Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

21st June, 2012

<u>**MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**</u>

Dear Alderman / Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on **Tuesday, 26th June, 2012 at 5.15 pm**, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. <u>Routine Matters</u>

    (a) Apologies

    (b) Declarations of Interest

2. <u>Requests for Deputations</u>

3. <u>Performance and Financial Matters</u>

    (a) Departmental Plan 2012/2013 (Pages 1 - 20)

    (b) Departmental Plan 2011/2012 - Update (Pages 21 - 32)

    (c) Year-end Financial Report (Pages 33 - 44)

4. <u>Belfast's Economy / Marketing the City</u>

    (a) Waterfront Marketing Contract (Pages 45 - 46)

(b) Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau / Belfast City Centre Management - Future Relations (Pages 47 - 50)

(c) Portas' Report on Regeneration of High Streets - Parking Update (Pages 51 - 54)

(d) Construction Sales Growth (Pages 55 - 58)

(e) Digital Hub - Proposed Study (Pages 59 - 60)

(f) European Social Fund - Update (Pages 61 - 64)

(g) Indie Games Developers' Event 2012 (Pages 65 - 82)

(h) Vacant Shop Units in Belfast - Update (Pages 83 - 94)

(i) Members' Workshop - Cultural Framework (Pages 95 - 96)

(j) Markets' Policy - Report to Follow

(k) Future Role of Members in Promoting Belfast in Europe (Pages 97 - 100)

(l) INTERREG V Model (Pages 101 - 122)

(m) Visit by Delegation from Hefei, China (Pages 123 - 126)

5. Neighbourhoods, Communities and People

(a) An Munia Tober - Revenue Grant Aid Support and Lease Arrangements. (Pages 127 - 130)

(b) Inter-Agency Forum on Travellers (Pages 131 - 136)

(c) Community Development Strategy (Pages 137 - 170)

(d) Asset Management at a Neighbourhood Level (Pages 171 - 174)

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Department Business Plan 2012-2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen Director of Development ext 3470
Contact Officer:	David Purchase, Policy Officer, ext 3792

	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present Members with the proposed 2012/13 departmental plan for approval by Committee.
1.2	The Departmental Plan is one of the key ways in which Members manage the delivery of the Committee's priorities. The plan is closely linked to the financial estimates (i.e. the budget for the year ahead) which were considered on 10 January of this year alongside the provisional key actions for 2012/13. These were subsequently agreed by Council at its meeting in February.
1.3	Since then, Chief Officers have been finalising their departmental plans based on these approved estimates and actions, and the commitments made in the Investment Programme. The proposed Departmental Plan is appended to this report for approval by Committee.
1.4	The plan, once approved, also provides Chief Officers with the delegated authority to deliver the key actions that it contains subject to regular monitoring and reporting to Committee.

	Key Issues
2.1	The appended plan sets out:
2.2	- key departmental actions in 201/13 and; - an indication of which actions directly contribute to the Investment Programme. - the departments key performance indicators for 2012/13. - financial information relating to the estimates for 2012/13.

2.3	The Plan enables Committee to performance manage the key work of the department. It should also assist managers and officers to make decisions and allocate resources in line with the agreed objectives and activities.

	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> A spending limit of £19,581,534 was agreed at Committee on 10 January 2011.

	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	None. Specific projects within the plan will be Equality Impact Assessed as appropriate.

	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to note and agree the proposed departmental plan which is appended.

Decision Tracking	
Timeline: October/ November	Reporting Officer: John McGrillen

Key to Abbreviations

Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - The Development Department's Business Plan 2012-13.

Development Departmental Plan 2012 - 2013

Draft

Contents

1.0   Background

1.1   The Corporate Plan embodies what the council intends to achieve from 2012-15. It is ambitious yet realistic and demonstrates how Members' are committed to improving quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in and visits Belfast. It is based upon an assessment of need in the city, the views of residents on what the council's priorities should be and a commitment to strong political and executive leadership at both a city wide and neighbourhood level.

1.2   While the Corporate Plan focuses on issues which cut across Council departments, it also reflects the importance of the quality of the vital services that we provide on a daily basis.

1.3   The corporate plan is illustrated in figure 1 below, showing our key priorities for the city over the next 3 years are:

- Leadership
- Environment
- Economy
- People & Communities
- Improving our Services
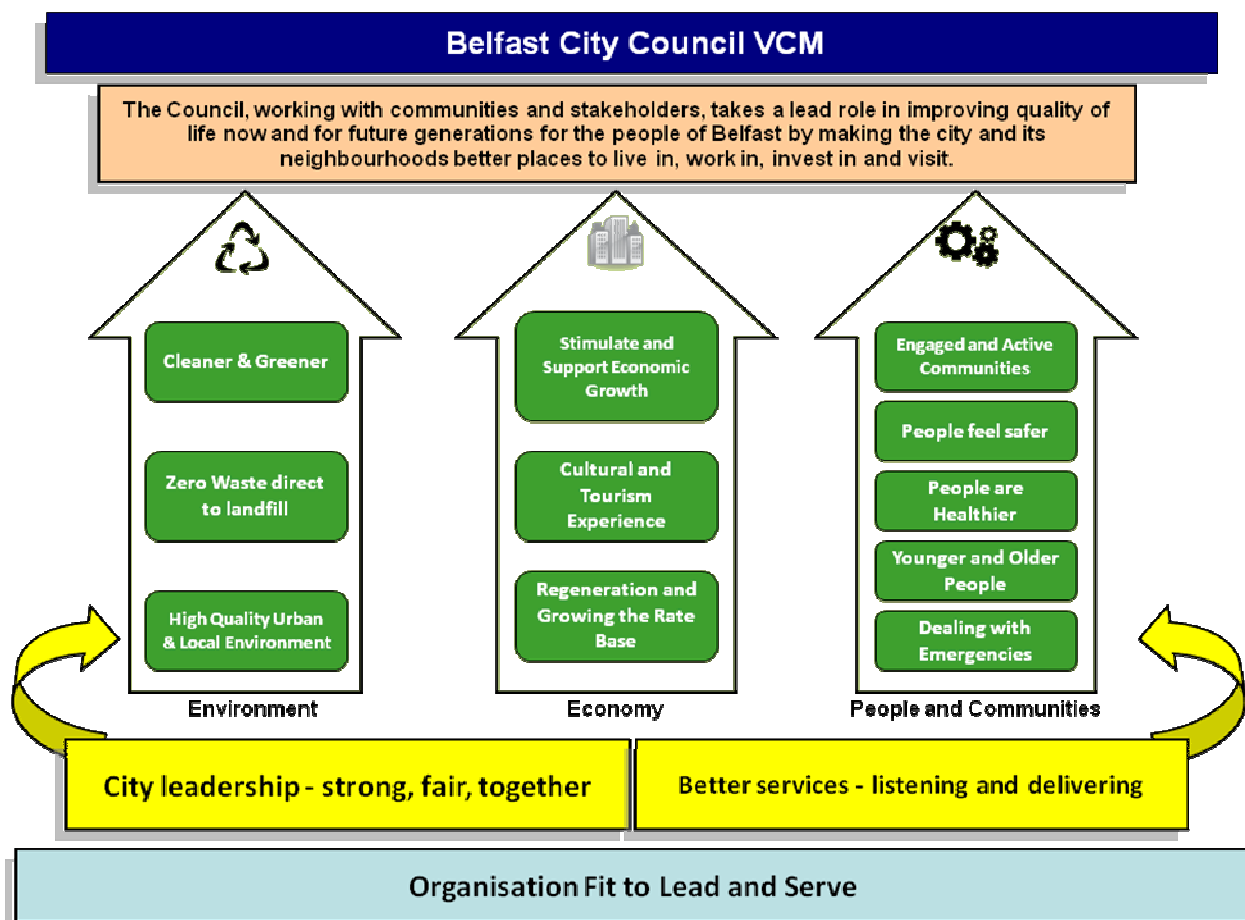- An Organisation fit to Lead and Serve

Belfast City Council VCM

The Council, working with communities and stakeholders, takes a lead role in improving quality of life now and for future generations for the people of Belfast by making the city and its neighbourhoods better places to live in, work in, invest in and visit.

Environment	Economy	People and Communities
Cleaner & Greener	Stimulate and Support Economic Growth	Engaged and Active Communities
Zero Waste direct to landfill	Cultural and Tourism Experience	People feel safer
High Quality Urban & Local Environment	Regeneration and Growing the Rate Base	People are Healthier
		Younger and Older People
		Dealing with Emergencies

City leadership - strong, fair, together   Better services - listening and delivering

Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve

Figure 1: Corporate Value Creation Map

1.4   This Departmental Plan describes how the Development Department's actions and targets for 2012/13 complement the Corporate Plan. This Plan sets the strategic direction for the department and will ensure focused and effective management of the department by the Committees and senior managers. It provides explicit links between core departmental activity and corporate strategy.

1.5   Under the council's Scheme of Delegation, the Director of Development has been given the delegated authority to undertake the activities as outlined in section 6. Progress update reports will be submitted to the Development Committee twice yearly.

Departmental VCM (if applicable)

2.1   The Development Department's purpose is "to play a key role in supporting the Council to improve quality of life by creating a city which is competitive, connected, confident and cohesive." The work of the department is summarised in the Value Creation Map below, which shows how it contributes to the objectives of the council:
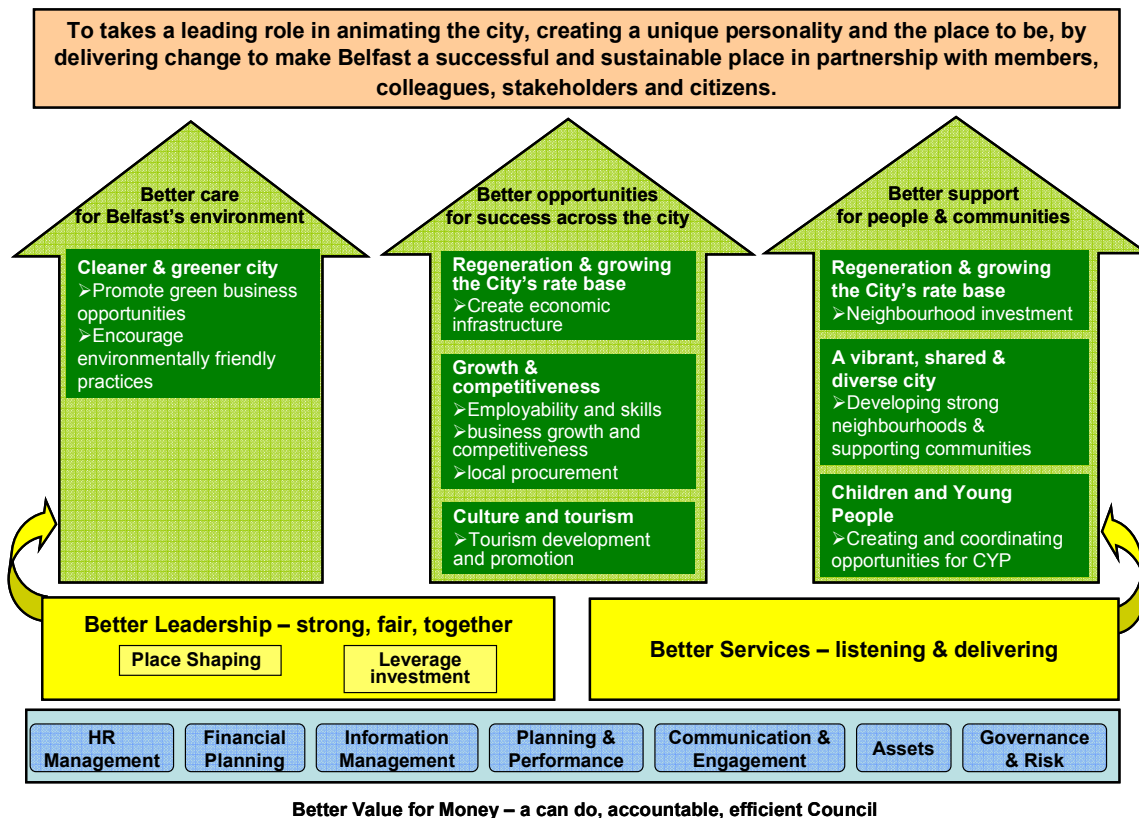
Figure 2. Development Department Value Creation Map

2.0   Values and purpose

2.2   The Department adheres to the council's values which state that we will:

- focus on the needs of customers, have a 'can-do' attitude, be problem solvers,
- provide value for money and improve services,
- work together,
- respect each other, be fair, promote equality and good relations,
- act sustainably,
- ensure the highest standards of health and safety, and
- value our employees.

3.0   Changes in internal and external environment

3.1   This plan seeks to contribute to the council's vision in a context of severe financial austerity. It aims to be both relevant and realistic by meeting rate-payers needs in a fashion which demonstrates flexibility and value for money. Additional economic pressures are likely to arise in 2012/13 and beyond, for example from increasing landfill tax and reduced income levels. The key activities listed in the plan reflect the need to prioritise and to find efficiencies through cooperating internally and externally in the delivery of key services.

3.2   The following sections highlight some of the issues we have had to take into account in developing this plan.

Internal

3.3   Internally, the Department is undertaking a series of change management projects to ensure we are fit-for-purpose. These include a programme to realise the benefits from the re-structuring in Community Services during the second half of 2010; work to look at any necessary revisions to the structure to accommodate the expansion of the Waterfront Hall; and the allocation of resources to deliver the Investment Programme including a review of the SNAP unit, Planning and Transport, and the Policy and Business Development team.

3.4   This past year has seen the introduction of several new strategies and policies. Several more are due to come into affect through this coming year. These include:

- The Investment Programme.
- The Masterplan.
- The Community Development Strategy.
- The Integrated Cultural Strategy.
- The Markets policy.
- The Neighbourhood assets strategy.

3.5   We have also put in place systems and resources to improve the Department's Grants management and have been preparing for Investors in People status.

External

3.6   The economic situation continues to be challenging. The Department has a crucial role to play in supporting Belfast's economic recovery via support for private sector growth, regeneration across the city and its neighbourhoods and developing new and innovative area based service provision and integration. As such we will play a central role in delivering the Council's new Investment Programme.

3.7   We also lead in a number of areas that will be significant in boosting the development of the city through 2012 and beyond. In particular we lead for the Council on the Titanic 2012 launch event, the Olympic Torch and celebrations, and the World Police and Fire Games in 2013.

3.8   After a period of uncertainly, the Review of Public Administration (RPA) now appears to be back on. It is too early to be sure of the full implications but the

transfer of powers is certain to affect us in areas such as planning, community planning and grant funding.

3.9   With regard to grant funding, Officers are working collaboratively with DSD to agree a framework for the transfer of DSD funding for communities and neighbourhoods, which could be in excess of £5M, to BCC. The project will develop a fit for purpose funding model based on a review into the way in which services are currently supported. It will consider how these services could be better integrated and improved to ensure that the best possible impact is made with the funds. This work will inform how BRO, VCU and BCC might work more collaboratively and effectively in the area of Community Development/ Infrastructure in the period up to the transfer of functions under RPA.

3.10   It is also a critical time for European funding. We are nearing the end of the current seven year programmes and so there are fewer grants available. We are working hard to influence Brussels and their decisions with regard to future programmes so we can maximise any future opportunities for Belfast. In particular, we are conscious of the Investment Programme's aim of attracting £50m to support the regeneration of Belfast.

New legislation

3.11   In terms of regulation, there are a number of new pieces of legislation which are likely to have implications for the Department during 2012-13. These include:

- The Review of Public Administration (as discussed previously)
- The new Programme for Government.
- The Regional Economic Strategy.
- The Regional Investment Strategy.

4.0   Departmental structure

4.1   The Development Department is one of 6 departments which make up the officer structure of the council. The various departments are shown in Figure 3 below and Figure 4 sets out the Department's service structure.

Figure 3: Council Departments
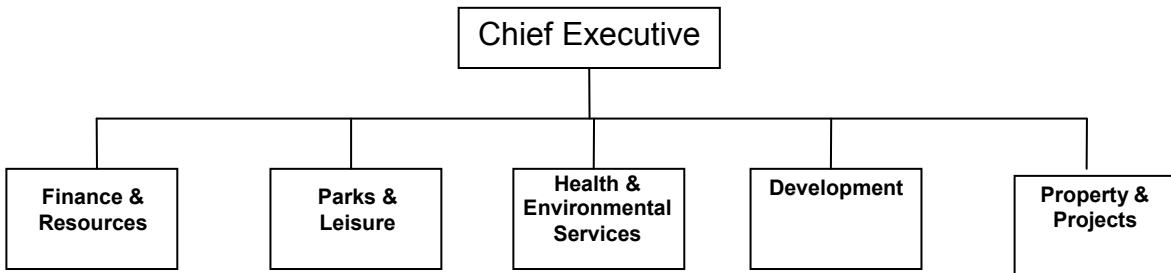
4.2   Service structures - functional charts

Figure 4: Development Department

5.0   Key actions for 2012/ 13

The Department's key actions have been defined against the background of the value creation map. Each key task has a relationship with one or more of the themes described in the departmental VCM. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the main outcomes expected are included at section 6. More comprehensive details of tasks, performance indicators and targets which contribute to the outcomes sought are contained in supporting Service Plans.

Actions Contributing to the Investment Programme

5.1   City Leadership
Key actions

Place Shaping / Physical investment programme
- Finalise the Belfast Masterplan, promote and help implement the Strategic Projects: Forum for the Belfast City Region, Royal Exchange, Windsor and Casement Stadia Hubs, Belfast Rapid Transit, and North Foreshore Bio Economy Hub.
- Lead on the delivery the Local Investment Fund Programme.
- Help the strategic development of the University of Ulster North City Campus.
- Be the Policy lead on planning and transportation including 'Belfast on the Move' and 'Rapid Transit.'
- Support a city-wide marketing approach/International Relations strategy and develop action plans.
- Maximise our draw-down and leveraging of EU funds including opportunities for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and other funding for key projects.

5.2   Environment
Key actions

Promote green business opportunities
- Support green industries and support the development of the Green Business Park. Including maximising any appropriate European opportunities.

Encourage environmentally friendly practices
- Lead on environmentally friendly travel initiatives for the Council including adopting the Council's Travel Plan and developing an active travel proposal.
- Lead on the Connect project for cycling and walking to the Titanic signature project
- Investigate funding opportunities for Belfast public bike hire

5.3   Economy
Key actions

Create an Economic infrastructure
- Manage the development and funding of increased convention centre and exhibition centre space at the Waterfront Hall.
- Support the delivery of new infrastructure for the Green Business Park
- Lead on the delivery of an innovation centre
- Lead on the delivery of a digital hub programme
- Lead on the delivery of a super-connected broadband project.

Support employability and skills development

- Work with partners on implementing the emerging recommendations for bursary schemes.
- Directly create jobs by working with local partners to deliver targeted employability initiatives across the city including HARTE and the Belfast Enterprise Academy.
- Work with partners on the Belfast Social Clause Delivery Forum.
- Work with DEL and Belfast Metropolitan College on employment and skills strategies and set up a city-wide Employability and Skills Steering Group.

Encourage business growth and competitiveness in key sectors

- Provide business support programmes in targeted sectors including retail, creative industries, financial & business services and connected health. Programmes will include: exploring export opportunities for the first time or growing into new markets, becoming social economy enterprises, supporting the independent retail sector, supporting local technology companies to exploit opportunities in the health sector, business start initiatives for key groups and creative industries.

Support local procurement and maximise the potential of our procurement spend

- Deliver procurement programmes including: the Smarter Procurement Programme, the Construction Sales Growth Programme and Procurement fairs and road shows.

