policy guidance to include a more proactive policy approach to tourist development to address this deficiency.

The draft policy asks for consideration on the role of local councils and their local tourism plans. The Council has prepared Belfast Tourism; Gateway to the future – an Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism 2010-2014 and it would be recommended that PPS 16 makes reference to local council tourism plans to ensure they provide integration and guidance for tourist development in these areas.

The guidance specifically mentions rural tourism and the benefits of tourism to rural communities however the policy guidance lacks reference to the value of city tourism. The need for the inclusion of additional policy guidance for the promotion of city tourism and the potential regeneration benefits for local communities may be considered appropriate.

The draft policy removes the tourism need test for all new tourism development in the countryside and introduces the sequential test. Policies which gives greater clarity to the type of tourist development and amenities which will be permitted in the countryside should be welcomed where they integrate the consideration of proposals through sequential approaches.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 There are no resource implications

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 There are no equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are requested to consider the proposed response to the Consultation paper on Draft PPS 16 Tourism and if appropriate, agree a response to be submitted to DOE.

6 Decision Tracking

Further to agreement the final response will be submitted to DOE

Timeline:

25 March 2011

Reporting Officer: John McGrillen

8 Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Draft Response”

Appendix 1

Draft Response to Planning Policy Statement 16 Tourism

It is widely recognised that the tourist industry is of major importance both at a national and local level generating economic prosperity and employment. Trends including the growth of city breaks, conferences and the number of direct air access routes to Belfast demonstrate that tourism numbers to the Belfast Metropolitan Area have quadrupled since 2000. Belfast plays an important tourism role in being a 'gateway' to the rest of Northern Ireland. In 2009 there were 9.3million visitor trips to Belfast and the value of direct tourism spend in Belfast City during 2009 was calculated at £451 million.

3.0 Policy Objectives

'The Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism' produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government states that "The planning system is crucial to ensuring the tourism industry can develop and thrive and the system should take a proactive role in facilitating and promoting the implementation of good quality developments to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits".

The emphasis of the draft policies outlined in PPS 16 is on the regulation of tourism development rather than adopting a balanced or more proactive approach to support development and the promotion of quality tourism proposals. The Council considers a more balanced approach would be more appropriate with linkages to local tourism plans where appropriate.

The objective to ensure a high standard of quality and design for all tourism development is welcomed also the need to safeguard tourism assets from inappropriate development.

4.0 The role of Development Plan

The consultation document states that the preparation of a development plan provides a key opportunity for planning authorities to consider how best to facilitate the growth of sustainable tourism in their areas. Whilst the lack of up to date plan coverage in Northern Ireland could offer potential for this to be included in future plans in the shorter term the current plans are unlikely to contain detailed tourism policies and proposals.

During the draft BMAP process, Belfast City Council made representatives to the Department requesting that BMAP should be proactive in identifying locations for future tourism facilities. In the absence of tourism opportunities being included in the local development plan it may be appropriate for the planning policy guidance to include a more proactive policy approach to tourist development or provision for supplementary guidance as interim guidance that provides a context for development and addresses the current deficit.

'The Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism' (Department for Communities and Local Government) outlines examples of proactive approaches and suggests that local development plans consider preparing a hotel strategy in the larger urban areas that actively promotes sites to hotel developers. The Council considers this approach as appropriate for Belfast. New hotels in urban areas can add to the land use diversity and support the continued development of broader weekend and evening economies.

5.0 Consultation

The draft policy asks to what extent planning authorities should give consideration to how individual proposal will meet the objective of a tourist development plan for which Councils are responsible.

Belfast City Council has produced Belfast Tourism; Gateway to the future - an Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism 2010-2014 in partnership with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and in consultation with stakeholders in both the private and public sector

Through this document, Belfast City Council sets out the plans and priorities for 2010-2014 as an Integrated Belfast Strategic Tourism Framework. The framework identifies a series of Tourism Place Destinations which should accommodate for a concentration of tourist related activity. The Council regard the framework as crucial to the city's development as a globally competitive sustainable tourism destination and will drive the opportunities and multiple benefits of tourism to community neighbourhoods across the city.

Consideration should be given to a mechanism for using the tourism frameworks in the planning of tourism development in particular in the absence of up to date local development plan coverage. The Council would recommend that PPS16 acknowledges the council's tourism development plans

within the policy context as they will be a crucial in the implementation and interpretation of PPS 16 at a local level, this could be considered within a revised sequential approach.