Tourism development and promotion

- Along with our partners at NITB and Titanic Belfast, deliver 'Our Time, Our Place' Titanic Belfast Festival 2012.
- Deliver events in line with the City Events Action Plan and the Waterfront and Ulster Hall programme, including the World Irish Dancing Championships 2012.
- Continue to deliver Council's contribution to the World Fire & Police Games.
- Develop Belfast's tourism product and deliver actions within the Integrated Tourism Strategy and action plan.
- Market Belfast by supporting the marketing and visitor servicing activities of the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BCVB).
- Relocate the Belfast Welcome Centre to a better location.
- Develop culture and arts by investing £2M in cultural and artistic activities including the 'City of Festivals' and Creative Legacies.

5.4   People and Communities and Neighbourhoods

Key actions

Neighbourhood investment

- Support the delivery of neighbourhood regeneration across the city.
- Deliver the Renewing the Routes Programme 2012-16.
- Support plans to restore and revitalise the Lagan Canal corridor.

Developing strong neighbourhoods & supporting communities

- Resource support for Community Development local activity (including management of an outcomes based £1.748m grant programme).
- Invest approximately £826,000 in community-based advice services per annum via 5 city-wide advice consortia.
- Deliver the Community Support Plan including:

- o Providing support for community engagement with Council e.g. training, skill development, raising confidence and access.
- o Management and increased usage of community centres and other facilities.
- o Support for 70,000 volunteering hours per annum in community facilities and developing a new volunteering framework.
- Implement the actions under our Poverty and Social Inequalities Framework.

Other actions

5.5 City Leadership

- Develop an Integrated Economic Strategy and establish a city-wide economic forum with key stakeholders including DETI, DEL and InvestNI.
- Develop and deliver a transition plan for a single core community development infrastructure support programme for the city (with DSD).
- Ensure a strong urban dimension to NI governments EU funding strategy, 2014–20.
- Deliver State of the City Development Debates (to support the Masterplan implementation). (Review SOTC June 2012).

5.6 Economy

- Re-stimulate city centre regeneration using a coordinated approach.
- Deliver city markets at St. George's and Smithfield and support creation of new markets in Belfast in the context of the Markets Policy.
- Finalise the integrated Cultural Strategy, promote and implement it.

5.7 People Communities and Neighbourhoods

- Champion and secure integrated support for a Community Development model for the city and deliver the related implementation plan.
- Deliver coherent inter agency and inter departmental approach to working with the Traveller community.
- In support of a Neighbourhood Assets strategy, develop an evidence based model of community centre management. Then agree a criteria based assessment framework and start assessing against this.

Create and co-ordinate opportunities for children and young people.

- Deliver an inter-departmental framework for children and young people.
- Deliver a comprehensive citywide summer programme.
- Build the capacity of Youth Forum members to increase the participation of children and young people in the city and neighbourhood life.

5.8 Value for Money

Key actions

- Ensure Community Centres are operated at a level sufficient for the quality kite mark.
- Use, promote and support evidence based planning via the use of CityStats and other local information.

5.9   Human Resource Management

Key actions

- Continue to demonstrate highest levels of competency through retention of independent accreditations (ISO) and IIP.
- Ensure compliance with all corporate process requirements including, audit reports, WIRES, risk management, etc.
- Implement a revised structure based on reviews of PBDU, SNAP, Markets, Economic Development and P&T.

5.10   Financial Planning

Key actions

- Implement a coordinated approach to grant management through the Grant Unit.

6.0   Key performance indicators for 2012/ 13

6.1   City Leadership

Performance Indicator	Annual Target
Amount of money leveraged from Europe and UK by Development Department	£3M

6.2   Economy

Performance Indicator	Annual Target
Jobs created	110
Number of Business supported	2,300
Number of people skilled up	3,600
Number of people attending Culture, Arts and Events	3.5M
Tourism Economic Benefit	£420M
Events Economic Benefit	£7M
Total Day Trips	6.6M
Visitor numbers	8.2M
Waterfront and Ulster Hall attendance	380,000
Number of MOUs with key businesses to deliver the urban broadband project	8
Markets footfall	1.9M

6.3   People and Communities

Performance Indicator	Annual Target
Community centre attendance	550,000
Volunteer hours	70,000
Number of community grants distributed	380
Amount of community grants distributed	£2.5M (subject to DSD confirmation)

6.4   Better Services

Performance Indicator	Annual Target
% Complaints that met response target - All	100%
Number of complaints received - All	n/a

6.5   Organisation fit to lead and serve

Human Resource Management

Performance Indicator	Annual Target
Actual direct employee costs and budget	9,752,589
Actual Staff Number and agreed establishment	293.77
Average number of working days per employee lost due to absence	tbc

Financial Planning

Performance Indicator	Annual Target
Compliance for PO raised after the supplier invoice date	85%
Compliance for GRN against the Supplier invoice	70%
% variance between actual net revenue expenditure and budgeted net revenue expenditure (in year)	+1 / -2
% variance between forecast net revenue expenditure and actual net revenue expenditure (year end)	+0.5 / -2

Planning & Performance

Performance Indicator	Annual Target
% PIs on target	70%
% PIs with valid data collected and reported upon	85%

7.0   Financial information

7.1   The approved net revenue expenditure for the Department for 2012/13 is £19,581,534. A breakdown of the revenue estimates by the main Services of the Department and Directorate Support is provided in Table 1

Table 1
Estimated net revenue expenditure 2012/13

	Net Expenditure 2011/12 (£)	Net Estimated Expenditure 2012/13 (£)
Community Services	5,564,620	5,519,610
City Events and Venues	4,127,505	4,181,548
Economic Initiatives Section	6,142,166	6,088,958
Directorate	3,881,039	3,791,418
Total	**19,715,330**	**19,581,534**

8.0   Monitoring and review arrangements

The Council has introduced an integrated performance management system that enables regular, up to date reporting to be undertaken at corporate, departmental and service level.

Key performance indicators have been identified for all services within the Development Department and are contained within section 7 of this plan.

A number of PIs and tasks have been identified as corporately significant and are contained in the corporate plan. They will be reported on a quarterly basis to CMT to ensure ongoing management of the key priorities.

The department also maintains a risk register to identify and manage risks that may affect its ability to deliver this plan. This register is reviewed regularly with support from the Council's Risk experts.

9.0   Committee membership

<u>Development Committee</u>
Chairman: Alderman Christopher Stalford
Deputy Chairman: Councillor Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

Committee Members:
Councillor Conor Maskey
Alderman Tom Ekin
Alderman Bob Stoker
Councillor Janice Austin
Councillor Tom Hartley
Councillor Máire Hendron
Councillor Colin Keenan
Councillor Bernie Kelly
Councillor Brian Kingston
Councillor John Kyle
Councillor Nichola Mallon
Councillor Jim McVeigh
Councillor Caoimhín Mac Giolla Mhín
Councillor Lee Reynolds
Councillor Guy Spence
Councillor Andrew Webb
Councillor Gareth McKee
Councillor John Hussey

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Quarterly update of the Departmental Plan (Q4)
Date:	26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	David Purchase, Policy and Business Development Officer, ext. 3792

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	The Development Departmental Plan 2011-2012 was approved by the Development Committee on the 15th June 2011 with agreement that update reports would be presented to Committee at later dates. This update is for the final quarter, 1 January 2012 to 31 March 2012.

2	**Key Issues**
2.1	<u>Method and key to coding</u> Service and unit managers were asked to provide updates on the status of their unit's key actions as listed in the plan and to provide commentary if necessary. The classifications used to provide updates are outlined below:
2.2	Complete – the action is complete and deadlines/targets met. On target – action has begun but is not yet complete. Ongoing – the action is day-to-day activity that continues through the year and there are no unexpected delays or issues.
2.3	Deferred – the action has been deferred due to changing circumstance or priorities. Externally Delayed – the action has been delayed due to circumstances outside of our control e.g. planning permission not received, waiting on a partner, etc. Delayed - project is delayed. Cancelled – the project has been cancelled with committee approval.

Docs 129350

3	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no additional 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	The Committee is asked to note: - The update of Development Department's plan for the period up to 31 March 2012.

6	Decision Tracking
6.1	There is no Decision Tracking attached to this report.

7	Documents Attached
7.1	Appendix 1: Quarterly update of the 2011/12 Departmental Plan for the period up to 31 March 2012.

Docs 129350

Belfast
Informed

Departmental Plan 2011/12

Development
Department

Quarter 4 Update

Internal document

7.0 Update against Key actions: end of Quarter 4 - 2011/12

1.1 City Leadership

Place Shaping Role

- Complete the Belfast Masterplan and identify the Council's key priorities for physical development and infrastructure in Belfast.

    - Delayed - The 6th March 2012 Committee agreed that the progression of the Masterplan should be based on a two stage engagement process ensuring engagement with the Executive (Departments) and Committee prior to wider consultation. This agreement was on the basis that a further report would be brought before the Committee in respect of the proposed arrangements and the additional resource requirements. This second paper is planned be presented to committee on 17/4/12 and will ask for approval of the consultation plan and £15k budget to facilitate it.

- Deliver 4 State of the City Development Debates to inform BCC's urban regeneration and economic development leadership role.

    - On target - The fourth event was delivered on the 4/3/12 in partnership with Titanic Belfast. The event was linked into a series of sessions Titanic Belfast have planned to promote tourism, culture and regeneration. Speakers included Professor Michael Parkinson CBE, Director of the European Institute for Urban Affairs, at Liverpool's John Moores University; and Scott Burnham, cultural strategist and Julian Dobson of Urban Pollinators, a consultant specialising in regeneration and sustainable communities.

- Set up a City Economic Partnership to design and implement a Belfast Integrated Economic Strategy with DETI, DEL, InvestNI and other stakeholders.

    - Externally Delayed - DETI's Economic Strategy has now been published following the consultation. The investment programme will also soon be finalised following the consultation period. Once this is complete, we will be able to start on Belfast's integrated economic strategy.

- Develop an EU urban funding strategy for 2011-13.

    - On target - We have engaged consultants to facilitated workshops and so help us articulate our request to government. The workshops will involve as many key people, policy & decision makers as possible from across the region. We are planning to hold these workshops in May once Chief Officers have had a preliminary meeting to discuss what Belfast priorities are regarding EU funding post 2013. These priorities will of course have to reflect the new EU regulations and eligibility but our aim is to present a strong lobby to NI government to ensure that we maximize opportunities for Belfast 2014-2020.

    - In Q4 the EU Unit submitted 7 project applications worth £10.9m and all 7 were rejected. Out of 28 from councils, only 2 got through. We are meeting the minister to discuss the situation. One of our proposals, the Giro cycling event, may be reconsidered. Additionally, we have 2 live projects; one with the NI Chamber looking at exports and one going to Tender for young entrepreneur business start-ups. These total £1.3m. We are also now part of a low carbon businesses bid led by Lisburn and are still waiting for a creative industries bid, which is going through the system.

- Policy lead on planning and transportation.

  - On going – We have continued to coordinate responses on issues such as the Rapid Transport Route, Strategic BMAP sites, Queens Quay, Taxi Fares, the Active Travel Strategy and Demolition Consultations. We have also been supporting the work with UU and Titanic Quarter.

1.2 Better Care for Belfast's Environment

Promote green business opportunities

- Ensure successful completion of BITES (business improvements through environmental solutions) programme by 12 companies.

  - On target – We have started recruiting for the next round of the programme to start in April. Over the last two years 22 local businesses have completed the programme and collectively have identified over £320,000 worth of collective savings through the support provided. The success of the programme has encouraged Carrickfergus, Lisburn and Newtownabbey to adopt similar programmes.

1.3 Better Opportunity for Success Across the City

Job creation

- Create 110 jobs via business development programmes for 1000 companies.

  - On target – We have helped to directly create 93 jobs in 2011-12. Several programmes (Sales development, Business Planning, Access to Finance, Export Support, and E' Commerce) were delayed while we waited for letters of offer from DETI. These have now been received and tenders have been issued. Other programmes for Creative Industries, Independent Retail and Environmental Support continued on target. The Construction Sales Growth programme has been delivered and participating companies have won £1/2M of new business to date.

- Deliver city markets at St. George's and Smithfield and support creation of 2 new markets in Belfast.

  - On target – We continue to have full occupancy and a waiting list at ST George's Market. We are meeting with traders and their representatives to look at how we can further improve the market for the benefit of traders, Council and the people of Belfast. In the current economic climate it is proving more difficult to introduce new businesses to vacant units in Smithfield.

  - The Markets Policy has been revised following the consultation exercise and input from Legal Services. Options for balancing the costs of administering the policy with the fees charged to applicants are still being considered. A paper will be presented to committee in June.

Employability and skills

- Deliver employability and skills programmes and secure commitment to Belfast Employability and Skills Plan.

  - On target – A meeting with the city-wide stakeholder forum is scheduled for 3 April. Meanwhile the new HARTE programme and work with Titanic Belfast has helped to secure 14 jobs.

- Support integrated implementation of 6 elements of Titanic Quarter Memorandum of Understanding (employment, community outreach etc).

   ▪ On going - Six distinct action plans have been taken forward by the Council and its partners in the areas of employment and skills, tourism, public realm, access, housing and community outreach. In summary:

      ▪ An inter-agency 'TQ Work' Group has been established to develop and implement an action plan providing access to skills and training aimed at meeting the needs of Titanic Quarter's employers.

      ▪ A TQ Access Group was set up to address the issues of improving public transport access to the site (bus and rail), the creation of new cycle routes and improving pedestrian access from the city centre and neighbourhoods close to the former shipyards.

      ▪ Council also embarked on a major engagement exercise with every section of society in partnership with Titanic Foundation, ensuring that everyone in Belfast and NI could benefit from the substantial investment in Titanic Quarter. An ambitious Community Engagement Plan was developed under the remit of our TQ Outreach work group.

      ▪ Of central importance to those communities closest to the development zone has been the issue of access to affordable and social housing and associated high quality public realm. Under the MOU Council worked with the Department of Social Development and other agencies to ensure that a proportion of the residential development on the site will be affordable and accessible to local communities. On spaces and public realm have been provided as an integral part of the redevelopment.

      ▪ Furthermore, an All Party Working Group was established with representation from all political parties in order to effectively engage, disseminate information and seek local views on the operation of the MOU.

      ▪ Given that almost all of the objectives set within the MOU have now been met, all working groups and associated governance structures will be wound up by 30 June 2012 to allow staff resources to be allocated to projects which are currently emerging from the Council's City Investment Programme.

Maximising Tourism and culture potential

- Hosting Belfast MTV Europe music awards, in conjunction with the NI Tourist Board.

   ▪ Complete – Analysis of coverage of the event and post event feedback suggests that there was a major impact for Belfast. It is estimated that 53% of coverage was positive while only approximately 1% was negative. Coverage reached a potential audience of 2.7 billion people. Based on the percentage of positive coverage, that means that 1.02 billion people will have seen a positive message about Belfast. In terms of advertising, to achieve the same impact would cost approximately £132 million.

- Prepare an integrated Titanic/2012 Events Programme.

   ▪ On target - All events to date this year have been delivered on time and on budget (including St Patrick's Day, the Marathon, the Maritime Festival, Halloween and the Christmas Lights). The specific Titanic Programme has been agreed and planned. Delivery will take place between the 31 March and 22 April 2012. A month long programme of diverse events to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Ulster Hall is ongoing. A free concert delivered in partnership with the BBC was attended

by 1200 patrons and broadcast live on radio and subsequently on television. A concert of organ and orchestra will close the month of celebrations on June 9th.

- Deliver actions within the Integrated Tourism Strategy including the 'Belfast Story', the Tourism 10 Places/Community Tourism, the Maritime Heritage Trail and enhancing our visitor attraction portfolio.

   ▪ On target – A commitment to have a permanent Belfast Story exhibition in place by the end 2014 is now in the draft Cultural Framework for 2012–15. This will be consulted on over the summer. A feasibility assessment, of both the process and physical requirements, is still required. Additional resource may also be needed in terms of training and facilitation. Additional reports will be presented to committee to present options.

   ▪ For 'Tourism Places' we have secured letters of offer for the three areas agreed by Committee (Gaeltech, Shankill and Cathedral). Detailed project plans have been developed and implementation work has commenced.

   ▪ A signage steering group with NITB and Totalis has been established. The trails (Titanic Trail, City of Merchants Trail and Lagan Maritime Trail) have been designed and copy written. Approximately 300 signs and banner brackets have been installed. Additional non-grant funded city cemetery and Newtownards Road signs are currently being designed to link in with the overall schemes.

- Produce options and secure investment for the provision of increased integrated conference and exhibition facilities in the city.

   ▪ Delayed – An Economic Appraisal has been completed and submitted to NITB as a funding application for a total of £12m (£2m TDS and £10m ERDF). The outcome is expected within 3 months. The recommendations of the EA in relation to operation of the convention centre are now being explored further internally.

- Deliver actions within the integrated Cultural Strategy.

   ▪ Delayed – The first draft of the Culture and Arts strategy has now been completed and circulated for consultation. It will be presented to committee in May.

- Invest £1.4M in cultural and artistic activities.

   ▪ On target – 129 grants worth £1.36M were distributed this year (2011-12). Committee approved the funding approach for 2012-13 at the end of quarter 3.

- Confirm and consult on City Events Strategy and Implementation Plan.

   ▪ Delayed - This has been delayed due to extensive workloads in the unit. In particular, staff have been acting up to cover vacant posts and the MTV awards has required extensive support. Additionally there are additional major programmes being worked on (Titanic 2012, Olympics, and WPFG2013) above and beyond the normal workload of the unit. We plan to start working on this again once the Titanic events are completed in May.

- Develop Council's contribution to the World Fire & Police Games.

   ▪ On target - Work continues towards the games in 2013 and there are no significant issues yet from our perspective. However, the Ltd Company managing the event have expressed concerns over the finances. There should be no financial implications for Council and a further briefing will be presented to committee in due course.

Regenerating the city and neighbourhoods - growing the Base Rate

- Deliver the Renewing the Routes Programme.

    ▪ Delayed - The initiative is currently in action across the city - at Sandy Row, Castlereagh Street, Grosvenor Road and Antrim Road. There are over 80 local businesses receiving environmental enhancements, including items such as painting and new signage. A paper will be submitted to committee on 17/4/12 to approve the invitation of tenders for the next stages.

- Support sectoral economic development particularly for creative industries, green businesses, advanced manufacturing and retail.

    ▪ On target – Work continues on our programmes to support Creative industries (digital media; film and television; music and design sectors) and Retail in the areas of marketing, product development and business development.

- To work with other council departments to develop our integrated approach to neighbourhood working to maximise the impact of existing neighbourhood and community development work.

    - Develop and deliver four neighbourhood regeneration projects.

    ▪ Externally Delayed – The pilot projects which were anticipated to emerge from the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships through the Department for Social Development's (DSD) Belfast Regional Office (BRO) were delayed. This is due to the fact that the Neighbourhood Renewal plans were placed under review and, as a result, these potential projects did not emerge. Instead, through the culmination of work from the SNAP unit, other units from the Department and local councillors, a number of possible projects were identified. These proposals were approved by Committee on 20th March. It is anticipated that these will now be monitored and reported through the new area-based governance arrangements for the Investment Programme.

    - Work with DSD to confirm a new service delivery model.

    ▪ On Target - Development Committee gave approval in December 2011 for council officers to continue work with officials from the Belfast Regeneration Office (BRO) and the Voluntary and Community Unit (VCU) towards the establishment of a single funding programme for community development work in the city (referred to as the 'Community Development Infrastructure Programme' or CDIP).

    ▪ The CDIP will draw together eight existing funding streams (including all of BRO's funding for community development under the Neighbourhood Renewal programme), community development funding for the five Area Partnership Boards, the Voluntary and Community Unit's Community Investment Fund and the council's funding under the Community Support Programme - which includes our Capacity Grant programme, Revenue funding for community facilities, and funding for the city's advice and information consortia.