6.0 Planning Polices

The guidance specifically mentions rural tourism and the benefits of tourism to rural communities however the narrative lacks reference to the value of urban or city tourism. Recent figures indicate that visits to Belfast city are worth up to £451 per year for the local economy, supporting up to 10,000 jobs in the greater Belfast area. In 2009, the city attracted 1.7m staying visits and 64,000 cruise passengers and crew. To build on the momentum achieved so far, the priority now is to raise Belfast's tourism to a higher level. It has the potential to offer much more to visitors and to attract them in much greater numbers. By doing this, tourism could make an even greater contribution to the local and wider economies and enhance the benefits it generates for businesses, citizens and communities.

The Council considers the need for the inclusion of additional policy guidance to support integrated city tourism and the coordination of assets. Policy support should also be given to tourism development where it will assist in the economic and physical regeneration of urban areas and be of benefit to the local community whilst contributing to the development of sustainable tourism infrastructure.

The Council would support proactive consideration for the redevelopment of existing buildings in particular redundant historic buildings for tourist development. The draft policy refers to this in Para 6.16 but is specifically in relation to rural buildings and should be extended to an urban context.

TSM 2 Tourism Development in Settlements / TSM 3 Tourism Development in the Countryside

The draft policy removes the tourism need test for all new tourism development in the countryside and introduces the sequential test for all new tourism development in the countryside. The Council welcomes the new sequential test which should encourage the location of tourism facilities within the settlements limits. Polices which gives greater clarity to the type of tourist development and amenities which will be permitted in the countryside are welcomed.

TSM 8 Criteria for Tourism Development

The design criteria relating to the movement pattern is unclear. The Council would welcome clear criteria to ensure the siting of new tourist development in accessible locations well served by public transport which will provide a sustainable choice of transport.

The Council supports general criteria to ensure the tourist development does not adversely affect features of the natural or built environment. The Council would emphasise the need to protect the historic built environment in the city, as well as its setting, from inappropriate development. The protection should also apply to key panoramas or views of natural resources such as the Belfast Hills.

Additional criteria to support the development of “authentic” tourism developments that fit with the brand values of Belfast and Northern Ireland would be welcomed. The Belfast Brand should be an integral guiding framework for future planning of tourist developments in the city. The Councils Tourism framework firmly establishes Belfast as the gateway to Northern Ireland and Ireland therefore its relationship to rural and other urban areas should be considered.

General criteria should be included to ensure that tourism developments are supported through managed and improved infrastructure and access where necessary.

The Council proposes that the policy below to suggested in relation to the draft BMAP, should be considered for inclusion in PPS 16.

BMA Tourism Strategy

Identify appropriate Development Opportunity Sites and actively promote for tourism development and associated infrastructure

Consider favourably tourism development where it will assist in the economic and physical regeneration of urban areas and be of benefit to the local community.

Promote the development of the ‘Must see’ visitor facility – Titanic Quarter Signature project

Actively promote water based/maritime tourism development along the waterfront for example on Development Opportunity Sites along River Lagan

Actively promote unique cultural quarter development

Consider favourably the reuse of historic buildings for tourism development.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Markets Unit - Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of progress with respect to:

1.2 1. Continental Market Report

Members will be aware that a report was taken to Committee and then Council in September 2010 where it was agreed to go out to tender for another term for the Continental Market in Belfast. The current contract for the Continental Markets held in front grounds of City Hall ended December 2010. It had been intended that the new contract would start in the new financial year with the first Continental Market planned for May 2011.

1.3 2. Markets Footfall and Economic Impact Figures 2010

Surveys were carried out recently by Millward Brown Ulster on behalf of Belfast City Council’s Development Department - Markets Unit. The survey covered the 2010 Christmas Continental, St George’s and Smithfield Markets.

1.4 3. Markets Usage

Members will be aware that at the January 2011 Committee it was agreed that the Sunday Market would become a permanent fixture in the Markets calendar, subject to a positive review after an initial 12 months. St George’s also hosts the weekly Friday and Saturday markets. Event booking days are currently Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, with some events booked for Sundays during 2011.

1.5 4. Markets Policy

Members will be aware that a briefing session took place on Friday 28 January 2011 on a draft Markets policy which would give the opportunity for private operators to operate markets in Belfast.

2 **Key Issues**

2.1 **1. Continental Market**

A review of the Continental Markets in Belfast has just been completed. It included an analysis of the financial and operational arrangements of the continental markets in Belfast. The review made a series of recommendations as to new conditions to be included in the new tender and contract.

2.2 The new tender for the Continental Markets is reducing Belfast City Council's expenditure; increase current income and aims not to reduce the economic impact the Continental Markets bring to the City. The new tender will specify an increase on the fee payable to council, (on top of the addition to the set fee there will also be a proposal for profit sharing of the pitch fees, also being payable to council). The new tender contract will ensure expenditure that council would have previously paid, will now be paid by the contractor, including set up and promotional costs.