    ▪ An officer-led inter agency delivery group has been established and, with BRO and VCU, develop a draft PID, project plan, and terms of reference.

    - Together with Parks & Leisure Services, develop a Neighbourhood Assets strategy and commence implementation.

    ▪ Delayed – CMT have now agreed to the establishment of a new Neighbourhood Assets group, chaired by the Director of Development, which will report to the Assets Board. This cross departmental group will seek to develop a model to improve the management and programming of the council's physical assets and to collaborate with our partners who have their own local assets. CMT

have asked officers to develop a terms of reference for the group and establish secretariat arrangements and a draft project plan. Following the first meeting of the new group a report will be brought to SP&R committee.

1.4 Better Support for People & Communities

Developing strong neighbourhoods & supporting communities

- Champion and secure integrated support for a Community Development model for the city.

  - On target - The Community Development model forms the basis for the draft community development strategy an update for which is given below. Staff are also working with a number of statutory partners, including the Public Health Agency, to take forward a shared approach to the model. Specifically, staff are working with BRO and VCU to adopt the model as a basis for a shared outcomes framework for the proposed Community Development Infrastructure Programme. BRO and VCU have adopted the model in principle subject to its approval by SP&R.

- Deliver new Community Development Strategy.

  - Delayed - A final draft of the strategy has now been prepared and equality screened. These documents were presented to CMT in April. However, before the final draft is presented to the SP&R committee, CMT wish to consider in more detail the implementation plan for the strategy in particular its implications for each department. Once final approval is given by CMT the strategy will be brought to the SP&R committee. The development work associated with the strategy has informed the design of the council's three year Community Support Plan; the content of a new community development training programme for frontline staff; and the scoping of the proposed community development infrastructure programme.

- Support 70,000 volunteering hours in community facilities and develop a new volunteering framework.

  - Off target – Unfortunately our figure reflect the continuing decline in volunteering across the UK and we finished the year just off target with 68,984 volunteer hours logged. To address this decline, we have taken action in several areas throughout the year. Our interventions include: a thorough 'health check' audit; the introduction of an action plan to address areas of weakness; various volunteering promotional events including a celebration event and volunteering awards; and staff training. However, it appears that our initiatives will not provide a 'quick fix' and so we will continue to promote volunteering through events and staff awareness.

- Increase usage of community centres and other facilities.

  - Off target – The final attendance figure was 538k visitors, which is just below target. To address this, a Marketing Strategy is being finalised with support from Communications. Usage/booking of rooms within our centres has increased this quarter and in above target at 70.9%.

- Deliver coherent inter agency and inter departmental approach to working with the Traveller community.

  - On going – The Travellers Liaison Officer continues to represent the council on LGP/NAGTO and other groups and attends appropriate conferences. We are researching the feasibility of an inter-agency Traveller Group and a discussion seminar for senior officials is scheduled for late April or early May of the group is scheduled for late April or early May 2012. We are also seeking an alliance with the

National Association of Gypsy and Traveller Officers (NAGTO) to Support and advise partners on approaches to mediation.

- Deliver the first year actions in the BCC Framework on Tackling Poverty and Inequalities.

    ▪ Delayed - The public consultation is currently ongoing and is due to end on the 20th April. We will amend the policy based on the feedback and present this for approval to committee in June.

Create and co-ordinate opportunities for children and young people.

- Establish an inter-departmental plan for children and young people.

    ▪ Delayed - A new project plan was developed and agreed with the Director. This included a revised approach and amended time scales due to resource issues within the unit. We are now working with the central policy team and thematic project board to consider options at a planning workshop. This will establish a working group and agree terms of reference before finalising an action plan. All CYP projects we have direct control over have been completed (evaluation into play provision, evaluate effectiveness of pilots, linking the Youth Forum to neighbourhood youth forums, and summer schemes).

1.5 Better Services

Key actions

- As part of the Community Development Framework, develop and deliver 3 community engagement pilots to maximise community ownership of and access to identified corporate initiatives.

    ▪ "On target – The service has successfully supported the development of and/or implementation of formal community engagement action plans related to BCC capital programmes including Titanic, Dunville and Woodvale Parks, Girdwood Communities Hub and the Arterial Routes programme.

- Roll out access to CityStats across the organisation.

    ▪ On target – the CityStats brochure has been developed and distributed. The CityStats Research Officer has carried out a number of presentations in relation to the system. The opportunity to make further presentations is now available upon request.

1.6 Better Value for Money – An Organisation Fit to Lead & Serve

Human Resources

- Continue to demonstrate highest levels of competency through retention of independent accreditations (ISO) and attainment of IIP on a corporate basis.

    ▪ On target - An internal cross department team has reviewed the results of the mock assessment and have developed a prioritised improvement plan in preparation for the next full audit. Much of the improvement work relies on the personal development plan (PDP) process and so work has been completed to make sure managers and staff are aware of how this approach benefits them and the organisation. The PDP completion rate for 2011/2012 is 92%.

- Review internal communications and implement improvements as necessary.

    ▪ Completed.

Finance, Governance and Risk

- Implement a coordinated approach to grant management through the Grant Unit.
  - On target – The analysis of 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 funding has been completed. A project plan is currently being delivered for the implementation of a consistent co-ordinated grant funding approach from April 2013 onwards.

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Agenda Item 3c
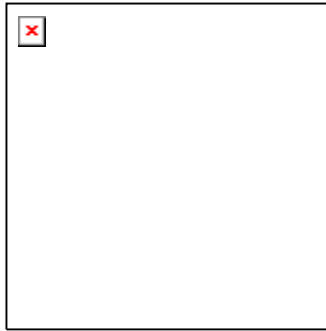
Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Quarterly Financial Report – Quarter 4 2011/2012
Date:	26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen Director of Development ext 3470
Contact Officers:	David Orr Business Support Manager ext 3502

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed at on 18 June 2010 that: • the council would produce financial reporting packs for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and each Standing Committee on a quarterly basis • the Budget and Transformation Panel would also receive monthly financial updates if there were any significant issues to report.
1.2	The reporting pack (Appendix 1) contains a summary dashboard of the financial indicators and an executive summary explaining the financial performance of the Development Committee in the context of the financial performance of the overall council. It also provides a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators covering the year to date and forecast financial position. The style and layout reflect much of the discussion and feedback arising from the members' financial training at the end of September 2010. As we previously advised the committee, we will continue to develop the style and contents of the reports in liaison with members.
1.3	Central finance and our departmental management team have worked together to develop the information within this financial reporting pack.

Document Number: 131323

2	Key Issues
2.1	*Final financial position 2011/2012*
	Net expenditure for the Development Department was £125k (quarter 3: £12k) below budget for the year representing 0.6% of estimated net expenditure.
	In terms of expenditure the under spend of £125k represents 0.6% of the annual budget of £19.815m and mainly relates to Supplies and Services which includes the following expenditure categories: licence costs, uniforms, operational consumables, printing and stationery costs. Transport costs were also under-utilised within the financial year.
2.2	In terms of income the Department took maximum advantage of external grant funding opportunities and successfully levered an additional £395k in grant funding. Within this additional grant funding, there was an £290k received from NITB in relation to MTV EMA's and Visitor Signage; a total of £8k from DCAL in relation to the Community Festivals Fund; £35k from the finalisation of the Tall Ships 2009 event and £65k from the IDF in relation to an internal trading charge not being raised by Property and Projects. The Department also earned an additional £205k in External Fees and Charges in relation to the Christmas Continental Market, Sunday Markets and long term bookings of hire facilities at Whiterock and Finaghy Community Centres all of which were not budgeted for as they all resulted from in year decisions and actions. This exceptional income of £600k was transferred to specified reserves at the end of the financial year.
2.3	The forecast year end position for the department at the end of quarter 3 was estimated as being 1.8% below budget at £350k. This forecast was over stated as a result of exceptional income from the European Unit, Business Support, Markets and Community Services totalling £203k being included within the £350k. This was transferred to specified reserves at year end.
	The department are currently reviewing the 2012/2013 budgets in line with the actual 2011/2012 outturn.
2.4	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.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	There is a year to date under spend of £125k

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	There are no equality nor good relations considerations attached to this report

5	Recommendations
	Members are recommended to note the above report and associated financial reporting pack.

Document Number: 131323

6	Decision Tracking
There is no decision tracking attached to this report	

7	Key to Abbreviations
NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board DCAL – Department of Culture Arts and Leisure IDF – Integrated Development Fund MTV EMA's – European Music Awards	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1: Financial Reporting Pack	

Document Number: 131323

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Performance

Development Committee

Quarterly Finance Report

Report Period: Quarter 4 2011/12

Dashboard: Quarter 4, 2011/12

Strategic Element: Financial Planning	Variance £,000 (under)/ Over Q3	Indicator % Q3	Variance £,000 (under)/ Over Q4	Indicator % Q4			Page no
Year to date variance							**3**
BCC	(3,240)	(3.7)%	(1,870)	(1.6)%	G	⬍	
• Development Committee	(12)	(0.1)%	(125)	(0.6)%	G	⬇	
o Community Services	(133)	(2.8)%	(122)	(2.2)%	G	⬆	
o City Events and Venues	93	2.7%	224	5.4%	R	⬇	
o Economic Initiatives	34	0.7%	(41)	(0.7)%	G	⬇	
o Directorate	(5)	(0.2)%	(185)	(4.8)%	A	⬇	

Executive Summary

The 2011/12 Quarter Four Dashboard indicates that the Development Department as a whole recorded a net under spend of £125k (0.6%) for the 2011/12 Financial Year – under spends of £122k in Community Services; £41k in Economic Initiatives; £185k in Directorate are offset by an over spend of £224k in City Events & venues.

Further analysis indicated that there are four key reasons for the Department's combined net under spend for the year:

- In relation to income, the Development Department earned or generated an additional £1,202,000 (15.5%) of income in 2011/12 in excess of its original income budget for the year.

  Within the additional £1,202,000, there was £602,000 which was generated as a result of additional EU funding and was matched by expenditure.
  The Development Department earned an additional £600,000 of income which was not budgeted, this was achieved by taking advantage of external grant funding opportunities, having increased bookings of hire facilities at Whiterock and Finaghy Community Centres plus additional income from the Summer Scheme programmes, and increased revenue earned from the Continental Christmas Market and Sunday market days. At the end of the year, this exceptional income was transferred to specified reserves as a provision for future city events.

  Gross expenditure for the year was over spent by £476,000. The main reasons were :

- Subscriptions and Grants were over spent by £633,000 which is matched by additional income, in relation to Open Cities and B Team partner payments.

- Employee costs were over spent by £47,000 as a result of unbudgeted staff costs in regards to EU grant funded projects and overtime costs for the Sunday markets which is matched by additional income as detailed above.

- There are savings in Supplies and Services costs totalling £222,000, this is in relation to an under spend in hired and contracted services due to reduced project costs. There are also under spends in licence and operational consumable costs.

During the year, the Department have also been able to plan and make provision for future projects and events and to this end a total of £420k was transferred in year to Specified Reserves and this includes £275k for Renewing the Routes, £75k for the Olympic Torch and £70k for Neighbourhood Renewal Pilots.

Year End % variance

This indicator calculates the difference between the budgeted net expenditure and the actual net expenditure as a percentage. It is reported for the year to date.
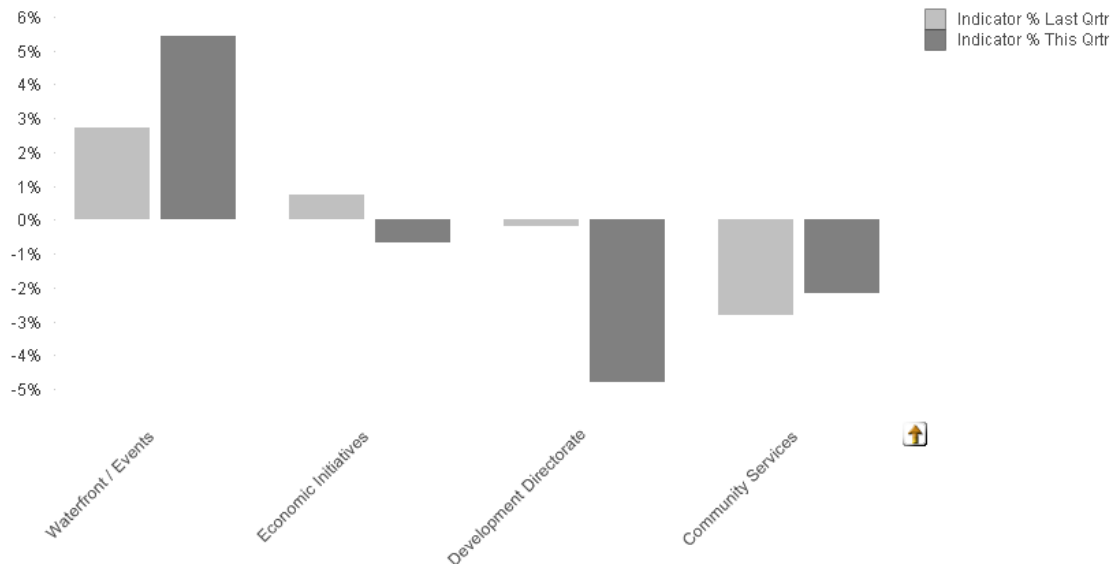
Commentary and action required

- **Community Services** is £122k (2.2%) under spent against net budget of £5.7million at the end of the 2011/2012 financial year.

  During the year the Service generated an additional £18,000 from grant funding and was matched by expenditure.

  The Service gross expenditure budget of £7.4m is under spent by £104,000 (1.4%). This is related to an under spend in Supplies and Services which includes licence costs, uniforms, operational consumables and printing and stationery costs. Transport costs were also under- utilised within the financial year.

  Exceptional income of £24,000 was identified as a result of increased bookings of hire facilities at Whiterock and Finaghy Community Centres, and also additional income from the Summer Scheme programmes. This was transferred to specified reserves at year end.

- **City Events and Venues** is over spent by £224,000 against net budget of £4.1 million at the end of the 2011/2012 financial year.

  Income is more than budgeted by £638,000. Within this, City Events income is more than budgeted by £602,000 (669%) and WFH/UH income is more than budgeted by £36,000 (1.1%).

  City Events - From the £602,000, a total of £467,000 was mainly related to the MTV EMAs and was matched by expenditure.

In addition, City Events and Venues were able to generate a total of £185,000 of income which was above budget and did not incur any additional expenditure. This was in relation to an additional £100,000 for the MTV EMA's, £35,000 in relation to the finalisation of the Tall Ships Events 2009 and £50,000 relating to WFH/UH income. This exceptional income was transferred to specified reserve at the end of the financial year.

The Service gross expenditure budget of £7.5m is over spent by £677,000 (9%) Within this, an overspend of £456,000 (25%) relates to City Events and an overspend of £221,000 (3.9%) relates to the Waterfront and Ulster Halls.

City Events had an over spend of £456,000, the majority of which relates to expenditure for the MTV EMA's which was not budgeted but was matched by additional income as detailed above. Other areas of over spend were as a result of variations from the normal schedule of events.

The WFH/UH over spend of £221,000 relates to an increase in supplies and services to include hired and contracted services, legal fees and compensation claims which were not budgeted.

- **Economic Initiatives** is under spent by £41,000 (0.7%) against net budget of £6.1 million at the end of the 2011/12 financial year.

Income is more than budgeted by £400,000 (16%). Within this, £380,000 additional income was generated by continuing to take advantage of funding opportunities and successfully levered an additional £190,000 in a contribution from the NITB in relation to Titanic and Maritime Signage. Additional revenue of £116,000 was also generated from the Christmas Continental Market and Sunday market days. Planning and Transport received income of £65,000 in relation to an internal trading charge not being raised from Property and Projects. This exceptional income was transferred to specified reserves at the end of the financial year.

Gross expenditure is under spent by £20,000 which relates to under utilisation in hired and contracted services.

Within expenditure, £275,000 was moved in year to the specified reserves account in relation to the Renewing the Routes programme.

- **Directorate** is £185,000 under spent against net budget of £3.9 million at the end of the 2011/2012 financial year.

Income is £122,000 (66%) more than budgeted.

There is an additional £107,000 of income which relates to Open Cities and Intereg grants and is matched by expenditure.

A total of £15,000 generated from the Department receiving income for staff secondments to external bodies and small rental claims. The exceptional income was transferred to specified reserve at year end.

The service gross expenditure budget of £4.1m is under spent by £77,000 (1.9%). Employee costs are under spent by £162,000 due to vacant posts not

being filled and the training budget not being utilised as a result of this. The Department has an over spend in grants totalling £72,000 in relation to Open Cities partner payments.

Within expenditure, £145,000 was moved in year to the specified reserves account in relation to £75,000 for the Olympic Torch and £70,000 for Neighbourhood Renewal Pilots.

Period 9 Forecast Vs Year-end Actual Outturn

In terms of forecasting, the initial Period 9 year-end forecast under spend of £350k reduced to £125k by the year-end.

The £350k included exceptional income of £203k in the European Unit, Business Support, Markets and Community Services, and was transferred to specified reserves at the end of the financial year.

Development Committee - Main Items of Expenditure

	Plan	Actual	Variance	
	Annual **£'000**	**At Year End** **£'000**	**YTD** **£'000**	**% Variance**
Development Committee	**19,815**	**19,690**	**(125)**	**(0.6)%**
Community Services	**5,666**	**5,544**	**(122)**	**(2.2)%**
City Events and Venues	**4,128**	**4,351**	**223**	**5.4%**
Waterfront/Ulster Hall	2,425	2,660	235	9.7%
City Events	1,703	1,691	(12)	(0.7)%
Economic Initiatives Section	**6,141**	**6,100**	**(41)**	**(0.7)%**
Tourism Unit	4,092	4,367	275	6.7%
Economic Development	1,127	909	(218)	(19.3)%
Planning and Transport	881	794	(87)	(9.9)%
Planning and Development	41	30	(11)	(26.8)%
Directorate	**3,881**	**3,696**	**(185)**	**(4.8)%**
City Development	878	891	13	1.5%
Development Business Support	1,865	1,794	(71)	(3.8)%
European Unit	246	232	(14)	(5.7)%
Policy and Research	536	466	(70)	(13.1)%
SNAP	356	313	(43)	(12.1)%

Agenda Item 4a

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Waterfront and Ulster Halls Marketing Services Contract
Date:	12 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen Director of Development ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Jacqui Owens Operations Manager ext 1690

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Marketing Services for Belfast Waterfront and The Ulster Hall are currently provided under contract by an external supplier. This contract was awarded after a public tendering exercise to AV Browne, in July 2009 for a one year period, with an option to extend for a further 2 years. The contract is due to expire in July 2012.

2	Key Issues
2.1	A recent economic appraisal by RSM McClure Waters has resulted in initial planning for the development of an International Convention Centre for Belfast at the site of the Belfast Waterfront.
2.2	If this project comes to fruition the impact on marketing services will be significant and include: - The need to address new and extended target markets, specifically the international conference and exhibition sector, and as a result the development of new marketing strategies. - A rebranding exercise for the venue – realigning core values, objectives and marketing activity. - Opportunities to explore a wider range of options for procuring all of the contracted services.

Document Number: 130161

2.3	Given the early stage of development of the proposed new convention centre it is not yet appropriate to enter a new contract for marketing services relating to the new operating environment.
2.4	Equally however the rigours of the tendering process and the development of a change management programme around the appointment of a new contractor for the interim period of time are not viable. For this reason management are seeking to extend the current contract with AV Browne for a period of up to 12 months dependant on progress on the plans for the new development.
2.5	This contract is not covered by the EU rules and advice from both legal services and the procurement manager is that there would be no legal or procurement impediment in regard to a proposed extension on the current contract.