2.3 The new tender will also specify that the new contractor will reimburse the council for units of electricity used.

2.4 A new electricity supply system is planned for City Hall grounds and it is anticipated this will be in place for the May Continental Market. With lead in time of approximately 4 weeks and then advertising of the new tender, there is now inadequate time available to complete the new tender and ensure a contractor is in place in time for the Continental Market in May 2011, therefore Committee approval is sought to extend the previous contract operated by Market Place Europe for the May 2011 Continental Market. This would allow for the new tender process to be completed effectively.

2.5 Approval is sought to have the May Continental Market operated by Market Place Europe Ltd.

Resource Implications

2.6 Income of £8,000 as per previous contract terms.

Equality and Good Relations Considerations

2.7 Equality and good relations screening to be completed as part of the drawing up on the new tender.

Recommendations

2.8 It is recommended that Members agree to the extension of the Continental Market to include May 2011 as per contract terms of old contract (Council receive the sum of £8K).

Decision Tracking

2.9 There is no decision tracking attached to this section of the report.

2.10 **2. Markets Footfall and Economic Impact Figures 2010**
Christmas Continental Market 2010

A recent survey conducted by Millward Brown Ulster on the estimated economic impact and footfall count has indicated that approximately, 588,816 people had visited the Belfast 2010 Christmas Continental Market during the period from 19 November to 20 December and that 1 in 10 were out of state and that almost 45% of those that visited were from the greater Belfast area.

- Almost 7 in 10 (67%) will visit over shops in the City Centre
- Royal Avenue and Donegall Place were the most popular areas to shop
- Almost 2 in 5 (38%) intend to visit restaurants or cafés in the City Centre

2.11 The survey also reveals total gross economic impact to the local economy of the Continental Market over the 4 weeks was over £26m, with shopping and eating out accounting for approx £19.6m of this total.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Belfast</u>	<u>Rest of NI</u>	<u>Out of State</u>
Estimated Attendees	588816			
Total Estimated Spend				–
Accommodation	£3,615,407.24	£0.00	£151,512.80	£3,364,894.45
Eating out	£5,132,830.77	£1,698,209.35	£1,577,736.55	£1,856,894.87
Shopping	£14,462,558.61	£5,132,168.46	£3,698,992.28	£5,811,397.87
Entertainment	£1,288,745.41	£339,839.45	£464,202.71	£484,703.25
Transport	£1,288,156.91	£382,319.38	£428,191.84	£477,645.69
Gross Economic Impact	£25,967,698.95	£7,552,536.64	£6,320,626.18	£12,094,536.13

2.12 Using these averages of spend per person within each market sector we can calculate that the total gross economic impact of the Continental Market over the 4 weeks was almost £26m.

2.13 St George's Market

Visitor numbers over a weekend, (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) for St George's was estimated at 11,647 and Economic Impact to the local economy was estimated at £315,230.49

2.14 The annual total gross economic impact of St George's Market of the 3 combined markets to be, approx £15.5M, with shopping and eating out accounting for approx £12.5M.

2.15 On average, visitors from Belfast spent £18.59 during their visit to St George's Market. In the case of visitors from the rest of Northern Ireland average spend was higher at £31.54 per head. Out of state visitors' spend per head was much higher at £90.42 per head, (although this includes the elements of spend associated with their trip rather than their visit to the Market per se).

2.16 Smithfield Market

Visitor numbers over a week through Smithfield was estimated at 13,566 and Economic Impact to the local economy of Smithfield for a week was estimated at £336,124.00

2.17 The total annual gross economic impact of Smithfield Market to be (£16.8 million) with shopping and eating out accounting for £15m annually.

2.18 On average visitors from Belfast spent £21.08 during their visit to Smithfield Market. In the case of visitors from the rest of Northern Ireland average spend was higher at £30.68 per head. Out of state visitors' spend was £64.22 per head.

2.19 Resource Implications

None.

2.20 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

2.21 Recommendations

Members are asked to note the information concerning the footfall figures and Economic Impact to the local economy for the Christmas Continental, St George's and Smithfield Markets.

2.22 Decision Tracking

There is no decision tracking attached to this section of the report.

2.23 3. Markets Usage

Up to this point St George's Market has normally hosted 4 cultural events on a Sunday during the calendar year. Currently no bookings are taken any Friday or Saturday Market days. Officers are aware that requests for events to be held on St George's market days may increase; and there is the potential for such requests to include a Friday and/or Saturday market days. Therefore going forward there is a need for Council to articulate a clear policy on the usage of St George's Market.

2.24 Officers are conscious that offering any of the markets days out as hire would be contentious with traders and their representatives. Traders' representatives have raised their concerns and have added that it may lead to loss of income if traders do not have the consistency of the weekly markets.

2.25 Resource Implications

None.

2.26 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

2.27 Recommendations

Members are asked to agree to further investigation of this issue with a view to presenting clear options to Members at a future Committee.