3	Resource Implications
	None

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	There are no equality and good relations considerations

5	Recommendations
	The Development Committee is asked to : Give approval to extend the Waterfront and Ulster Halls Marketing Services contract with AVBrowne up to March 2013 which will represent an extension to the existing contract of 9 months. The extension to be monitored on a month by month basis thereafter for up to a further three months depending on the progress of plans for the development of a Convention Centre for Belfast.

6	Decision Tracking
Further to approval, extension of the contract will run on a month by month basis in line with decisions on the potential redevelopment and any associated timeline and then monthly up to August 2013. Reporting Officer: Jacqui Owens	

Document Number: 130161

Agenda Item 4b

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	BVCB and BCCM
Date:	26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext.3470
Contact Officers:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext.3459

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	Following a proposal agreed at Development Committee, a cross-party group of Members were convened to discuss interrelationships between Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) and Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM). A session was held recently which was attended by two Members – Councillors Maskey and Webb. Given limited attendance at this meeting, the Members agreed that a further report be brought back to Development Committee by way of update.

2	**Key Issues**
2.1	Discussion centred around the roles and responsibilities of Council's two arms-length organisations, BVCB and BCCM and any potential overlaps or duplications. The conclusion reached was that both organisations had bespoke missions which whilst related were distinct.
2.2	Going forward there may be scope for shared services across administrative or support back-office. Such sharing of services should be looked at in the context of cost reduction and efficiency. There is the potential of some cross-over of membership between Belfast Chamber of Commerce (as managed via BCCM) and membership of BVCB. Marketing is a current area of close cooperation between BVCB and BCCM and it is clearly recognised that BVCB take the lead in this area with BCCM inputting budget for special campaigns and initiatives.
2.3	The future of both organisations involves differing sets of challenges although both must be set in the context of increasing the competitiveness of Belfast and internationalising our profile and agenda.
	Belfast City Centre Management
2.4	Belfast City Centre Management Company (BCCM) is a partnership vehicle owned by Belfast City Council, the Department for Social Development and the

	city centre business through Belfast Chamber of Trade & Commerce
2.5	Belfast City Centre Management .delivers additional services into Belfast city centre, on behalf of its core funders, which contribute in a measurable way to a cleaner, safer, more attractive, accessible and economically vibrant city. Belfast City Centre Management engages in city centre issues through:
2.6	Partnership between Government and city centre Businesses

Belfast City Centre Management provides a partnership vehicle through which regional and local government can partner with city centre businesses – at all times facilitating strong communication and the maintenance of an agreed agenda. |
| 2.7 | BCCM Business Plan addresses three areas of work in the city:

• Economic performance
• Making the city safer and enhancing perceptions of safety
• Public space management |
| 2.8 | Many of the initiatives that are delivered by BCCM could be more equitably funded across private sector funders through the use of statutory Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). DSD are presently bringing legislations for BIDs through the NI Assembly, with secondary legislation forecast to be in place by Autumn 2013. |
| 2.9 | BCCM believe that there are at least three BID's opportunities in Belfast City Centre:

• Core retail area BID, with retail focused portfolio of initiatives
• Cathedral Quarter BID, with night time economy focused portfolio of initiatives
• Main Office Area BID (behind City Hall), with business services focused portfolio of initiatives |
| 2.10 | Business Improvements Districts will not be able to deliver all of the functions presently delivered by BCCM. There will still be a need for city centre partnership coordination across the BIDs and city centre management of those areas in the city centre, outside the BIDs. |
| 2.11 | **Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau**

The Development Committee agreed the BVCB Business Plan for 2012-13 which articulates the following:

BVCB Core Purpose – 'To create and service visitors for Belfast in order to generate economic benefit for the City region'.

BVCB/Belfast Core Mission – 'Belfast will be in the top 15 performing tourism cities as measured by the annual European Cities benchmarking Report by 2020'. |
| 2.12 | BVCB continue to implement their business plan which was presented to committee in January 2012. In the meantime key activity includes the launch of a |

	revised www.gotobelfast.com, working with sea and air carriers to exploit access routes between Belfast and England/Scotland as well as competing for new conference business for the city. A quarterly update on BVCB's progress will be presented to committee in August 2012. The relocation of the Belfast Welcome Centre remains on target for delivery by Summer 2013.
2.13	In going forward the future of city marketing will be considered as part of the wider international marketing /relations activity that has been flagged up as a project within the Investment Programme. There is a need to develop a new city narrative based on a refreshed brand which has now been in place for the last 4 years. The role of BVCB in this context will be considered; in the interim BVCB are considering renaming to become Visit Belfast in the foreseeable future which is an agreed position of the BVCB Board at present.
2.14	Going forward BVCB are keen to undertaken a change management programme to refocus on a vigorous sales oriented approach and to concentrate on growing the volume and value of tourism to Belfast. They see the issues of business tourism connected to the expanded Waterfront facilities and the issues of air access to be critical and recognise that there needs to be continuous investment in events and new product development which should be market led. BVCB will bring forward specific proposals on these issues to BCC in due course.
2.15	Based on contact and experience with both BVCB and BCCM they have strong working relationships in the field of city marketing. It is clear that BVCB takes the lead in marketing and that BCCM working alongside Chamber buy into particular campaigns as the case arises.
2.16	The proposed way forward is for a review to take place on integrated city marketing which will be brought to Committee in due course. In the interim Members are asked to agree to officers continuing to explore shared services where appropriate between BVCB and BCCM which may incorporate financial management support.

3	**Resource Implications**
3.1	None at this stage.

4	**Equality and Good Relations Considerations**
4.1	None.

5	**Recommendations**
5.1	That Members agree to officers exploring shared services and continued partnership working between BVCB and BCCM.

6	**Decision Tracking**
	N/A

7	**Key to Abbreviations**
	BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management
	BVCB – Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau

	BID – Business Improvement District

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	DSD High Street Meetings – Update Report
Date:	Tuesday 26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	Members will be aware that, at the 20 March 2012 meeting of the Development Committee, it was agreed that Belfast City Council would work with the Department for Social Development (DSD) to deliver meaningful regeneration across the city. Members will also be aware that, at the 17 April 2012 meeting of the Development Committee, a Retail Action Plan was agreed with the aim of supporting the development of the independent retail sector in particular. The action plan contained a range of support programmes which were aligned to the recently-published report by Mary Portas on reinvigorating the High Street.
1.2	DSD's regeneration support has included a significant focus on town centre regeneration, particularly the issue of vacant properties. In order to inform their work on the process, the Department has recently been engaging in a series of meetings with traders and traders' groups across Belfast and Northern Ireland as a whole. On 7 February 2012 the DSD Minister announced that, in response to Mary Portas' report on how to halt the decline of the high street, he was setting up a taskforce of senior officials to respond to the difficult trading challenges facing Northern Ireland's towns, villages and cities. The taskforce will review the support which the Department already provides to regenerate town centres to see whether this might be further strengthened in light of the recommended actions identified by Mary Portas.

2	**Key Issues**
2.1	DSD High Street Consultations
	In order to inform the process, the Department embarked on a series of High Street meetings across Northern Ireland. The purpose of these meetings was to enable local traders and business people to put their views on the future of our local high streets, town and city centres to senior officials working on the taskforce.

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2.2	The Minister has met with stakeholder business representative groups to hear their views and the task force is engaging with the Association of Town Centre Managers (ATCM) and Northern Ireland Independent Retail Association (NIIRTA). For the Belfast-based meetings, the Department worked closely with Belfast City Council and there was Council representation at all the Belfast meetings.
2.3	Meetings have taken place at the following venues in Belfast: - City Centre, 17/05/12, The Ulster Reform Club - South Belfast, 24/05/12, Riddell Hall - East Belfast, 30/05/12, Belmont Tower - West Belfast, 31/05/12, Argyle Business Centre - North Belfast, 01/06/12, Belfast Castle
2.4	The final DSD High Street meeting is scheduled to take place in Ballymoney on 13th June 2012.
2.5	The discussions at the meetings have been led by the retailers present with the following prevailing issues coming forward: - Car Parking – Belfast City Council has undertaken some further consultation regarding this issue and the feedback is detailed below. - Rates burden and implications for business, including clarification around the timetable for the proposed rates review (2015). - Poor state of streetscape in some areas e.g. pavements, derelict properties. - Poor condition of vacant retail units and implications for adjacent businesses. - Need for initiatives to improve footfall in key areas. - Need for marketing of retail areas including linkages to tourist attractions e.g. City Hall, Queen's University; Titanic Belfast. - Need for re-imaging areas of the city to attract new retailers and improve footfall. - Lack of positive messages in local media about local and independent businesses. - Concerns at conduct of utility services e.g. poor timing of roadworks/utility services, excessive bollards and obstructions.
2.6	The traders have been proactive in proposing a range of potential initiatives to address these challenges. Ideas include: - Proposal for a targeted strategy and action plan to encourage more independents to start up in business and support to assist their development. - Supported enterprise zones for independents and start-ups like Covent Garden. - Planning quotas to encourage/discourage certain types of shops where appropriate. - Greater integration between government departments, Council and retailers to co-ordinate initiatives and maximise impact of spending. - Clear guidance on pop-ups and promotion of these opportunities. - Review of car parking across the city, to encourage and support access to retail outlets. - Measures to increase footfall – retailers in the City Centre especially highlighted the reduction in footfall at weekends and as a result of the re-

	location of bus stops.
	- Legislative changes required to enhance offering of retail and entertainment on Sunday mornings especially for tourists visiting City Centre. - Widening of an "Independent Retail Week" concept. - Marketing of individual areas including Shopping maps and other promotional literature. - Event-led promotional activity especially linked to major events and festivals etc. - Getting local business involved in continental market or a Belfast-only independent market at City Hall. - Initiatives to ensure landlords take greater responsibility for the condition of their properties. - Public-private partnerships to allow start-ups to trade in empty retail units and offices.
2.7	Belfast City Council is already working with a number of the traders' groups and individual traders on a range of marketing and promotional activities, with 8 traders' groups now operational across the city (outside the city centre). The Council is also undertaking environmental improvement works at a range of locations across the city and is working directly with other partners including PLACE, Arts and Business and Belfast City Centre Management to coordinate a strategy to address the issue of vacant properties.
2.8	Parking Issues: One of the major issues of concern for traders across the city is car parking. At the April 2012 meeting of the Development Committee, Members asked that specific attention be given to this issue, in conjunction with other statutory partners.
2.9	In discussion with local traders' groups, the following specific issues have been raised:
2.10	- Belmont Road Traders have noted a range of issues relating to parking including commuters leaving their cars in the area and getting the bus into town, shop workers parking on the road all day. They have consulted with elected Members and applied to DRD have the city-bound traffic on the road classed as restricted waiting, a process that started in 2009. The proposed restricted waiting went out to consultation in November 2010. DRD Roads Service advised that this proposal has come up against legal difficulties and is with DRD solicitors.
2.11	- Ballyhackamore traders have noted that they too would welcome a two-hour limit system in Ballyhackamore village to allow for greater circulation of customer parking. They have also identified a current parking bay which is could be redesigned to accommodate greater parking and also serve as a public space.
2.12	- Stranmillis Traders have noted that their businesses are severely impacted by the lack of on-street parking on the road and side streets which are largely used by the student population. Traders reported that there is no circulation of parking at the public park all day on the Urban Clearway. They also noted that trade increases during the summer when the universities are closed. Several meetings have taken place with DRD to resolve the issue but no appropriate resolution has been agreed to date.

2.13	- <u>Lisburn Road Business Association</u> have raised concerns over the "enthusiastically enforced clearway" noting that 28% of all tickets issued in Northern Ireland for clearway infringements are given out on the Lisburn Road. The group has been campaigning for a tidal clearway that allows parking in the morning on the outbound side and parking in the afternoon on the inbound side. Opposition to this proposal came from Translink and the emergency services. The group have highlighted a need for adequate and alternative parking on the Lisburn Road.
2.14	Other areas of the city have raised similar issues including the need for increased parking bays in certain areas of Cliftonville Road, Carlisle Circus and Antrim Road with the introduction of limited waiting times and systems for better circulation of traffic.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> There are no financial implications at this time.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality or good relations considerations.

5	Key to Abbreviations
ATCM – Association of Town Centre Management BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management DSD – Department for Social Development DRD – Department for Regional Development NIIRTA – Northern Ireland Independent Retail Traders Association	

6	Documents Attached
None.	

7	Recommendations
Members are asked to: - note the update on DSD's work on improving the High Street, taking account of the collaboration with Belfast City Council on this activity; - note the update on parking issues from a range of traders' groups and consider how these may be addressed with the relevant statutory bodies.	

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Opportunities for local construction companies
Date:	Tuesday 26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives ext 3463

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members may be aware that the Construction Sales Growth programme commenced in September 2011. The programme aimed to help local construction-based companies to access opportunities within the supply chain of major contracts.
1.2	The development of the Council's investment programme – alongside the Northern Ireland Executive's Investment Strategy – sets out a clear blueprint for significant volumes of major public sector infrastructure investment in the coming years.
1.3	Given the scale of many of the contracts, local small businesses have been unable to access government contracts. They have also been inhibited by the regulatory and legal requirements of many of the contracts and are sometimes unclear about the tendering process and how it works.
1.4	The Construction Sales Growth programme has provided an opportunity to align a targeted support initiative for a sector that is currently under significant pressure with the commitments of the Investment Programme and wider regeneration schemes. A number of activities have already taken place in this regard and additional initiatives are planned in order to maximise the benefit for participating companies.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The Construction Sales Growth programme consists of a series of workshops on issues such as registering for tender information; writing tenders and joint bids; selling skills; project costing and new legislative requirements. These are supplemented by 1-2-1 mentoring support for local companies to help them address key challenges potentially impacting on their potential to win new business. Finally, some time is set aside to match participants with potential supply chain partners and create new business opportunities.

2.2	One year into the programme, significant progress has been made with many of the participating businesses. At the present time, some of the outputs include:
	  − Three companies have become Invest NI client businesses.
	  − Companies being "matched" are being helped to tender for over £15million worth of contracts (outcomes of tenders pending).
	  − 6 companies have had visits to potential clients in Scotland and England and are following up on potential leads.
	  − One company has won a contract for a new shopfitting job valued at £400,000.

2.3	One of the main targets for the programme was that participating companies would win £1million of new business and the project managers are confident that this figure will be easily achieved in the course of the coming years. There is, naturally, some time lag between the tender submission and the contract award and therefore it is unlikely that the final figure will be available until at least next year.
2.4	Linking to the Council's Investment Programme, meetings have been arranged with the contractors for the Woodvale and Dunville Park development schemes to promote companies on the programme and to encourage the main contractors to involve them in supply chain opportunities.
2.5	Members are reminded that EU procurement regulations preclude contracts from being awarded to local companies without entering into an open and competitive tendering procedure. Equally, it is not possible to stipulate that contractors must use local businesses. However it is possible to improve the capacity of local companies to tender for business opportunities and this is the focus of the work with the participants on the Construction Sales Growth programme.
2.6	In addition to the Dunville and Woodvale Park opportunities, there are a number of additional Council schemes which are likely to be tendered in the coming year or two. These include a number of pitches; the Waterfront Hall Extension; the Forthriver development; infrastructure works at North Foreshore and the development activities required as part of the broadband and wireless investment under the Urban Broadband Fund (UBF). Other opportunities for companies on the programme include the development of Casement, Windsor and Ravenhill stadia.
2.7	Taking account of the unprecedented opportunities for local companies at this time, Members are asked to consider providing additional mentoring and business matching support for companies participating on the Construction Sales Growth Programme, focusing on those businesses that show the greatest potential to benefit from the additional support. Other companies – not currently on the programme – may also be interested in availing of this support.
2.8	It may also be appropriate to consider investing in the development of a resource on consortium building and training local companies on this. This is an area that has emerged as being increasingly important – given the need for small companies to work together in order to win business. However there a significant legal implications for those companies seeking to enter into consortium agreements and they need to be aware of this before doing so. It will also be important to take account of potential consortium bids when developing and issuing Council tenders.
2.9	In order to complete this work, it is proposed that £35,000 is set aside from within existing Economic Development budgets to support this activity.

3	**Resource Implications**
3.1	<u>Financial</u> Members are asked to approve up to £35,000 towards business matching and mentoring support for construction companies, focusing on opportunities emerging from major public investment schemes as well as a resource on consortium-building that can be applied to Council and other public contracts.

4	**Equality and Good Relations Considerations**
4.1	No specific equality and good relations implications.

5	**Recommendations**
5.1	Members are asked to: − Note the progress under the Construction Sales Growth programme to date. − Consider the proposal to provide additional mentoring and business matching support to companies taking part in the Construction Sales Growth programme – as well as any other potential construction businesses. − Consider the proposal to develop a consortium toolkit to help businesses interested in entering into a consortium, and to apply this model to Council contracts, ensuring that they can be accessed by small companies.

6	**Documents Attached**
None.	

Document Number: 131802

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Digital Hub update
Date:	Tuesday 26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives ext 3463

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that the Belfast City Council Investment Programme 2012-15 sets out a package of measures to help address the impact of the economic downturn across Belfast and to capitalise on the city's growing reputation as a choice for foreign direct investment and a top tourism and cultural destination.
1.2	Specific proposals include establishing a Digital Hub – a proposed £4m investment to promote digital technology based enterprises in the city. Belfast City Council has been playing a key role in the development of the creative industries since 2004, (with a key focus on film, television, digital media, music and design) and the sector has been identified as a priority area of work for the Council's Economic Development team and as such have been involved in numerous discussions to drive this development forward.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Both the NI Economic Strategy and Belfast City Council have identified the creative industries as making important contributions to the NI economy and are recognised drivers of wider economic and social innovation. Over the past number of months, meetings have taken place with representatives from both the public and private sector to identify key areas of development and support, Belfast City Council should prioritise and take the lead on.
2.2	A key project that was highlighted was that of the development of a hub for the digital / creative industries. It was agreed that there is an opportunity to explore the development an international centre of excellence for creativity, culture and innovation in Belfast, focusing on the priority creative enterprises of film, television, music, digital content and art and design.
2.3	Preliminary discussions have taken place between officials from Belfast City Council (BCC); the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL); the Office of the First and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM); the Department for Social Development (DSD); and Invest NI.

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2.4	As a result of these discussions, it was agreed that that a more detailed examination of the digital hub proposal was required with the commissioning of a formal feasibility study.
2.5	The feasibility study will provide Belfast City Council the necessary information as to what the best options are available to us in moving this project forward, including locations, possible partners, finance options and service delivery.
2.6	The final study will provide Belfast City Council with the key information which will be used to form an application for match finance to be submitted to Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the competitiveness programme.

3	**Resource Implications**
3.1	<u>Financial</u> Members are asked to approve up to £20,000 towards the commission of a framework study with a digital / creative hub for Belfast.

4	**Equality and Good Relations Considerations**
4.1	No specific equality and good relations implications.

5	**Recommendations**

5.1	Members are asked to:
	  − Note the contents of the report.
	  − Approve the proposed activity and associated budget.

6	**Key to Abbreviations**
BCC – Belfast City Council DCAL – Department of Cultural, Arts and Leisure OFMDFM – Office of the First and Deputy First Minister DSD – Department for Social Development	

7	**Documents Attached**
None.	

Agenda Item 4f

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	European Social Fund update
Date:	Tuesday 26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development ext. 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives ext. 3459

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	The European Social Fund (ESF) Priority One measure provides financial support to promote training and other activities to assist long term unemployed people obtain sustainable employment. At present, Belfast City Council is a match funder of three ESF projects. These are Jobs on the Move (managed by Upper Springfield Development Trust); Jobs 4 u (managed by East Belfast Mission) and Learn to Earn (managed by Time Associates). The Council also manages the delivery of its own project – HARTE (Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment).
1.2	ESF projects are of a three year duration and the match funding commitment for the projects must be confirmed on an annual basis. At the February 2012 Development Committee meeting, Members approved the match funding for 2012-2013 and requested that progress reports be provided on the match funded projects on a quarterly basis. This report provides information on the year-end figures for 2011-2012 as well as some updates on progress in the first quarter of the current financial year.

2	**Key Issues**
2.1	<u>HARTE</u> Between November 2011 and March 2012, five HARTE programmes were delivered (four in Belfast and one in Lisburn). These programmes have attracted 75 participants (against an annual target of 64 participants). Almost all of those starting the programme saw it through to completion (96%). Those who took part received a total of 464 Level 2 qualifications (against a target of 320). 27 participants have gained employment at the end of the programme (against a target of 24).

2.2	For those participants that have not yet found employment, ongoing mentoring is being provided to help them address skills challenges or to support them in their job search activities.
2.3	In order to showcase the work that they have been engaged in and the experience gained, HARTE participants are currently planning the delivery of a special employers event which will take place in Belfast Metropolitan College's Titanic Quarter campus at the end of June. These participants are responsible for menu selection, food preparation and serving the meal at the event. Those in attendance will be key employers from the hospitality and retail sectors. The event will give the participants an opportunity to showcase the skills that they have developed and to enhance their prospects of finding employment.
2.4	In the period April to June 2012, four programmes will be run (three in Belfast and one in Lisburn). Unlike the previous programmes which have been delivered in conjunction with specific employers such as the MAC and Titanic Belfast, these programmes will not be directly linked to any specific employers. The programmes will take place in the Crescent Arts Centre, E3 (Springfield Road) and Sally Gardens. Programmes for the next quarter will take place at alternative venues, in order to ensure city-wide coverage.
2.5	On 16 May 2012, over 50 HARTE graduates attended a celebration event in Belfast City Hall to recognise and celebrate their achievements. The participants received their certificates from Councillor Guy Spence, member of the Development Committee.
2.6	Other ESF Projects Jobs on the Move: Upper Springfield Development Trust
2.7	Jobs on the Move provides a wide range of information, advice, guidance, referral and employer engagement services for job seekers in the greater West Belfast area.
2.8	The year-end figures (to March 2012) for USDT reported that they had engaged with 471 clients against a target of 300 and that 44 had obtained employment against a target of 30. The majority of jobs obtained for clients were in driving, security and similar non manual non professional occupations. The project also supported 242 clients to receive some job-related training, directed towards improving employability and personal development.
2.9	In the year 2012-2013, the project aims to have a caseload of 300 participants and to secure employment for at least 30 of those clients. All clients will be offered advice and guidance on job seeking and 70% will be supported into some form of training or personal development activities.
2.10	Jobs 4 u: East Belfast Mission The Jobs 4 u project provides a wide range of advice, information, guidance, training placements for job seekers in East Belfast.
2.11	The year-end figures for East Belfast Mission report that they engaged with 250 clients against a target of 150 and that 72 people obtained employment against an original target of 45.
2.12	The largest single type of employment gained was in warehouse jobs followed by sales and call centre work. The project also refers clients to other programmes

	such as HARTE and engages in a wide range of personal development activities such as Life Coaching and activity days. 88 participants gained some 188 accredited qualifications.
2.13	In the period 2012-2013, the target is to have a caseload of 175 participants with 25% obtaining employment and 20% to gain at least one qualification.
2.14	Learn to Earn: Time Associates Learn to Earn is a small scale ESF project that aims to provide intensive advice, training and support to a client base that is particularly disengaged from all other forms of assistance. There is a particular element of the programme to assist people consider self employment as a route out of economic inactivity. 25 people have taken part in the Learn to Earn project to date (against a target of 24). Of those who did take part, 10 have now moved into employment.
2.15	In the period 2012-2013, the programme aims to engage with 24 clients with a target of eight obtaining either employment or self employment. It is expected that participants will obtain an average of five Level 2 qualifications.
2.16	All projects will be submitting full progress reports for the period April to June at the start of July this year. This detailed information will be provided to Members in the September update report.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	No specific resource implications – match funding for financial year 2012/2013 approved at the February Development Committee.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality and good relations considerations – all applications subject to equality impact assessment as part of the application process to Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to note the update on progress for the ESF match-funded projects.

6	Key to Abbreviations
DEL – Department for Employment and Learning ESF – European Social Fund HARTE – Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment USDT – Upper Springfield Development Trust	

7	Documents Attached
None.	

Document Number: 131561

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Indie Game Developers' Event 2012
Date:	Tuesday 26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Shirley Mc Cay, Head of Economic Initiatives ext 3463

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been playing a key role in the development of the creative industries since 2004, (with a key focus on film, television, digital media, music and design) and the sector has been identified as a priority area of work for the Council's Economic Development team.
1.2	Belfast City Council has delivered over 35 industry specific projects covering areas such as games development, intellectual property, trade missions and meet the buyer events, targeting specifically the film, television, digital media, music and design sectors and developed numerous partnerships to help drive the creative agenda for Belfast forward and to ensure a collaborative and joined up approach to the development and support of this sector.
1.3	Council's activity to date has been focused on the following three broad areas: - <u>Business development and growth - 'Creative Economy'</u> Covering issues such as increased start-up and growth initiatives for target companies. - <u>Capability development – 'Creative Talent'</u> Covering issues such as supply and demand, training services and facilities, increased liaison between university and industry, mentoring approaches, retraining and attracting indigenous talent. - <u>Infrastructure development – 'Creative Space'</u> Covering issues such as incubation and all aspects of physical and cyber networking and clustering.
1.4	The aim of Council in relation to the creative sector is to provide a supportive business environment to allow the industry to develop, to establish new collaborative networks, provide business mentoring, support innovative product development and the design and implementation of appropriate infrastructure to assist in sector growth and overall economic development within the City.

Document Number 131903

2	Key Issues
2.1	Belfast City Council has played a key role in the strategic development of the Creative Sector through a range of initiatives and actions reinforcing Belfast City Council's role in the Creative Industries and as a result have been approached by Invest Northern Ireland to help support hosting a worldwide game development event in Belfast in September 2012.
2.2	The Indie Game Developers event 2012 is a three phase competition, that will showcase some of the most innovative and interesting new game ideas from unknown talent around the world. The three day event will consist of a launch event and keynote speech followed by business panels and additional keynotes, ending in final judging and a live internet stream of the finals competition. It is envisaged the event will attract over 250 delegates from around the world and provide up to 50 local companies the opportunity to network and pitch to key figures in the judging panel and from the international delegation.
2.3	The total cost of the event is $726,000 and both Belfast City Council and Invest Northern Ireland have been asked to support the event up to a maximum of £50,000.
2.4	Members should be aware that we are in the discussion stage at present with the organisers of the event, which is due to take place at the end of September, and it has not yet been agreed to host the event in Belfast this year. Financial approval will help us take these discussions further and to a successful conclusion.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Financial Request for £25,000 to the development and hosting of the Indie Game Developers' Event 2012, subject to £25,000 being secured from Invest Northern Ireland.
3.2	Human Resources To be delivered by Creative Industries Officer

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality and good relations considerations.

5	Recommendations
5.1	To approve the report and allocate £25,000 to the Indie Game Developers event 2012.

6	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - Indie Game Developers event 2012 – draft proposal	

Document Number 131903

INDIE GAME COMPETITION

DEFINING OPPORTUNITY

OPPORTUNITY

•Create the definitive independent games competition

•Showcase game concepts and sponsors of the event through massive reach of YouTube Celebrities

•Showcase Northern Ireland as the center of the game industry leading up to and including the event.

GOALS

•**Millions** of video views of game submissions

•Significant exposure during lead-up to all sponsors promoting the competition finals in Northern Ireland.

•Live event in Northern Ireland (streaming broadcast) to showcase the country as a premier destination for the games industry

TARGET

•Core Gamers, Game Publishers, Game Developers, Industry tech and service providers, Investors and Press

OVERVIEW

BIG IDEA

"AMERICAN IDOL FOR INDIE GAME DEVELOPERS"

We are proposing to build the most entertaining and exciting Independent Game competition ever. This **three phase** competition will showcase some of the most innovative and interesting new game ideas from unknown talent around the world. Similar to great talent competitions like *"American Idol," "X Factor"* and *"The Voice,"* we will give these diamonds in the rough massive exposure to fans and industry opportunities all around the world via the largest video distribution service on earth; YouTube.

Using celebrities and their reach to broadcast originally produced content leading up the finals, we will be able to drive excitement among the games communities by allowing them to have input and decision making power on which game ideas make it to the finals.

There will be a fan voting component (via YouTube and other social portals) to help determine the finalists. After this, the finalists will all be flown to Northern Ireland to compete for the grand prizes. A panel of expert judges made of of legendary game makers will make the final decisions on which games are the best.

EVENT PHASES

JUNE 16th – JULY 30TH

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

- Announcement of competition just prior to E3
- Massive Public Relations effort
- Sponsors and prizing announced
- Website for submissions live
- Culling of submissions happens over ensuing six weeks

JULY 30TH – SEPT 10TH

YOUTUBE BROADCASTING

- Website updated with contenders game pitches
- Weekly produced shows air on Youtube
- Public voting and commenting on game ideas
- Bracketed system to reduce submissions

SEPT 23TH – SEPT 24TH

LIVE EVENT

- Finalists announced
- Event is 2-day
- **Day 1:** Kick-off & Keynote
- **Day 2 Morning:** Business focused panels & keynotes
- **Day 2 Evening:** Final competition judged by Game Industry legends
- Live stream of the finals competition

CREATIVE OVERVIEW

STRUCTURE:

After the call for submissions and a six week break to cull down the entries, we begin the consumer facing phase of the content. This is where the entertainment starts. Over the course of the weeks leading up to the live event, we will produce one show a week showcasing our eight Indie Game finalists. These shows would be produced with a live audience, have an entertaining host and highlight what is great about each of the different games. The format for the shows is to get the Indie Game developer to solicit sponsorship from our panel of Youtube celebrities (think The Hunger Games).

By securing Youtube celebrity support, the developer will enjoy significant exposure and promotion from that celebrity on their broadcast channels. Some developers may secure multiple sponsors thus launching games awareness while others may receive no sponsorship and be on their own to garner promotion. This all leads to the final live broadcast event from Northern Ireland where our panel of game developer Legends pick the winner.

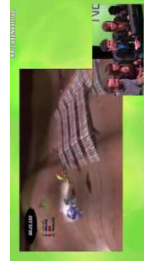**EXAMPLE: http://www.twitch.tv/ xboxlivearcade**

The Host

Co-Host

Celebrity guests

Sponsor Solicitation

Live Playthrough

CELEBRITY YOUTUBERS

SAMPLESS

SEANANNERS

MINECRAFT

- oves Cubism
- he builds it, they will come
- riticizes constructive criticism

www.youtube.com/seananners

- •TOTAL YT Subscribers 1,013,995
- •Twitter 230K
- •Facebook 152K

1 of the top 10 gaming Celebrities

TOBUSCUS

BLOODFENCE

- Has an extra toe... on his left hand
- Is highly allergic to sword wounds
- Enjoys killing enemies gruesomely

www.youtube.com/tobygames

- •TOTAL YT Subscribers 3,188,134
- •Gaming YT Subscribers 873,044
- •Twitter 200K
- •Facebook 182K

1 of the top 10 gaming Celebrities

KATERS17

FABLE HEROES

- Is actually British, therefore better than you
- Adventure is her middle name
- Magic is her second middle name

www.youtube.com/ratersonseven

- •TOTAL YT Subscribers 201,346,
- •Twitter 28.4K
- •Facebook 1,5K

OLGAKAY

TITAN EVOLUTION

- Invented the external combustion engine
- Can change a flat while still riding her bike
- Refuses to use her brakes

www.youtube.com/olgakayw

- •TOTAL YT Subscribers 694,556
- •Twitter 74.,2K
- •Facebook 40,6K

CELEBRITY YOUTUBERS

FHR PIDFF

THOWOGTCHTT

- TOTAL YT Subscribers 1,699,477
- Twitter 177K
- Facebook 61K

CDRRIDDR DIGI

- TOTAL YT Subscribers 875,733
- Twitter 24K
- Facebook 51K

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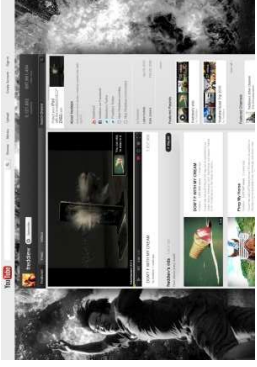
- TOTAL YT Subscribers 4,061,202
- Twitter 195K
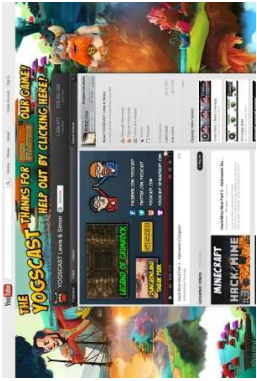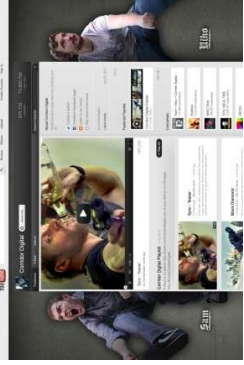- Facebook 509K

LIVE EVENT FINALS

OVERVIEW:

- Focus attention of gaming industry on Northern Ireland

- Host a B2B conference prior to the televised competition final with panels and keynote speeches as well as an opportunity for local Northern Ireland representatives to showcase advantages to doing business in the country

- Live stream the finale where each of the eight developers showcases their game concept, gets critiqued by the judges and evaluated on their ability to generate buzz.

- Grand prizes awarded to the winner.

STRATEGY:

The culmination of the summer long event is the showcase conference in Northern Ireland where the eyes of the gaming community will be focused on. The day will be split between B2B efforts and capped off by a star studded live broadcast competition. __An invite only conference__, we will target 200-250 industry attendees from around the globe to be our guests, attend the panels and discussions and be a part of the black tie awards ceremony. Attendees would be made up of key press, publishers, developers and service providers to encourage global coverage and showcase Northern Ireland as a hub of game development.

PRIZING

PRIZE PACKAGES

- **8 WINNERS**
- **GRAND PRIZE PACKAGES WILL INCLUDE**
  - Publishing contracts (Example: Atari, Konami, Microsoft)
  - Technology license and associated service agreements (Example: Havok, Unity, Epic)
  - Marketing/PR services (Examples: [a]List Games)
  - Legal services (Example: Reed Smith, local counsel, other legal sponsors)
  - Other game-related services (Example: Kickstarter, Angel/Venture investment)
  - Cash Prizes

  (Prize packages are subject to sponsorship efforts)

VALUE

Value For All Involved

For Northern Ireland:

* 10 week lead-up to event provides extensive PR
* "Phase 2" programming will drum up extensive interest in finals competition
* Actual event will be the focal point of the industry and press.
* Contestants and invited guests will see what Northern Ireland has to offer in the games community
* Local games community will be invited and have the opportunity to mingle with the industry execs in attendance.

For Sponsors:

* Unparalleled combination of industry and consumer exposure
* Significant potential for business opportunities/contacts

For Developers/Contestants:

* Consumer visibility
* Publisher/industry contacts
* Prize package

For Judges/Celebrity YouTubers/Press:

* Content
* Exposure

BUDGET

EVENT PHASES

PHASE 1

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONSF

Website development: $55,000

Public Relations: $18,000

Culling of submissions: $10,000

Legal Fees: $50,000

SUB TOTAL: $133,000F

PHASE 2

YOUTUBE BROADCASTINGF

Website updates: $40,000

Youtube Celebrities: $60,000

6 Produced Shows: $195,000

Public Relations: $18,000

SUB TOTAL: $313,000

PHASE 3

LIVE EVENT F

Event Production $150,000

Evening Awards: $60,000

Live stream: $60,000

Public Relations: $10,000

Travel: $25,000

SUB TOTAL: $305,000

GRAND TOTAL: $726,000

[ayzenberg]

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626.584.4070 x25

Report to:	Development Committee	
Subject:	Vacant Units	
Date:	26 June 2012	
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen	Director of Development ext 3470.
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay	Head of Economic Initiatives ext 3459.

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been taking a leading in role in supporting the growth and sustainability of the Independent retail sector as well as city regeneration through supporting trader groups, public art, supporting the work of DSD, renewing the routes as well as legislation for street trading and developing our markets policy.
1.2	In terms of city regeneration and competitiveness concerns have been raised at the level of vacant commercial and retail units within Belfast City Centre and the arterial routes. Within the primary retail core at March 2012 the level of vacancy was 21.37%. An increase of 1.59% since August 2011.
1.3	Within the City Centre, while new developments such as Victoria Square have been essential to ensure Belfast is a competitive retail destination, the consequence has been a move from the prime retail area of Donegall Place, Royal Avenue.
1.4	This situation is exacerbated by the large number of vacant properties that are let but not occupied such as the old Mango unit on Donegall Place where tenants are still paying rent to the landlord while trying to assign their leases; however the units remain in an untidy state, often without any light and offering no incentive to potential occupiers.
1.5	The negative image and impact of vacant premises needs to be addressed through a cohesive and integrated approach that maximises the opportunities to shape the use of the city and ensure it is competitive, attractive, vibrant across the day and night time economy and attracts investment.
1.6	The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the range of activities supported and initiated by Council and agreement to support activity to provide more active street frontages which will help support the existing traders and create vibrant and attractive streets across the city. It is to be noted that an effective partnership approach is essential to deliver the plan.

Docs:131721

2	Key Issues
2.1	**Rates (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2012** In an attempt to improve the aesthetic quality of the high street the Rates (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2012 permits window displays which will animate shop frontages within the specific parameters detailed previously. Window displays will not constitute occupation of the premises and thus the 50% rate relief will remain for landlords.
2.2	An important new incentive in the Rates (Amendment) Act is the provision to grant 50% relief on long term empty shops where the property is first occupied during the 2012/13 rating year.
2.3	The small business rates relief (SBRR) has been extended to provide 20% rate relief for those properties with an NAV of £10,000 or less. In total, this affects just over 1700 companies in the Belfast City Council area (of whom just over 200 are based in the Shaftesbury Electoral Ward. A guide to the current legislation is attached to this report in Appendix 1.
2.4	A Vacant Unit internal officers group was set up by Belfast City Council and the membership has been extended to a wider group including Department for Social Development, Belfast City Centre Management, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Arts and Business and PLACE. Each organisation represented have been undertaking and leading on a number of initiatives to reduce the amount of vacant units. There is consensus that the vacant units presents an opportunity to implement an Integrated action plan which meets the main objective of permanently letting vacant units and creating a vibrant and animated streetscape that attracts footfall and spend to support the day, evening and night time economy. An overview of activity to date is found in Appendix 2.
2.5	PLACE have approached Council to support an "Urban Summer Design School" from 6 to 10 August 2012 which will be delivered using a vacant unit in Belfast City Centre. PLACE are intending to locate the school in a place of architectural merit and have asked BCC to support this search. It is proposed that this symposium is delivered in conjunction with Council.
2.6	PLACE have also proposed delivery of a symposium on the subject of empty shops which be targeted at key stakeholders including property developers, landlords, DSD and BCC.
2.7	Based on the outcomes of the summer/autumn symposium and the academy it is proposed that Belfast City Council with our partners develop an Integrated Action Plan and political agreement will be sought. The proposed plan would be driven by the organisation best placed to take the lead on its implementation. This action plan will support recent initiatives led by the entrepreneurs in the private sector such as the recently opened 'Home' restaurant, the Dock café and Refound's furniture recycling shops.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	A budget allocation of £2,000 support the delivery of the Vacant Unit Symposium which will support venue hire, refreshments, securing key note speakers.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No equality or good relations considerations.