2.28 Decision Tracking

There is no decision tracking attached to this section of the report.

2.29 4. Markets Policy Update

Members will recall that a decision was made by Committee in June 2010 to formulate a markets policy for the Council. A final draft of the proposed policy is attached as appendix 1.

Permission is sought from Committee to go out to public consultation on the draft Markets Policy as attached.

2.30 Resource Implications

- Potentially extra staff and financial assistance required to cover inspections and operational issues, when the markets policy is implemented.
- Possible income generation.
- Boost to local economy.

These issues will be further explored and brought back to Committee in due course.

2.31 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

2.32 Recommendations

It is recommended that Members;

- 2.33**
1. Approve the draft Markets Policy as a basis for public consultation and
 2. Receive a future report on the resource implications attached to the public consultation period.

2.34 Decision Tracking

Bring a report back to Committee on public consultation findings.

Time Frame: August 2011 Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

3 Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - Draft Markets Policy

**DRAFT MARKET RIGHTS
POLICY**

(Version 7)

1. INTRODUCTION

Belfast City Council holds the exclusive market rights for Belfast and no other market may operate legally within a 6 and 2/3 mile radius of a market operated by the Council. Exclusive market rights are therefore a valuable commercial asset to the city which the Council intends to retain, and has taken legal action in the past to protect.

The history as to how Belfast City Council came to be in possession of those rights is detailed in Appendix One.

However, the Council recognises that markets in Belfast have changed considerably and extend well beyond those envisaged when market rights were first obtained by the Council in the 17th century and by virtue of legislation in 1845. Markets are now often deliberately produced and consumed as authentic local experiences designed with the visitor in mind; as places to go, animated with music, performances and entertainment; and as initiators of city and neighbourhood regeneration. A large element of markets' evolution has been their ability to attract footfall and income to localities starved of investment and as a means of kick starting community confidence in the potential of an often forgotten space of place. As part of Belfast's transformation in the post peace process era, we have seen the rapid expansion of market type activity as part of festivals, special events and community fundraisers.

Whilst many of these types of activities extend beyond the traditional market definition, it is important to recognise that they are part of a modern environment and their operation should be supported and placed on a legally sound basis. The role of this policy is to review the current demands and requirements within the city in relation to alternative market creation, operation and enforcement and to take account of the legal position as well as the modern environment and place management agenda.

Belfast City Council therefore wishes to make available the rights which it holds to private interests and organisations for the purposes of operating such events, which will be held under licence from the Council, subject to adherence to such terms and conditions as deemed appropriate.

The Council intends to invite expressions of interest from any persons or organisations who wish to hold a regular market within the city. It also welcomes applications for one off or temporary markets throughout the year.

Whilst welcoming all such expressions of interest and applications, the Council recognises the contribution in terms of culture, the local economy and tourism already provided in the city by St. Georges Market and Smithfield Market. In those circumstances, no licence shall be granted for a regular market in the city centre on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday save in such circumstances that the Council can be satisfied that the proposal will complement the existing market provision in the city centre.

The Council is also prepared to consider permitting other regular markets outside the city centre in other suitable locations, for example at the North Foreshore, but only where such applications complement existing market provision and comply with the general principles below.

Car boot sales are also a market, although the Council recognises that the majority of such events are held as a one off and for charitable purposes. This is recognised in the application requirements in relation to such events, which are detailed in Appendix Two, which also holds more detailed provisions in relation to other types of markets.

Each application will be considered on its own merits and will be fairly and objectively assessed.

Belfast City Council is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Therefore any decision regarding the grant of a market licence will be impartial and shall not be influenced by the religious beliefs, political opinion, racial group, age, gender, marital status or sexual orientation of the applicant.

3. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy has been developed to set out Belfast City Council's position with regard to markets and the general principles which shall be applied to any expression of interest or application received to hold a market. The policy shall provide guidance to the general public, potential applicants and officers in relation to the licensing of markets.

The policy and the fee structure in relation to holding markets are subject to review through the passage of time and the policy is subject to review where legislative changes make it necessary to do so or in other such circumstances when deemed appropriate or expedient by the Council.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Without prejudice to the Council's right to take into account any consideration which it believes to be relevant, when assessing an application the following matters will be considered:

- (a) Will the proposal enhance the general amenity of the area;
- (b) Will the proposal animate a vacant site in the city;
- (c) Will the proposed type, location or size of the market improve the economic development of the area/city;
- (d) Will the proposal contribute to the development of culture, arts and tourism in the city;
- (e) Does the proposal fulfil an objective of Belfast City Council's Corporate Plan and/or is it consistent with any Council policy, strategy or other initiative;
- (f) Is the proposal consistent with any development plan or master plan applicable in or relating to the relevant area;

- (g) Whether the location at which the market is proposed is suitable;
- (h) Whether the relevant planning permission has been obtained;
- (i) Are there any other statutory provisions which appear relevant to the application;
- (j) Is there any risk to public safety;
- (k) What are the potential environmental effects such as additional litter, cleansing requirements, odour and noise and how those will be dealt with;
- (l) Does the location provide adequate space for the proposal without causing undue interference or inconvenience to persons or vehicles;
- (m) Is there potential for the proposal to have an adverse effect in terms of anti-social behaviour and/or public disorder;
- (n) Is the Applicant a fit person to whom a licence should be granted.
- (o) Will the proposed market complement existing market or retail provision in the locality.