Docs:131721

5	Recommendations
5.1	Note the delivery of an "Urban Design Summer School" which will be delivered by PLACE into an empty city centre unit and support-in-kind support with regards to helping locate venue.
5.2	Support PLACE to host an autumn symposium on the subject of vacant units.
5.3	Develop and seek agreement of an Action Plan at following the above activities are implemented.

6	Decision Tracking
Update at October 2012 Development Committee meeting.	

7	Key to Abbreviations
BCC	Belfast City Council
BCCM	Belfast City Centre Management
DSD	Department for Social Development
ACNI	Arts Council of Northern Ireland
A&B	Arts & Business

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 – Current Legislation	
Appendix 2 – Vacant Units Activity update	

Docs:131721

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ACTION PLAN

Appendix 1

Action#	Action Description
1.	Identify those retail premises which have been vacant for over a year and actively promote these units benefitting from this year's additional 50% relief
2.	Promote a public register of landlords to create greater involvement in all aspects of the city centre and work to have all units which are vacant presented in a manner to attract potential investors
3.	Work with DSD on the outcome of their review of Mary Portas' work in the Northern Ireland context. Take account of the need for a wider approach to the development of a dynamic, accessible and welcoming city centre and ensure that any action plan takes account of the prevailing economic conditions and wider challenges.
4.	After the DSD report has been published, seek to work with the public and private sector in a Retail Circuit Strategy for Belfast - understand those retailers in the city who are in financial difficulty and whose possible departure may result in undeniable void and job losses - To establish the ideal retail mix required to improve performance, identify exemplar towns and shopping streets from elsewhere in the UK and prioritise strategies to encourage the sustainable regeneration of underperforming areas to define what other practical interventions are required to make a significant difference across the entire town centre. - To provide research data and commentary on the Belfast market opportunity in a manner that can be understood by retailers and to create compelling reasons for sought-after retailers to invest in the city.
5.	Work with the DFP and LPS to explain to occupiers the basis of Net Annual Value on which rates bills are assessed.
6.	Promote window displays in empty shop units but consider carefully the management and quality control issues associated with this
7.	Work with landlords and managing agents to try and ensure that premises are left in a state which may attract potential occupiers willing to take on an assignment of a lease. Support the work of A&B in line with a policy surrounding the best use of vacant units and to ensure they are fit for purpose when vacated.
8.	Support PLACE on the delivery of a series of events/seminars and initiatives to explore mixed uses of vacant units.
9.	Share the current database of Arts clients interested in animating vacant units and match with the data base of empty units.

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ACTION PLAN

Appendix 1

Action#	Action Description
10.	Communications – ensure there are clear fact sheets to explain the legal and financial implications arising from occupying an empty retail space. The fact sheet must clearly explain what organisations can and cannot do, life spans of projects, rates liabilities etc. Solid evidence of the success of these initiatives need to be promoted through case studies, literature and 'seeing is believing' events

Appendix 1
Current legislation

Belfast City Centre Vacant Units

When rating of empty commercial premises was introduced in 2004 it was anticipated that landlords having to pay 50% of the normal rates payable would act as swiftly as possible to re-let the premises and secure occupiers able to pay the rates on the premises.

However, due to the economic downturn, a situation has arisen whereby empty premises primarily retail in the high street have remained vacant often for lengthy periods. The government has recently reacted to this situation and has introduced a number of measures reduce the impact of the empty units on the high streets.

Rates (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2012

In an attempt to improve the aesthetic quality of the high street the Rates (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2012 permits window displays which will animate shop frontages within the specific parameters detailed previously.

Window displays will not constitute occupation of the premises and thus the 50% rate relief will remain for landlords. This is primarily a cosmetic exercise to encourage landlords to be creative with their shop frontages and to remove the blight of dead poorly lit frontages in our shopping streets.

The reason why the number of charity shops has increased in the city centre is because charities receive exemption for the payment of rates and this relieves landlords of the 50% rates burden to which they are subject if the premises remain empty.

An important new incentive in the Rates (Amendment) Act is the provision to grant 50% relief on long term empty shops where the property is first occupied during the 2012/13 rating year. The previous vacancy period must be for a period of 12 months or more. This is a measure specifically designed to attract potential tenant towards properties which have been unoccupied over a long period. *Estates Agents should be encouraged to actively promote this additional relief which is only available until 1st April 2013*.

The small business rates relief (SBRR) has been extended to provide 20% rate relief for those properties with an NAV of £10,000 or less. In total, this affects just over 1700 companies in the Belfast City Council area (of whom just over 200 are based in the Shaftesbury Electoral Ward.

Current situation

Many potential occupiers may be able to pay rates. However, combined with the other occupation costs for rent, service charge etc., the total cost is beyond their means. What has occurred in the city centre are short term agreements between landlord and tenant whereby the tenant pays the rates and the landlord either substantially reduces the rent payable in order that the rates are covered.

Potential occupiers can only avoid paying rates is they meet the charities exemption criteria and if the usage directly relates to their charitable activity.

Meanwhile uses, pop up shops and other short term occupiers *are not specifically provided for within the legislation*. Arrangements are made privately with landlord and the assessment of rates is undertaken by Land and Property Services after occupation. Whilst there is a period of three months for re-letting when a property becomes vacant and in which no rates are charged, should the property be occupied again within the 3 months period, LPS may make an assessment. 50% rates become payable should a property remain vacant after the 3 month period.

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Appendix 2
Vacant Units Activity Update

City Dressing – Cow Parade

Members agreed to bring the CowParade Public Art Event to Belfast in 2012 Development Committee of 14th September 2011. This will be part of the City Dressing Project 2012-2013 and is an effort to enhance the visitor experience in the city, increase visitor expenditure and enhance the attractiveness of the environment for both local communities and visitors. Belfast will host 17 cows that have been inspired by community groups across the city. CowParade Belfast will be formally launched on 19 July 2012 at St Anne's Square and then cows will go on location in all of the tourism place destinations including Ormeau Park, Queen's Quarter, Waterworks Park, Lisburn Road, Belfast Hills, Cathedral Quarter, Gaeltacht Quarter, Titanic Quarter, St George's Market, Belfast City Hall, Holywood Arches.

Artists interest in using empty units

ACNI have undertaken an expression of interest among their clients which will be shared with City Centre Management in an effort to link landlords and artists up and agree projects to take forward in the empty spaces.

Public Art Lisburn Road

Members should be aware that the Development Committee on 13th April 2011 agreed to spend £6000 from the Tourism Art and Culture budget on existing street artwork on hoarding erected by building control as a proactive response to screen off and protect the public from the increasing number of dilapidated properties across the city.

Belfast City Centre Management – Temporary Window Dressing

Currently BCCM has awarded a contract to dress 6 windows of vacant premises in the city centre in an imaginative and vibrant way. A budget of £10,000 will be allocated to the contractor and it is anticipated that the outcome of this initiative will secure private sector match funding to roll out the scheme, improve public perception, drive footfall and ultimately secure future occupancy of the premises. With additional support from Belfast City Council additional units will be dressed to support the Literary Belfast project.

Shop Window Initiative

Improving the appearance of vacant units can be delivered in a variety of formats, cultural organisations and charities involved with dance and art groups could be encouraged to become temporary occupiers of vacant space and through delivery of their active programmes bring people into the city centre and provide a use for space which would otherwise remain unused.

In July 2011 a number of properties located in St Anne's Square, Cornmarket, Wellington Place, Upper Queen Street, Castle Lane and Obel Tower were decorated with banners and displays, community quotes from some of Belfast's leading actors and poets. The 'shop window' initiative was delivered on the Council's behalf by Arts and Business NI who have established strong partnership with Belfast City Centre Management property owners and local businesses to identify potential sites across the city. The initiative was part financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for Northern

Appendix 2
Vacant Units Activity Update

Ireland administered by NITB. The amount allocated to Arts & Business for the entire initiative was £10,000, £7500 paid by NITB, £2500 BCC.

Out of Place

In September 2009 Arts & Business Northern Ireland in conjunction with Belfast City Council held a consultation with a number of business and arts partners regarding the possible use of empty retail spaces in Belfast City Centre.

The consultation indicated that there was overwhelming support from the property sector in moving forward on a project which would address this issue.

Arts and Business, PLACE and BCCM worked in partnership with Deramore Properties. The aim was to utilise the learning from the pilot project to encourage businesses in the property sector to use the arts community and their skills to fill these empty spaces, to re-animate the city centre and in turn bring new viable tenants to them.

The pilot was a success with a 3 month occupancy period which converted the retail unit into a public space including workshops, exhibitions and talks. The occupying organisation were subject to zero rateable value which in turn allowed the business to contribute financially to the fit out and running costs of the building for the duration that it was occupied.
Most crucially, the unit was re-animated and shown as a commercially viable space which allowed the landlords to successfully let the unit during the project.

The project also was fortunate in that there was a financial contribution from both the business partner and Arts & Business Northern Ireland which meant that the content and usage of the space was innovative and meaningful.

Arts and Business work with empty retail spaces precedes the pilot with their work with Robinson McIlwaine in converting the ground floor of their premises into gallery space. Since the pilot Arts and Business have worked on a number of other initiatives listed below:

1. Robinson McIlwaine & The Golden Thread Gallery (2007) – conversion of unused ground floor space of RMI architects to a fully functioning gallery

Appendix 2
Vacant Units Activity Update

2. The Outlet/ W5 – utilisation of empty space at The Outlet Banbridge as a mini-W5

3. The Outlet / Ulster Orchestra- creation of the Music Room – a fully interactive music space within an empty unit

4. Victoria Square/ Belfast Print Workshop – empty unit utilised as exhibition space

5. Victoria Square / Cinemagic – children's workshops taking place in un-let space.

6. Cahoots Ni / Northern Bank - long standing lease of former Northern Bank building for rehearsal and storage space and activity in the shop frontage.

THE OPEN SOURCE

Time: 12.00-7.00pm daily
Sinclair House, 89/101 Royal Avenue, Belfast, BT1 1FE

The Open Source took place during the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival and turned the vacant Art Deco Sinclair House, Royal Avenue into a performance space, music venue, workshop hub, tea room and tuck shop. The Open Source was a hub to harness creative energy, a platform for talent and great ideas, and a drop-in venue to provide great atmosphere and delicious food for visitors to the festival.

Workshops were programmed on an open source basis, with slots filled by those who want to share their skills or spread their ideas.

The venue was run by volunteers.

This was a somewhereto_ project managed by Seedhead Arts in partnership with PLACE and supported by McConnell Properties.
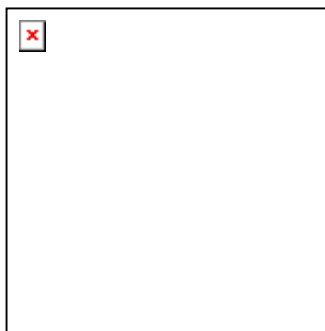
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Agenda Item 4i

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Workshop with Members on Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012 –15
Date:	26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	**Relevant Background Information**
	As you will be aware, at Development Committee on 22 May 2012, Members agreed the draft Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012–15 and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA).
	The public consultation on the Cultural Framework and EQIA opened on 11 June and will close on 31 August 2012. Consultees can have their views heard by responding to two short questionnaires or by attending meetings facilitated by our partners, including at community centres across Belfast.
	In the development of the draft Framework, Council's Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit undertook a series of workshops with the arts sector, which would like Councillors to play a greater role as advocates for culture and arts. Members therefore agreed to the Chair, Deputy Chair and one representative from each of the other parties participating in a workshop with existing culture and arts funding clients.

2	**Key Issues**
	It is proposed that the workshop with Members will take place in City Hall at 5.30 pm on Thursday 16 August 2012.
	The Chair and representatives would be invited to sit on a panel and give a short presentation on the Cultural Framework. This would be followed by a question and answer session with existing culture and arts funding clients. The evening would conclude with a drinks reception and light buffet, which all Members would be invited to attend.
	The event will be branded as an Investment Programme initiative.

Docs: 131901

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The budget for the workshop will be a maximum of £1,000 and is included in the Tourism, Culture & Arts budget 2012-13.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	A full EQIA has been prepared in tandem with the development of the Cultural Framework.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and that:- - the Chair and Deputy Chair indicate whether they can attend or nominate another Member - nominate Members to participate in the panel from each of the other parties.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeframe: August 2012 Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay	

7	Key to Abbreviations
EQIA: Equality Impact Assessment.	

8	Documents Attached
None.	

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	The Role of Elected Members in European affairs
Date:	26th June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, Ext. 3470
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, European Manager, Ext. 3577

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	Members will recall a discussion at the Development Committee meeting on 20th March 2012, around the role of Belfast City Council and, in particular, the elected Members in relation to Eurocities and future EU engagement. At this meeting, the Members agreed continued engagement in the Eurocities Network, but asked that a report be produced in due course reflecting on the role of elected Members.
1.2	Like all Eurocities Network members, Belfast City Council engages in various thematic Fora within Eurocities, meeting with officer counterparts on a quarterly and bi-annual basis and engaging in project and policy development. Elected Members from Belfast City Council, through the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of Development attend the Eurocities annual conference in November of each year. In the past, they have also occasionally attended high level political meetings in Brussels to lobby on the role of Cities with the EU Commission and EU Parliament. Within Belfast City Council, the remit of European Affairs lies with the Development Committee although the EU Unit works across all departments. In other cities, it is led by the Mayor and Leader of the Council who act as champions for EU affairs, eg Sir Richard Leese of Manchester City Council or Councillor Flo Clucas of Liverpool City Council. Although the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Development within Belfast City Council attend the Eurocities AGM, there is the potential to increase elected Member involvement in our EU work.

1.3	There are opportunities throughout the year where Members could play a greater role. An upcoming example is where Belfast City Council has been asked to host the Eurocities Knowledge Society Forum here in Belfast in June 2012. The theme of the event is cyber security and Belfast has many examples of best practice to showcase during this 2-day event. The Chairman of Development will speak at this event, which will be attended by approximately 70 domestic and European delegates. Other recent examples of elected Member involvement have been through Belfast City Council-led EU projects such as the ongoing B Team project led by the Arterial Routes team.
1.4	In addition, the Chairman of Development or nominee officiates each year at the launch of the European Day of Languages and opens the annual Opportunity Europe event in St. George's in October.
1.5	Political representation in Europe has typically been limited to political engagement delivered through the 4 Committees of the Regions representatives (organised through NILGA), the 3 MEPs and through the 2 Junior Ministers.
1.6	Since 2010, the 2 Junior Ministers have played an enhanced role in EU affairs in NI and lead the NI Barroso Task Force. This is a unique platform to engage senior NI civil servants with their Commission counterparts in Brussels. Smart targets have been set to enhance NI engagement and draw down on non structural funds by 20% per government department annually. Work plans around 4 themes to achieve this are currently awaiting NI Executive sign off, namely: • Social Cohesion • Competitiveness and Employment • Innovation and Technology • Climate Change and Energy
1.7	At an Assembly level the OFMDFM Committee has created a new NI EU Advisory Panel to provide a working brief on EU affairs. Belfast City Council's EU Manager participates on the panel.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	There is a real need for the development of a political engagement between Members and a range of political representatives in relation to the shape of the EU funding programme for the period 2014-2020. Given the clear role that cities play in the regional economy, Belfast and Derry City Councils, in particular, need to emphasize the need for a programme, which focuses on the development of urban areas, similar to the Rural Development Programme, which currently exists. It is important that the Council seeks to influence key political players who will contribute to the shaping of this policy, particularly the Minister of Finance, MEPs and the Junior Ministers with OFMDFM. This should be included in the agenda for any future meeting between the Party Leaders, Chairmen of the SP&R and Development Committees and the Minister for Finance.

2.2	An opportunity also exists to secure agreement from the DFP Minister for a devolved programme for the Belfast area under the future funding arrangements. This would allow Belfast City Council to administer EU funds for the City as opposed to bidding through government departments to access resources. Again, it would be important that the Council seeks to influence key decision-makers to shape the future funding arrangements to ensure that this can happen.
2.3	Members could also consider the nomination of specific Members to acts as EU political champions as the other Councils do, to work closely with the EU Unit, to attend occasional events in Brussels and aspire to represent and promote the City at EU conferences. It is important that Belfast/NI position itself and not be overlooked in favour of newer regions in Europe.
2.4	The Eurocities Network is currently looking at ways to better engage elected Members in EU Affairs in Cities and within the Network. Belfast City Council's EU Manager recently sat on a panel with other Eurocities officers giving examples of NI Political Engagement in Europe. Other examples of City experiences are outline in Appendix 1 attached to this report, which may be of interest to Members.
2.5	Finally, Members should consider attendance at the annual Brussels Open Days in October of each year. To date, for 3 years running, the EU Unit has organised a funding and policy information session with EU Commission representatives for all NI delegates visiting Brussels at this time. It is usually chaired by the COMET Chairman who to date has not been a Belfast City Council elected Member.
2.6	Belfast City Council has 2 seats on the COMET INTERREG Partnership Board. Unfortunately, due to very busy diary commitments, the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of Belfast City Council's Development Committee (as Board nominees) have regularly been unable to attend. Member consideration could be given to nominate alternative Members within the Development Committee to sit on the COMET INTERREG Partnership Board, thereby ensuring that Belfast City Council is represented as a full partner alongside the other 5 councils. This is an important time to influence the shape of Interreg V, which will provide further opportunities to apply for funding to assist with City Investment Programme and try to extend the eligible area to allow Belfast City Council to work with Dublin, in the future, as a more natural partner than rural border communities.

3.	**Resource Implications**
3.1	There are no resource implications at this stage, but should Members decide to engage in EU events, travel and subsistence within reason can be found within the Eurocities budget within the EU Unit.

4	**Equality and Good Relations Considerations**
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations considerations attached to this report.

5.	Recommendations
5.1	Member are asked to consider better engagement in EU activity and to – • Nominate political champions to work closely with the European Unit to become skilled in EU policy and programmes and attend EU events, where appropriate, to represent and promote the interests of Belfast. • Continue attendance at the Eurocities AGM, but through the above-mentioned political champions. • Ensure councillor attendance and EU champions at the annual Brussels Open Days and represent Council at the COMET-led seminar organised by the EU Unit. • Member consideration should also be given to the selection of alternative Development Committee Members to sit on the COMET INTERREG Partnership Board.

6.	Decision Tracking
	There is no decision tracking attached to this report.

	Key to Abbreviations
	NILGA NI Local Government Association MEPs Members of the European Parliament OFMDFM Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 'Mission impossible? Getting politicians more involved in EUROCITIES'.

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	INTERREG V Model
Date:	26th June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Laura Leonard, European Manager, ext 3577

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	The five Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups are made up of thirty three local authorities and cover the Ireland/N Ireland INTERREG IVA eligible area. These partnerships are COMET INTERREG Partnership, East Border Region, Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN), North East Partnership and North West Region Cross Border Group.
1.2	A working group consisting of one County Manager, one Chief Executive Officer, the Chair and Manager of each local authority led cross border group or partnership has been established. The COMET INTERREG Partnership is represented on this group by the Chair of the Board, Councillor Jenny Palmer, Sheila McClelland, Chief Executive of Carrickfergus Borough Council, Belfast City Council's European Unit Manager and the COMET INTERREG Partnership Manager.
1.3	The role of this group is to define and lobby for the future roles of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the context of the new round of EU Structural Funds 2014-2020, in particular the INTERREG V Programme, and to propose an appropriate model which will achieve the effective implementation of those roles.
1.4	The scope of the work of the Working Group was to consider how best the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups can contribute to the implementation of the INTERREG V Programme in the eligible area.
1.5	In this context the working group considered the following: - Maximising the role of Local Authorities through the Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG VA programme, to bring practical benefits to the communities on both sides of the border and consequently ensuring that Local Authorities in the eligible area are at the forefront of cross border economic development. - Advocating for the fair and equitable allocation of INTERREG V funds to

	Local Authorities through the Cross Border Groups in relation to cross border activity. - The preferred model to implement these funds, giving consideration to other best practice examples in Europe. - Ensure complementarity with existing and changing structures, policies and procedures, impacting on Local Government, North and South, e.g. local government reform in Northern Ireland - Complementarity and additionality of actions across related expenditure programmes, both EU and National.
1.6	The following factors were also considered: - The legal, operational competences and future remit of local authorities, North and South (including the Review of Public Administration in NI) ; - EU Structural Funds Regulations; - The role of the Member States, Government Departments, Special EU Programmes Body and other delivery agents; - Accountability - Efficiency and Effectiveness; and - Transparency and Inclusiveness in EU funds management and delivery.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Following two months of work by the working group the attached paper (Appendix 1) has been produced as the lobby position paper for both Finance Departments and other agencies that will shape the programme. The focus of this paper is on the principles and role that should govern the role of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG V Programme. Further work will be required on the implementation of those principles as the shape of the INTERREG V Programme becomes clearer.
2.2	The final report will be strategic in nature and must be agreed and ratified by the Boards of the Cross Border Groups; after approval by the individual local authorities. It will set out a proposed model and options for the involvement of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups which will provide a framework for the accountable, effective and efficient delivery of the relevant parts of the INTERREG V Programme.
2.3	This paper will be used to lobby the Department of Finance and Personnel, Department of Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) and Special European Programmes Board (SEUPB) as authors of the next programme, as well as the North South Ministerial Council to ensure an enhanced and significant role for the local authority led cross border partnerships. This paper will be used to feed into the Special European Programmes Board autumn consultation.
2.4	It essentially calls for a return to a similar delivery model that local government led partnerships implemented through partnership in INTERREG IIIA and to avoid the mistakes of INTERREG IVA. The model will adhere to the Community led Local Development model as outlined in Article 28 of the General Regulation of the European Union.
2.5	It entails a predefined strategic plan and a sub-delegated budget to deliver it by the cross border partnerships. The strategic plans will mirror the selected

	themes and investment priorities and proposed impacts will be tied to the EU2020 priorities and targets. It will also reflect the national and local strategies and priorities of both jurisdictions.
2.6	In addition to this collective lobby, the Councils of the COMET INTERREG Partnership would recommend lobbying to extend the INTERREG V zone to include Dublin. There are greater synergies with Dublin and opportunities for significant projects to be delivered along the Belfast Dublin corridor rather than as at present with rural border partners. A formal request for this extension will be taken to Department of Finance and Personnel, Department of Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), the Special European Programmes Board (SEUPB) and the North South Ministerial Council.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	There is no financial cost for involvement and officer time will be as part of the work of the European Unit

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 asked to approve the following: - The proposed INTERREG V model on behalf of Belfast City Council as a partner of the COMET INTERREG Partnership - That Belfast City Council's European Unit takes the lead in liaising with Dublin and other partners to work to extend the INTERREG V zone to include Dublin

6	Decision Tracking
Following approval by Committee the European Unit will: - Through the INTERREG partnerships working group meet the relevant people to work on ensuring there is an enhanced and significant role for the partnerships in the new INTERREG V programme - Take the lead in working to extend the INTERREG V Zone to include Dublin	

7	Documents Attached
Appendix 1: Position Paper presented to Minister Sammy Wilson (DFP) on the proposed role of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG VA Programme.	

Docs 131860

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Draft: 30th May 2012

Position Paper presented to Minister Sammy Wilson (DFP) on the proposed role of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG VA Programme.

1. Introduction

The five Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups are made up of thirty three local authorities and cover the Ireland/N Ireland INTERREG IVA eligible area. The total population of the thirty three local authorities is 2.769million.

The Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups are

- **East Border Region** (Louth, Monaghan and Meath County Councils in ROI, and Newry and Mourne, Down, Armagh, Craigavon, Ards, North Down and Banbridge in N Ireland.)

- **Irish Central Border Area Network** (Monaghan, Leitrim, Cavan, Sligo and Donegal County Councils in ROI and Armagh, Cookstown, Dungannon and South Tyrone, Fermanagh and Omagh in N.Ireland

- **North West Region Cross Border Group** (Donegal County Council in ROI, and Derry City, Limavady, Strabane and Magherafelt in N Ireland.)

- **North East Partnership** (Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Larne, Moyle and Newtownabbey Councils in N Ireland)

- **COMET** (Belfast, Lisburn, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, North Down and Newtownabbey Councils in N Ireland)

The Map overleaf shows the coverage of the five groups which taken together makes up the Ireland/N Ireland INTERREG IVA eligible area. The five Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups are unique amongst the INTERREG Programmes across the European Union.

To ensure that a genuinely bottom up approach, which adequately reflects the local needs, as well as the specific needs of each sub-region continues, it is important that the local identity of the 5 groups is maintained. Each group has built up excellent relationships with local stakeholders, have strong local knowledge and are best placed to identify cross border needs going forward.

Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups

- ■ East Border Region
- ■ ICBAN
- ■ North West Region Cross Border Group
- ■ North East Partnership
- ■ COMET

Striped areas illustrate Local Authorities who are members of two groups.
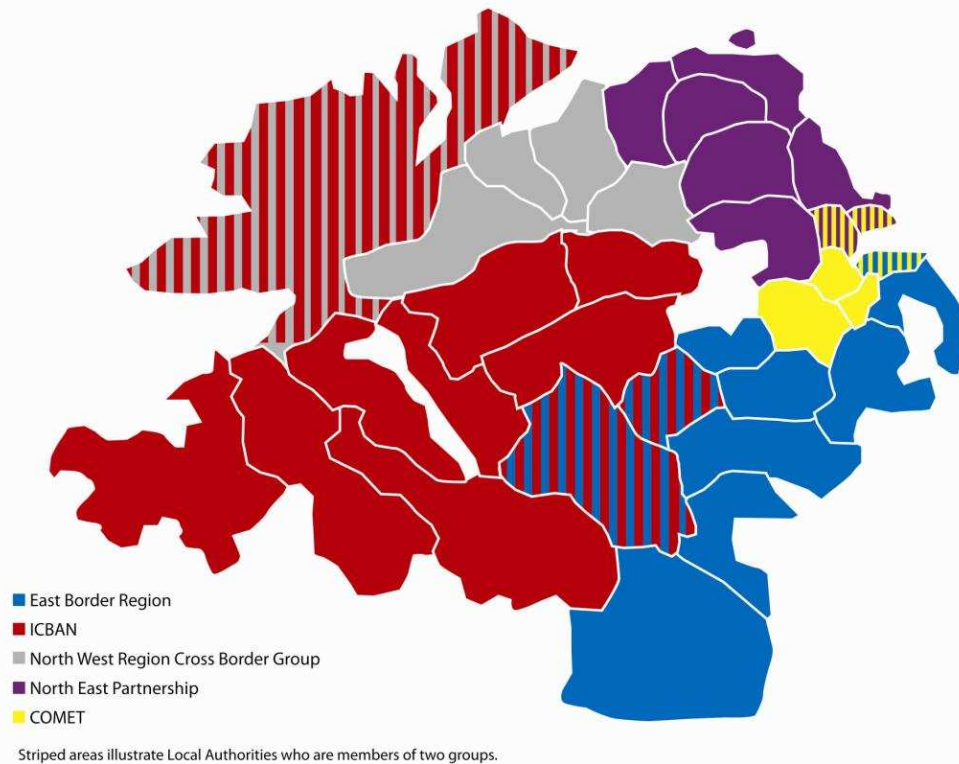
Although they differ in their internal structures and procedures, all five Groups are, at present, composed entirely of elected members of the constituent local authorities.

The five groups have, in recent years, been working closely together to establish best practice in cooperation between European border regions and to apply such lessons in the context of the Ireland/N Ireland border region. East Border Region, ICBAN and the North West Cross Border Group are longstanding members of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) and have used this platform to gain insight into cross border practice in other European Border Regions. In May 2012 NEP officially became members of AEBR.

1.1 The INTERREG Programme

The groups have received financial assistance from all of the Ireland/N Ireland INTERREG Programmes to date. Both East Border Region and the North West Group benefited under INTERREG I as project applicants and under INTERREG II these groups plus ICBAN were funded as project applicants. The INTERREG III

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Programme differed in that the three groups, East Border Region, ICBAN and the North West Region Cross Border Group were Implementation Bodies. This came about following a concerted lobbying campaign by the three groups. As a result, both Finance Ministers in the Republic and in N Ireland, Ministers McCreevy and Durkan, set up an Action Team in 2000. The role of the Action Team was to define and report on the future roles of the Border Corridor Groups in the context of the new round of Structural Funds support 2000-2006 and to propose an appropriate model which would achieve the implementation of those roles. In April 2001 the report of the Action Team was considered by the North South Ministerial Council and the following key principle was agreed;

'That a substantive allocation of funds will be made to the Border Corridor Groups and decentralised decision making structures be formed to administer this funding' (INTERREG IIIA Partnerships)

The East Border Region, ICBAN and North West INTERREG IIIA Partnerships were formed and in total the groups successfully administered €60 million, one third of the total INTERREG IIIA budget. A range of projects were funded through the local groups and the profile of the INTERREG Programme was raised considerably across the eligible area. This decentralised model of delivery was a success. Indeed the evaluation of the INTERREG IIIA Programme stated;

'The Partnerships offer added value to the Programme in that they have local knowledge and expertise. The Partnerships by their nature, are engaged in, and promote, cross border economic and social development on a day to day basis'

INTERREG IIIA Midterm review

During this time both the North East Partnership and the COMET Group formed Shadow INTERREG IIIA Partnerships.

INTERREG IVA Programme

The INTERREG IVA Programme saw a change in the role of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups which now included the North East and COMET Partnerships. There were no implementation bodies in this programme, instead the Lead Partner Principle was introduced. The five Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups developed Multi Annual Plans and these were considered

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by The Special European Union Programmes Body. At the outset of the funding period it was anticipated that an allocation of funds would be awarded to each Local Authority Group to implement their respective Multi Annual Plans. This did not happen and subsequently, two years into the new Programme an alternative process was introduced. In 2009 each group had to submit individual applications for each project for consideration. The result was a significant delay in respect of group projects and frustration amongst elected members and officers alike. Indeed the first group project to receive funding was in 2010, three years after the commencement of the Programme.

The INTERREG IVA Programme is the first INTERREG Programme to award 100% funding. This has resulted in a further centralisation of the Programme because the match funding for each project now comes from government departments North and South. Acquiring accountable department approval for projects in the current harsh economic climate is challenging. Overall local delivery in respect of the INTERREG IVA Programme has been challenging and approval processes have been arduous and slow.

The new round of Structural Funds 2014-2020 and particularly the European Territorial Co-operation Regulation offers the opportunity for the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups to develop their roles in increasing local involvement and participation in the INTERREG V Programme and providing Local Strategic input in this context. The groups believe that the decentralised INTERREG IIIA model best delivered for the people living and working in the INTERREG eligible area.

1.2 Peace Programme

The Peace III Programme retained a local element in respect of implementation and it is clear that this Programme has not suffered the delay and frustrations which INTERREG IVA has.
The Peace III Programme has been administered via the formation of Peace Clusters/Partnerships. These self-forming consortia comprise regional organisations and locally based groups, making provision for cross sectoral engagement.

Each consortia initially developed an agreed regional Action Plan with specific targets and associated budgets, which were submitted to and approved by the Special EU Programmes Body. In the Republic the Peace Partnerships form a sub committee of the relevant County Development Board.

Whilst there is a degree of variation in the composition of the groups, with some Peace Clusters having a more significant presence from the statutory sector, the Interim Review (October 2010) reports that:

'…this approach has brought with it excellent local knowledge and enthusiasm…'

1.3 Terms of Reference

This report has been produced by a Working Group. The role of this group is to define and lobby for the future roles of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the context of the new round of EU Structural Funds 2014-2020, in particular the INTERREG V Programme, and to propose an appropriate model which will achieve the effective implementation of those roles.

The scope of the work of the Working Group was to consider how best the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups can contribute to the implementation of the INTERREG V Programme in the eligible area.

In this context the working group considered the following:
- maximising the role of Local Authorities through the Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG VA programme, to bring practical benefits to the communities on both sides of the border and consequently ensuring that Local Authorities in the eligible area are at the forefront of cross border economic development.
- Advocating for the fair and equitable allocation of INTERREG V funds to Local Authorities through the Cross Border Groups in relation to cross border activity.
- The preferred model to implement these funds, giving consideration to other best practice examples in Europe.
- Ensure the complementarity with existing and changing structures, policies and procedures, impacting on Local Government, North and South, e.g. RPA in Northern Ireland
- Complementarity and additionality of actions across related expenditure programmes, both EU and National.

 The following factors were also considered:

- The legal, operational competences and future remit of local authorities, North and South (including the Review of Public Administration in NI) ;
- EU Structural Funds Regulations;
- The role of the Member States, Government Departments, Special EU Programmes Body and other delivery agents;
- Accountability
- Efficiency and Effectiveness; and
- Transparency and Inclusiveness in EU funds management and delivery.

1.4 Composition of the Working Group

- One County Manager from each Local Authority Led Cross Border Group
- One Chief Executive Officer from each Local Authority Led Cross Border Group
- Chairperson of each Local Authority Led Cross Border Group
- Manager of each Local Authority Led Cross Border Group

The final report will be the agreed outcome of the work of the Working Group.

The final report will be strategic in nature and must be agreed and ratified by the Boards of the Cross Border Groups; it will set out a proposed model and options for the involvement of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups which will provide a framework for the accountable, effective and efficient delivery of the relevant parts of the INTERREG V Programme.

The focus of this report is on the principles which should govern the role of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG V Programme. Further work will be required on the implementation of those principles as the shape of the INTERREG V Programme becomes clearer.

1.5 Structure of the Report

Section 2 sets out the principles which we believe should govern the involvement of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG V Programme. It also sets out the principles which would govern the roles of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in relation to other organisations involved with the INTERREG V Programme.

Section 3 sets out a proposed model for the involvement of the Local Authority Cross Border Groups in delivery of the INTERREG V Programme.

Section 4 addresses the issues of complementarity and linkages with:
- Other EU and National expenditure programmes;
- Existing structures

2. Principles for Involvement

The Working Group considered a framework underpinned by a set of shared principles as the preferred method of securing a meaningful involvement for the Local Authority Led Cross border Groups, and by extension their Local Authority members in the INTERREG V Programme for Local Cross Border Economic Development.

The principles which the working group recommends should underlie future arrangements are:

- In the context of Government Policies and legal and administrative frameworks, North and South, the role of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups should be maximised to bring practical benefits to the communities on both sides of the border;
- The ethos of Partnership working should be maintained between all groups;
- Arrangements need to be compatible with EU Structural Funds regulations and the legal and administrative frameworks, North and South and need to achieve complementarity with other structures and programmes;
- Within this context, a substantive allocation of funds should be made to the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups and decentralised decision-making structures will be put in place for the administration of those funds;
- Structures and processes for decision-making at local level need to be inclusive and transparent;
- Recognition of the role of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups as a source of authoritative consultation for elements of the INTERREG V Programme not managed directly by the groups e.g. Infrastructure

This report provides a framework of principles and partnership which requires further development, discussion and agreement and cannot, at this time be a final and prescriptive document.

We believe that recognition of these principles by Government Departments, in particular the Finance Departments, and by the Special EU Programmes Body will provide the basis for implementing meaningful roles for the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups and by extension their Local Authority members through more detailed development of the INTERREG V Programme.

3. The Proposed Model for INTERREG V

This Section outlines the proposed involvement of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG V Programme. In accordance with the principles set out in Section 2, it should be noted that this is not intended to be a prescriptive strait jacket and that further work is needed, to develop the operational aspect of these proposals. That further work will take into account the response of the European Commission to the draft Programme submitted to it.

A number of distinct roles are envisaged for the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups. Those roles have been identified on the basis that they are the functions for which the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups are potentially the organisations 'best placed to deliver'.

The proposed roles are
- Being the decision making bodies for defined parts of the INTERREG V Programme, where decision making would be delegated to the Cross Border groups through the Article 28 Community Led Local Development Provision.
- Being an authoritative source of consultation on the needs and priorities of the INTERREG V eligible area in the context of both INTERREG and other EU funds for cross border economic development
- Working in partnership with the Special EU Programmes Body to develop the capacity of the Ireland/N Ireland INTERREG V area to undertake strategic cross border cooperation.
- Representing the local dimension on the INTERREG V Monitoring Committee/Steering Committees/Multi Lateral Meetings

In addition, nothing in the above roles would prevent the Local Authority Led Groups remaining able to apply for funds and manage projects either directly or through member local authorities.

3.1 Context

The proposed roles of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups need to be set in the context of EU and national policies and practices, the legal and administrative frameworks, and the particular institutional context provided by the two administrations for cross border co-operation.

The Structural Funds Regulations in general and their specific provisions in relation to the roles and responsibilities of Member States, Managing and Paying Authorities have been taken into account in developing these proposals. In particular, within the framework of policies, practices and regulations provided by the Member States and the Structural Funds regulations, it is the role of the Monitoring Committee, subject to Member State agreement, to make financial allocations and adjustments.

The legislation establishing the Special EU Programmes Body specifies its functions and responsibilities and arrangements for the Body to act in consultation with the Finance Departments. Other specific institutional arrangements which had to be taken into account when developing these proposals included

- The differing roles and responsibilities of local authorities North and South of the border, and
- The role of Government Departments North and South,

We are satisfied that the arrangements set out in this report fully meet the various requirements and constraints while providing for appropriate roles for the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups which respect the principles of partnership and subsidiarity.

3.2 Structures

To be able to play these roles the Local Authority Led Cross Border groups realise that we may have to make structural changes. While the precise details of the structural changes will vary between the five groups all will adhere to the Community Led Local Development model as outlined in Article 28 of the General Regulation of the European Union[1].

The key principles of this model are that Community-Led Local development, shall be

- Focused on specific sub regional territories;
- Community-led, by local action groups composed of representatives of public and private local socio-economic interests, where at the decision making level neither the public sector nor any single interest group shall represent more than 49% of the voting rights;

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[1] Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions. COM (2011) 615Final/2

- Carried out through integrated and multi-sectoral area based local development strategies;
- Designed taking into consideration local needs and potential, and include innovative features in the local context, networking and, co-operation

Each Local Authority Led Cross Border Group shall form a Local Action Group which will be similar to the INTERREG IIIA Partnerships established under that Programme. This group will comprise elected members and social partners. The means by which social partner membership is secured will be inclusive, open and transparent.

The Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups will also participate in the INTERREG V Programme Monitoring Committee and in whatever structures are established for the overall management and delivery of the Programme, subject to this participation being consistent with other roles the Groups might undertake in the Programme. The groups would strongly recommend a return to the Multi Lateral Meetings conducted under INTERREG IIIA as they encouraged communication between key stakeholders and exchange of best practice.

The five Local Action Groups should be supported by an Advisory Committee chaired by SEUPB. The Advisory Committee would draw in wider representation including specific sectoral knowledge and representation from appropriate Government Departments and public bodies. The views of the Government departments and public bodies would be expressed through the Advisory Committee.