5. GRANT OF LICENCE

The Council may grant a licence subject to any condition which it sees fit and may grant a licence for the applicant to trade on fewer days, or for a shorter period than that specified in the application.

A licence may be granted for a maximum period of 3 years or for such shorter period as the Council sees fit, including the grant of licences authorising the holding of a market on a certain date or dates.

Where an application has been lodged but the proposed location is not suitable the Council may grant a licence for a nearby alternative location which is more suitable provided the applicant can demonstrate that it has consulted with all appropriate persons.

The decision of the Council will be final.

6. MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS

Belfast City Council acknowledge that there may be instances in which more than one application or expression of interest will be received for a proposed market at a specific location.

In those circumstances, the applications will be brought before the Council's Licensing Committee for consideration, only upon the basis that officers are satisfied that all the necessary consultation has taken place and consents as detailed above have been obtained. Such applications may also be referred to the Development Committee for consideration in order to inform the decision of the Licensing Committee.

In the case of competing applications the Council will determine which if any to grant a licence to on the merits of the applications and having regard to those matters set out in the Section headed General Principles.

The Council may require Applicants to appear before the Council's Licensing Committee to make representation and answer questions in determining whether an application shall be granted.

7. GROUNDS FOR REFUSAL

The Council reserves the right to refuse an application for any reason.

Without prejudice to that right, the Council will refuse an application in the following circumstances:

- (a) Where the applicant has, in connection with the proposal, made a statement which he knows to be false in a material particular;
- (b) The applicant is, whether on account of misconduct or some other reason, unsuitable to hold a licence;
- (c) The applicant has refused or neglected to pay fees or other charges to Belfast City Council in relation to a market licence or any other matter for which the Council is entitled to charge fees;
- (d) Where there is a designated street trading site or market at the proposed location from which a licensed trader is currently operating;
- (e) The applicant has failed to provide all the information required by the Council to deal with the application;
- (f) There is sufficient market provision in the area already.

The Council may also refuse an application where there are designated street trading sites at the proposed location regardless of whether there is a trader operating from those sites.

8. REVOCATION OF LICENCE

The Council reserves the right to revoke the licence for a breach of any of the conditions under which it was granted or for any other substantial reason.

In any case in which the Licensing Committee is presented with a report to address the question of revoking a licence it shall give an opportunity to the licence holder to appear before it and make representation prior to a decision being made.

9. SUSPENSION OF A LICENCE

If the question of revocation arises in the context of public order or public safety an authorised officer may suspend the operation of the licence pending referral to the Licensing Committee for a decision.

Where the location of a market becomes temporarily unsuitable for any reason, and in particular in relation to any road works or development, the Council reserves the right to suspend a licence until such times as the works or development have been completed.

10. Procedural requirements for applicants

Applicants must apply to the Council providing full details of the proposal, its location (by reference to an Ordnance Survey map) and the dates and times of operation. The map should be 1:500 scales and should show the location of any existing street furniture and the proposed location of the market.

Applicants must demonstrate that appropriate and sufficient consultation has been undertaken in relation to their proposal with supporting documentary evidence produced. It is expected that applicants will provide all the information referred to in the preceding paragraph to consultees.

Applicants for a licence are required to consult the following:

- (a) P.S.N.I District Commander for the area in which the proposal is situated;
- (b) Department of Regional Development as regards roads and the regulation of local traffic;
- (c) Department of Social Development;
- (d) Planning Service.

Depending on the scale, location and nature of the proposal, Belfast City Council may require an applicant to consult with such other persons or organisations as it deems appropriate. In addition, the Council may undertake its own consultation with those persons or organisations which it deems to be appropriate.

The Council reserves the right to require the applicant to publish notice of intention to apply for a licence in a newspaper circulating in the area, in accordance with the Council's policy regarding advertising notices, the form of which must be agreed with the Council in advance. In those cases in which the Council does not require publication of a notice, the Applicant will comply with any directions given by the Council regarding consultation with persons residing or trading in the area to which the application relates.

In any case in which planning permission is required, any application not supported by proof that such permission has been obtained will be refused.

Applicants will be required to produce a business plan, an environmental management strategy and, if granted a licence, a health and safety risk assessment prior to the opening of any market.

In any case in which the application relates to the holding of a car boot sale and the proposal is to hold six or less events in a year and the scale of the event may be regarded as de minimis (less than 20 persons trading), the requirement to consult and produce the documents required in the preceding paragraph (with the exception of the risk assessment) will not be required. The decision as to the grant of such a licence may be taken by an officer or officers authorised in that regard by the Council.

Applications will be determined by the Licensing Committee of the Council, however in relation to any application impacting or potentially impacting upon any Council strategy, policy or initiative or where otherwise officers are of the view that due to the scale and nature of the proposal it is appropriate to do so, the matter will be referred to the Council's Development Committee to ascertain the views of that Committee prior to a decision being made.

The Council may require the Applicant to appear before the Licensing Committee and to make representation and answer questions in relation to the proposal.

11. GENERAL CONDITIONS

The following conditions will attach to every licence which is granted by the Council, subject to any other additional conditions which the Council deem necessary.

- (a) Periodic visits will be made to markets by an officer of the Council to ensure compliance with the conditions of licence. The standard conditions attached to any licence will include a right of access for authorised council officers.
- (b) Failure to pay any fees due may result in revocation of the licence and/or may result in future applications being refused.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the organiser and operator to ensure that the market does not become a nuisance to residents or neighbouring businesses, and are operated in an appropriate manner, including compliance with relevant legislation for public events and with Belfast City Council's Health & Environmental Services Department and Trading Standards requirements.

- (d) The organiser or operator agrees to indemnify the Council against any claims for personal injury, loss or damage howsoever sustained.
- (e) The applicant must demonstrate it holds adequate public liability insurance and, if applicable, employers liability and products liability insurance.
- (f) If it is proposed that entertainment will be provided at the event, the applicant may be required to apply for an entertainment licence in addition to the market licence.
- (g) If it proposed that food will be provided at the event, the applicant and each relevant stall holder shall ensure that it is registered with the Council as a food business operator.
- (h) If a licence is granted, it is the responsibility of the organiser/operator to ensure that no fly posting or leafleting in relation to the event takes place and that no notices, signs or advertisements are fixed on any street furniture, structure or trees.
- (i) Event organisers or traders shall not display openly on their stalls, any flags, or emblems of any nature considered by the Council to cause offence.
- (j) It is the responsibility of the organiser/operator to ensure that no counterfeit or stolen goods are sold at their event.
- (k) All fees are non-refundable.
- (l) All matters pertaining to the conduct of the market, including consumer safety and health and safety, are the sole responsibility of the Applicant.
- (m) Approval to hold a market is not-transferable to any other person or company.

Breach of any of the above conditions will entitle the Council to determine the licence. In the event that the Council is of the opinion that any of the conditions have been breached and it is minded to determine the licence, it shall give the licence holder the opportunity of appearing before the Licensing Committee and making representation prior to any decision being made. The decision of the Licensing Committee will be final.

Appendix One

The history of Market Rights in Belfast goes back to 1620 when extensive lands in County Antrim were granted to Lord Chichester by King James. In addition to the Grant of those lands, a franchise right to hold a market in the town of Belfast was also granted by the King. These franchise market rights were subsequently transferred to Belfast Corporation in 1847.

In addition to these franchise market rights, the then Belfast Corporation was granted the power to purchase existing market rights and to provide new market places by virtue of a number of pieces of legislation. The legislation grants Belfast City Council the exclusive right to establish a market within its district, to regulate the conduct of those markets and to make bye-laws in relation to them.

A market is legally defined as being either a franchise or statutory right to hold a concourse of buyers and sellers to dispose of commodities. The following events would be considered to be a market;

1. Farmers market;
2. Car boot sale;
3. Specialty market;
4. Regular variety market.

Any market that is owned or operated, other than by the Council, within a 6 and 2/3 radius is defined in law as a 'Rival Market' and shall be operating illegally. As the Council holds the exclusive right to hold markets, it is entitled to take legal proceedings to restrain any person or organisation from holding such a market.

Appendix Two

CAR BOOT SALES

1. Car Boot sales shall be restricted, as far as possible, to householders selling surplus household articles.
2. No new goods are permitted for sale at any Car Boot sale.
3. The Council may limit the number of trading positions depending upon the nature of the application, particularly with regard to the proposed location of the Market.
4. Permission shall only be granted to any organisation or individual during the course of any 12 month period, to hold a maximum of 12 car boot sales. Only one application per household or organisation shall be permitted in any 12 month period

5. Any site or premises may only be used for a maximum of 12 car boot sales during the course of any 12 month period.
6. Should any part of the site or premises be used for a market, any other part of the site or premises should not be deemed as a separate site or premises for the purposes of this policy. A site must be of a different location, have separate boundaries and be a suitable distance from other sites at which any Market is or has been operating.
7. If, in the opinion of the Council, any organiser of a car boot sale either directly or indirectly contravenes any of these conditions, then the Council may determine to refuse a subsequent application for a licence from that person by reason of that contravention.
8. Any venue used for the purposes of a Car Boot sale which, in the opinion of the Council, either directly or indirectly is used in contravention of these conditions will not be permitted to host any further markets of any description until such times as the matters giving rise to the breach have been remedied to the Council's satisfaction.
9. In respect of a car boot sale organized by commercial organiser a fee of ? shall be payable upon application. (Do we charge flat fee or basic fee and additional fees per car as well?)
10. In respect of a car boot sale operated by non commercial organisers or operators a fee of ? shall be payable upon application. (Do we charge flat fee or basic fee and additional fees per car as well?)
11. In respect of a car boot sale operated by registered charities a fee of ? shall be payable upon application. (Do we charge flat fee or basic fee and additional fees per car as well?)
12. A registered charity must provide written confirmation of their registered charity number and that the full proceeds of the event will be received by the organisation must be sent at the same time as the application for a licence.

FARMERS MARKET

1. A Farmers Market is a themed market whereby farmers or producers meet to sell their own produce.
2. The organiser/operator of the market must supply the Council with the register of all farmers trading at the market, together with the address of the farm.

3. The Council may limit the number of trading positions depending upon the nature of the application, particularly with regard to the proposed location of the Market.
4. Permission shall only be granted to any organisation or individual during the course of any 12 month period to hold maximum of 12 Farmers Markets.
5. Only one individual will be permitted to apply per household.
6. No licence for a Farmer's market shall be granted on a Friday or Saturday.
7. Any site or premises may only be used for a maximum of 12 Farmers Markets during the course of any 12 month period.
8. Should any part of the site or premises be used for a market, any other part of the site or premises should not be deemed as a separate site or premises for the purposes of this policy. A site must be of a different location, have separate boundaries and be a suitable distance from other sites at which any market is or has been operating.
9. If, in the opinion of the Council, any organiser of a Farmer's Market either directly or indirectly contravenes any of these conditions, then the Council may determine to refuse a subsequent application for a licence from that person by reason of that contravention.
10. Any venue used for the purposes of a Farmer's Market which, in the opinion of the Council, either directly or indirectly is used and contravention of these conditions may not be permitted to host any further markets until such times as the matters giving rise to the breach have been remedied to the Council's satisfaction and, if appropriate any necessary undertakings are provided as regards to future conduct.
11. A market license fee will be charged at ? per trading day and must be paid in full upon application. (Do we charge flat fee and per stall as well?)

SPECIALITY MARKET

1. Speciality markets are those where there is a specialised theme or grouping of produce or goods that make the event more than a car boot sale or traditional market. For example, a continental, craft market or exhibition market.
2. The Council may limit the number of trading positions depending upon the nature of the application, particularly with regard to the proposed location of the Market.

3. An application for a speciality market licence must be lodged at least 4 months before the date of the proposed event.
4. Permission shall only be granted to any organisation or individual during the course of any 12 month period, to hold a maximum of 12 daily speciality markets or for no longer than 12 consecutive days.
5. Only one application per household or organisation shall be permitted in any 12 month period.
6. Any site or premises may only be used for a maximum of 12 speciality markets during the course of any 12 month period.
7. Should any part of a site or premises be used for a market, any other part of the site or premises should not be deemed as a separate site or premises for the purposes of this policy. A site must be of a different location, have separate boundaries and be a suitable distance from other sites at which any other market is or has been operating.
8. If, in the opinion of the Council, any organiser of a speciality market either directly or indirectly contravenes any of these conditions, then the Council may determine to refuse a subsequent application for a licence from that person by reason of that contravention.
9. Any venue used for the purposes of a speciality market which, in the opinion of the Council, either directly or indirectly is used in contravention of these conditions may not be permitted to host any further markets of any description until such times as the matters giving rise to the breach have been remedied to the Council's satisfaction.
10. In respect of a speciality market organized by commercial organiser a ? fee per trading day shall be payable upon application.
11. In respect of a speciality market operated by non commercial organisers or operators a fee of ? per trading day shall be payable upon application.
12. In respect of a speciality market operated by registered charities a fee of ? per trading day shall be payable upon application.
13. A registered charity must provide written confirmation of their registered charity number and that the full proceeds of the event will be received by the organisation must be sent at the same time as the application for a licence.

REGULAR MARKET

1. A regular market is a market which is held on a number of days throughout the year and will be a general retail market where a variety of goods are available for sale or swap.
2. If it is proposed that the market shall be held on more than 14 days per year, the appropriate planning permission must be obtained and proof of same lodged with the licence application.
3. An application for a regular market licence must be lodged at least 4 months before the date of the proposed event.
4. Proof of the permission of the venue owner to hold the market must also be lodged with the application.
5. The applicant must also provide a full business plan to include:
 - (a) A plan showing the proposed layout of the market;
 - (b) A financial plan;
 - (c) The organisers health and safety policy, coupled with the necessary risk assessments;
 - (d) The organisers food safety policy;
 - (e) An environmental statement;
 - (f) Documentary evidence, to include 2 supporting references, demonstrating the applicants experience and track record.
6. Upon receipt of an application, the Council may decide not to issue a typical market licence but instead enter into a negotiated contract which reflects the needs of the market as well as providing suitable remuneration to the Council for the provision of market rights.
7. It may be necessary for Belfast City Council to carry out a procurement exercise in relation to any proposed regular market to comply with its obligations under EU procurement requirements.
8. Any agreement reached in respect of a regular market shall reflect the principles within this policy including the right of the Council to determine in the event of any breach of condition.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations at paragraphs 2.8, 2.21 and 2.27 and endorsed, as a basis for public consultation, the draft Market's policy and appendices 1 and 2 as set out.

Shopmobility Belfast - Future Funding Options

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 11th August, 2010 it had agreed to accede to a request from Shopmobility Belfast for annual funding in the sum of £25,000, subject to that organisation being notified that no direct financial support would be provided in future by the Development Department. In addition, the Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of the Council, on 1st September, 2010 the portion of the minute relating to Shopmobility had been amended to provide that a further report in relation to the Council's future funding options to the organisation be submitted for consideration in due course.

Accordingly, the Director of Development reported that Shopmobility was funded by a range of public and community organisations, principally the Department for Regional Development, the Department for Social Development and the Belfast Health Trust. He reminded the Committee that the Council had provided direct funding to Shopmobility over the past decade, on the basis that the services it provided would help enhance access to the City centre and thus increase economic turnover. However, Belfast was the only local authority in Northern Ireland to provide funding on that basis. It was noted that other organisations throughout the City provided similar services and, should the Council continue to provide direct funding to Shopmobility on an arbitrary basis, it could leave it open to legal challenge.

The Director of Development reported that, in essence, the Committee had two options available to it; namely, to adhere to its decision of 11th August, that is, that direct funding would no longer be provided, or to consider an alternative method of providing indirect funding to Shopmobility. He reminded the Members that, at its meeting on 22nd February, the Committee had endorsed the contents of a Belfast City Centre Management's Business Plan for 2011/2012. That Plan, within its Strategic Aims and Objectives, had stated, amongst other things, that Belfast City Centre Management would seek to "promote city centre accessibility" for all citizens and to work with disability groups to that end. Therefore, the Director suggested that the Committee might wish to consider the feasibility of entering into a Service Level Agreement with Belfast City Centre Management who, in conjunction with Shopmobility, would work to deliver that aspect of the Business Plan with Council support. However, Belfast City Centre Management had indicated that, whilst they would be happy to work on behalf of the Council in this regard, they would be unable to provide a financial contribution. Therefore funding from Council, up to a maximum of £25,000 per annum, would be required in future years from to oversee this Service Level Agreement for the agreed programme of work.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Kingston,
Seconded by Councillor Garrett and

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to authorise the Director of Development to explore the feasibility of entering into a Service Level Agreement with Belfast City Centre Management and, if appropriate, provide funding to that organisation, up to a sum of £25,000 per annum, to promote accessibility to the City centre for all citizens, in conjunction with Shopmobility, in accordance with the aims and objectives of Belfast City Centre Management's Business Plan for 2011/2012.

Questor Centre Management

The Committee agreed to note the contents of a report which provided Members with an update on the progress to date of the Council's membership of the QUESTOR Industry/University Co-operative Research Centre.

Installation of Creative Legacy - Connswater Public Art Piece

The Committee was reminded that Creative Legacies was an organisation which had been established to enhance development and outreach initiatives for shared cultural space throughout Belfast and was delivered through the Council's Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit and funded by Peace III. As part of its programme, five pieces of shared public art were to be installed throughout Belfast and it was reported that a piece entitled '*Moving Forward*' had been created by young persons from the 'The Klub' in conjunction with the artist Daniella Balmaverde. The artwork reflected a number of issues pertinent to the community within East Belfast and, accordingly, the views of the Members were sought on where the piece of art should be displayed.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that '*Moving Forward*' be erected outside the Ballymacarratt Recreation Centre on the understanding that it could be moved to other positions within East Belfast at future dates.

Adjournment

At this point of the meeting the Committee adjourned its business and agreed to reconvene on Monday, 28th March at 4.30 p.m.

Chairman