See Diagram below which illustrates proposed Structure:

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                    │  European Commission    │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
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                                ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │     Member States       │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                │
                                ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │         SEUPB           │
                    │   Managing Authority    │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
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INTERREG VA Programme				
Etc.	Health	Infra-structure	Env	**Local Actions**

→ Monitoring Committee
→ Steering Committee
→ Multi Lateral

LAG Advisory Committee				
SEUPB	InvestNI	ITI	EI	Gov Depts

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                                │
                                ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  Cross Border Groups    │
                    │       (L.A.G.S)         │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                │
                                ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │      Beneficiaries      │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
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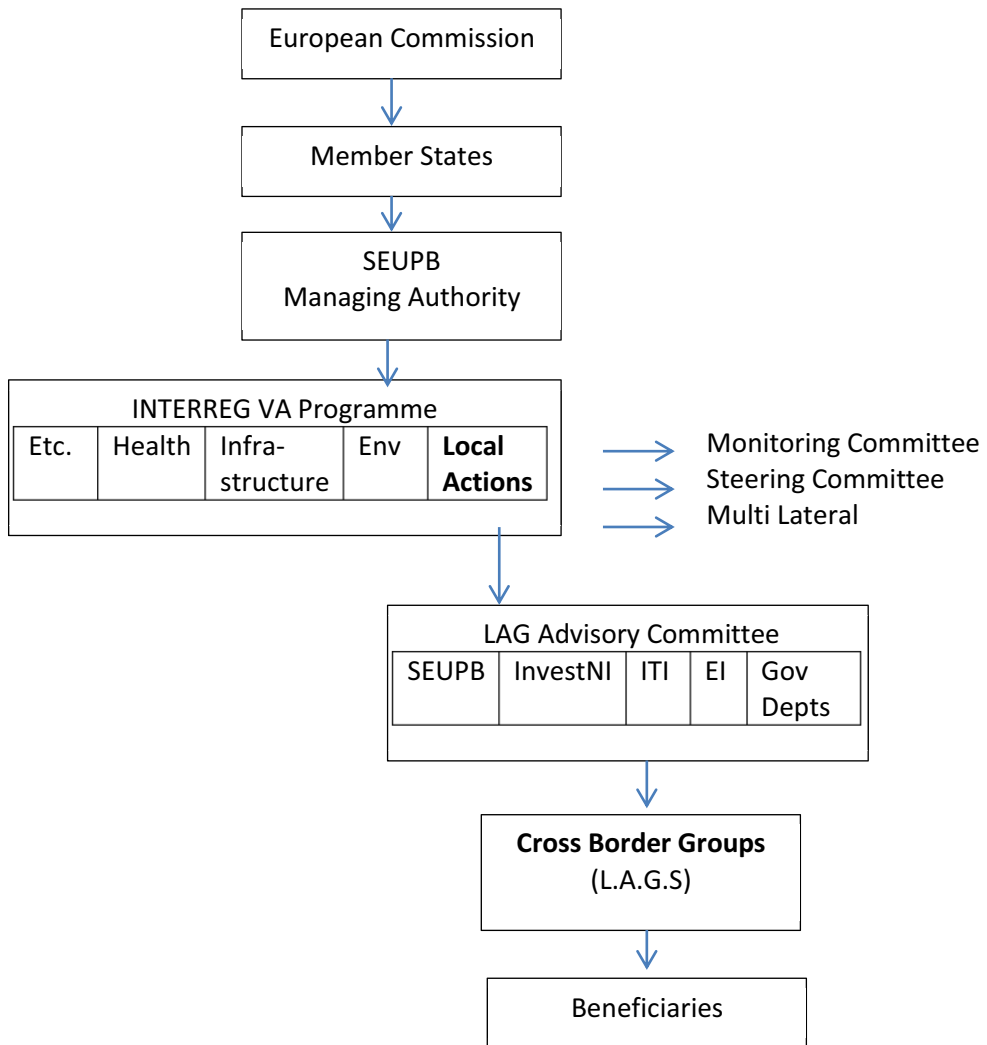
3.3 Strategy Setting

Each Local Authority Led Cross Border Group will prepare a Strategic Plan which will include a Local Development Strategy. The Strategy shall contain the following elements:

- The definition of the area and population covered by the strategy
- An analysis of the cross border development needs and potential of the area, including a swot analysis;
- A description of the strategy and its objectives, a description of the integrated and innovative character of the strategy and a hierarchy of objectives, including clear and measurable targets for outputs or results. The strategy will be coherent with the INTERREG V Programme.
- A description of the process of community involvement in the development of the strategy;
- An action plan demonstrating how objectives are translated into actions;
- A description of the management and monitoring arrangements of the strategy, demonstrating the capacity of the local action group to implement the strategy and a description of specific arrangements for evaluation.
- The financial plan of the strategy

The member states shall define the criteria for the selection of local development strategies based on the rules and regulations of the INTERREG V Programme. The member states in conjunction with the Managing Authority for the INTERREG V Programme shall select the Local Development strategies. The selection and approval of each should be completed as soon as possible after the Ireland/N Ireland INTERREG V Programme is adopted by the European Commission. The Member States shall define the respective roles of the local action group and the authorities responsible for the implementation of the relevant programmes, for all implementation tasks relating to the strategy.

The Strategic Plan will be rolled forward by Annual Operating Plans which will be subject to the approval of the Member States and SEUPB.

The detailed structures and resources required for the implementation of the roles of the groups would be a matter to be dealt during the development of the Strategic Plans. It is envisaged that there will be areas where the groups can pool their resources to ensure that efficiencies in respect of administration and other areas of expertise are realised across the programme. The groups are currently considering where these efficiencies may best be realised.

3.4 Authoritative Consultative Role

The consultative role of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups will be an important aspect of the INTERREG V Programme – this extends not only to the elements of the Programme for which they have a decision making role or to individual projects within their areas, but also to the broad strategy for the Programme.

The added value which the groups bring to the INTERREG Programme is through the local dimension. The groups are aware of the needs of their constituent areas and operate on the 'bottom up 'principle. It is thus important that this message is conveyed through the groups across the whole INTERREG V Programme. The groups should be involved from the outset.

 An authoritative consultative role for the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups can be achieved through the following mechanisms:

- Through their membership of the Monitoring Committee/Steering Committees and proposed Multi Laterals if this role is consistent with other roles in the Programme;
- By participating in the development of the INTERREG V Programme in advance of it being submitted for adoption as recommended by the European Commission.

3.5 Representational Role

The authoritative consultative role of the Local Authority led Cross Border Groups would be strongly reinforced by the groups' representation on the Programme Monitoring Committee, which approves any changes to the Programme in consultation with the Member States.

4. Complementarity and Linkages

This section considers the complementarity and linkages between the proposed role of the Local Authority led Cross border Groups and
- Other EU and national expenditure Programmes

Existing structures

4.1 Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)

The position of the Local Authority Led Cross border Groups is complementary to the Position Paper on the New Regulations for European Cohesion 2014-2020, issued by the AEBR in March 2012. On behalf of its members, AEBR has taken part in all relevant debates at European Level dealing with the future of Cohesion Policy, particularly on the European Territorial Cooperation, and especially on the future Cross Border Cooperation. AEBR has had intensive discussions with representatives of the European Parliament and the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions and some National Governments and regions. The AEBR opinion thus reflects the situation in many European border and cross border regions. The Position Paper states that
- Region specific and decentralised managed INTERREG A Programmes achieve the best cross border results
- There is a need for 'people to people' projects. This could be considered a minor issue for national governments but it is crucial in the practice of day to day cooperation, as it has very much to do with the involvement of civil society in daily cross border cooperation.
- More visibility is needed both top-down and bottom up to convey the meaning and impact of cross border cooperation.

In general the AEBR contends that some of the present weaknesses of cross border programmes which have been identified in the Barca Report, the INTERREG ex-post evaluation and in various past AEBR reports are due to the frequent lack of bottom up approach and overall strategic framework, too many priorities, insufficient real cross border character of projects, as well as the need to enhance stakeholder participation. The approach being advocated by the five Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups should go some way to addressing these common weaknesses.

Due to the time constraints to have this paper completed, we advise that will be undertaking further work to ensure that we align our position with emerging EU Programmes for Northern Ireland and the Border Regions as well as with the national strategies in both jurisdictions.

Conclusion

The five Local Authority led Cross Border Groups fully recognise that the European regulations and budgets for the period 2014-2020 have yet to be finalised. We are fully aware that the INTERREG V Programme will reflect four of the eleven proposed ERDF thematic priorities but as yet these are to be determined by the Managing Authority, SEUPB and the Accountable Departments North and South. We will ensure that Strategic Plans will mirror the selected themes and investment priorities, in turn tying our proposed impacts to the EU2020 priorities and targets. We will also naturally reflect the national and local strategies and priorities of both jurisdictions.

Recommendations

1.   **That the Minister considers adapting the use of Article 28 for the inclusion   of the Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups in the INTERREG VA Programme.**

2.   **That the Minister invites the five Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups to develop strategic INTERREG VA Plans and that these are named in the N. Ireland Partnership Contracts in December 2012.**

3.   **That the Minister invites the five Local Authority Led Cross Border groups to present the above model to the DFP Committee at Stormont.**

4.   **That the Minister ensures that the five Local Authority Led Cross Border Groups are represented on the INTERREG VA Development Committee**

5.   **That the Minister considers taking these proposals forward with his counterpart in the Republic of Ireland, Minister Brendan Howlin.**

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Visit from delegation from Hefei, China
Date:	Tuesday 26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that, over the last decade, the cities of Belfast and Hefei have been developing linkages. These culminated in the signature of a Sister Cities relationship between the two cities in 2005. A number of visits and exchanges between the cities have taken place and new relationships continue to develop. The most recent visit in February 2011 coordinated by the Chinese Welfare Association (CWA) as part of the Chinese New Year celebrations.

2	Key Issues
2.1	An action plan for the development of linkages between the cities was approved by the Committee in September 2008. This included a range of actions under the following headings: - Business Development and Investment. - Education and training. - Enhancing links with the Chinese community in Belfast. - Cultural awareness.
2.2	Currently work has commenced on a new International relations framework which is renewing existing relations.
2.3	In addition, a range of activities has also been delivered to encourage business linkages with the wider Chinese market. Most recently a 'Doing Business in China' information event was held in Belfast City Hall, organised by Belfast City Council in conjunction with the University of Ulster, to launch The Confucius Institute at the university's Jordanstown campus. The event focused on promoting China as a place to do business and the university was keen to illustrate how the Confucius Institute could support local companies interested in trading in the Chinese market. The event was attended by 32 individuals representing a range of local companies.

Document Number: 131510

2.4	Given the increasing drive to support export development and the continuing importance of the Chinese market, a number of organisations are actively promoting trade and business links – as well as cultural, educational and research connections. Key partners in this regard are Invest Northern Ireland, Queen's University and The British Council.
2.5	The International Office from Hefei City has recently made contact with a view to organising a brief visit to Belfast as part of a wider visit to Europe in September/October this year. The delegation from Hefei will be attending the 8th World Technopolis Association (WTA) General Summary meeting in Gliwice, Poland and had expressed an interest in a visit to Belfast in advance of this event.
2.6	At this stage, it is suggested that the delegation will comprise the following representatives: - Mr. Chu Zhaoping, Vice Chairman of Hefei Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference - Ms. Zhu Dali, Deputy Secretary-General of Hefei Municipal Government and Executive Deputy Director of Hefei Administrative Centre - Mr. Fu Nianfeng, Consultant, General Office of Hefei Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference - Mr. Qi Qiang, Vice President of Hefei No 4 People's Hospital - Mr. Li Zeyou, President of Anhui Changzheng Minimally Invasive Surgery Hospital - Mr. Wang Jiwan, Commissioner for WTA Affairs in Hefei.
2.7	The delegation has expressed an interest in focusing discussions as part of their visit on city development. In addition, given that the delegation includes two representatives from the Hefei medical community, an interest has also been expressed in visiting care homes for the elderly.
2.8	While the final dates for the visit have not yet been confirmed, it is proposed that Members support a visit programme to allow the delegation to meet relevant people in Belfast and that, as part of this programme, provision is made for some civic hospitality. The International Office in Hefei has confirmed that the delegation will cover their own travel and accommodation costs.

3	**Resource Implications**
3.1	<u>Financial</u> While the final details of the duration of the visit is not known at this stage, it is suggested that a budget of £1,000 should cover all overheads associated with this visit.
3.2	<u>Human Resources</u> The work required will be undertaken by existing staff resources.

4	**Equality and Good Relations Considerations**
4.1	No specific equality or good relations implications to this report.

Document Number: 131510

5	Documents Attached
None.	

6	Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- approve the allocation of up to £1,000 towards civic hospitality as part of the civic visit by Hefei;
- agree that Members of the Development Committee attend any specific civic event arranged for the Hefei delegates.

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Agenda Item 5a

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	An Munia Tober: Community Services Revenue Grant Aid support 2012/13 and Lease Arrangements.
Date:	26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	Catherine Taggart, Community Development Manager
Contact Officer:	John Nelson, CSUM, Community Facilities.

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	An Munia Tober (AMT) is the main Traveller support group within Northern Ireland providing specific services to Travellers within the greater Belfast area and also providing a regional supporting role. AMT receive Community Services Revenue Grant award of £17,116.06 pending compliance with our assessment procedures and their ability to demonstrate monitoring compliance.
1.2	In April 2011 the Council were advised that the Director of AMT had been dismissed following the discovery of financial irregularities which could potentially leave the organisation insolvent. The Board of AMT commissioned Bill Osborne to assist the AMT Directors investigate the current financial situation and to recommend a course of action for the Board to follow.
1.3	The Council's Traveller Liaison Officer immediately informed BCC Audit and Legal Services of the current position of AMT and it was agreed to hold all council grant support to AMT until the management and fiscal arrangements of AMT met our required professional standard as assessed by BCC Audit, Governance and Risk Services.
1.4	In September, AMT further advised Council that the agreed programme of work to address the issues recorded in the Investigation Report were ongoing and that the organisation were working, with support from Bryson Charitable Group, to address the financial issues and seek a way forward whilst maintaining much needed services to the Traveller community. The proposal was for Bryson to initially undertake the day to day operation and financial management of AMT and to consider options for the long time sustainability of the services provided. The agreement was subject to funding being released from OFMDFM to facilitate

	Bryson's involvement.
1.5	Following six months of Bryson management of AMT, the Council were advised on the 29th March 2012 by Jo Marley, Bryson Director of the *Transfer of Ownership- An Munia Tober to Bryson Charitable Group*. Details were set out in the correspondence from Jo Marley which are being considered by a Council solicitor. Community Services and officers form Legal Services, met with Bryson in May 2012 where all outstanding issues were resolved.
1.6	Belfast City Council have supported the efforts of AMT and Bryson during this difficult period given our stated commitment to the retention of a quality Traveller Support Organisation as an essential element in the promotion of quality of life issues that impact on the Traveller community .
1.7	The current lease arrangements relate to the Glen Road site i.e. two porta cabins and the land immediately adjoining them. The lease expires on the 30th September

2	**Key Issues**
2.1	AMT remains a viable organisation and continues to be a registered company, however due to the recent financial and management difficulties the previous AMT Board of Directors resigned and have been replaced by Directors nominated and elected at a EGM, on the 20th April 2012
2.2	AMT is now a sub group of Bryson Charitable group and is being fully managed and controlled by them and is subject to their assessed governance arrangements.
2.3	Community Services support this new arrangement which ensures effective governance and the retention of a dedicated traveller support organisation in the city. Community Services have assisted both AMT & Bryson during this difficult period of change.
2.4	BCC Audit Risk and Governance Services (AGRS) have assessed the new arrangement for management of AMT within the Bryson Charitable and the associated financial policy, procedure and practice. They confirm that they meet the required standards to permit the continuation of BCC grant support to AMT as a sub-group of the Charitable group.
2.5	Bryson Charitable Group have worked with AMT and Community Services in order to address the AMT financial irregularities, however an amount of £6,000.00 is still outstanding, this relates to costs associated with rent and insurance.
2.6	In order for Bryson Charitable group to formally take over the management of AMT, they have requested that their current core funders consider one off additional funding support to address this deficit position. They therefore ask that BCC contribute £2,000 to meet this outstanding balance.
2.7	Officers will continue to offer specific Traveller Liaison and community development support in order to facilitate this transition period and to build the capacity of the newly constituted group to maintain and then build effective support services for the Traveller community. Service provision will be monitored throughout this period with a formal review of the new arrangements at the end

	of the year.
2.8	Leasing arrangements with AMT are due for renewal (1st October 2012) with the current lease period stated as 5 years. Committee are asked to consider renewing this lease for a period of no more than 5 years up to 30th September 2017 pending discussion with Legal Services and subject to a review after 12 months. The lease relates to the two porta-cabins and the adjoining land on the Glen Road. Legal Services are currently working on updating this document.

| 3	**Resource Implications**
3.1	Revenue Grant towards the overhead and programme costs of the Traveller service provision to a maximum value of £17,116.06 for 2012/13, included in revenue estimates. Officer and worker support from within existing budgets
3.2	The request for the exceptional payment of £2,000 from within existing Traveller Liaison budget.

4	**Equality and Good Relations Considerations**
4.1	The Traveller community is recognised under Section 75 of the Equality legislation. AMT provides essential support services to promote quality of life issues that impact on the Traveller community

5	**Recommendations**

5.1	It is recommended that committee:
	   i. Note the continuation of revenue grant aid support to AMT for the provision of Traveller Support Services,
	   ii. Note the ongoing provision of officer support to develop and monitor service provision during this transition year
	   iii. Approve the renewal of the lease for the Travellers' Portacabin for a 5 year period from October 2012
	   iv. Approve an exceptional payment of £2,000.00 to Bryson Charitable Group to address the accumulated deficit.

6	**Decision Tracking**
	John Nelson will implement committee decision and progress lease renewal in association with Legal Services.

7	**Key to Abbreviations**
	AMT – An Munia Tober
	BCC – Belfast City Council
	OFMDFM – Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

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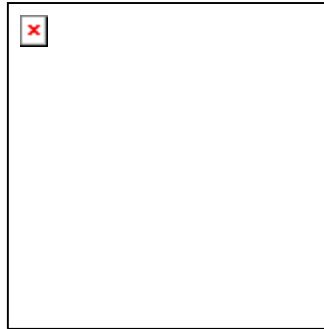
Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Inter Agency Forum on Travellers – Workshop Report
Date:	26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Catherine Taggart, Community Services

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	The Council supports the Travelling community through the work of its Traveller Liaison Officer, based in the Community Services Department, and through the Inter-departmental Traveller Liaison Group. Through this work, internal acceptance of Council responsibilities to Travellers has been effectively imbedded in the context of the Corporate Strategic aims of providing services and leadership.
1.2	Addressing the ongoing disadvantaged position of the Traveller community however will require an inter-agency partnership approach in order to sustainably plan and deliver support services across a diverse range of issues including health, accommodation, education, employment, policing, racism, community safety, culture and community development.
1.3	A number of emerging issues would also benefit from a joined up multi-stakeholder approach, for example, the changing accommodation responsibility, new planning regulations, unauthorised encampments legislation, land availability for site development, site licensing requirements, the Department of Education Task Force Report on Traveller Education 2011 and the All Ireland Traveller Health Study Report 2010.
1.4	There is however no forum to formally facilitate a holistic multi-stakeholder approach in Northern Ireland.
1.5	Despite legislative protections, the Traveller community continue to suffer disadvantage often displayed via inequalities in access to key statutory services and prevailing racist attitudes.
1.6	Current interagency work is generally targeted at specific single issues and there is a growing consensus that no single agency can resolve the overall disadvantaged position of the Traveller community.

	The existing multi-stakeholder Traveller groups include, • OFMDFM Traveller Thematic Group set up to monitor the 33 Recommendations of the PSI Report. This group has not meet for several years • Local Government Partnership on Traveller Issues represents the collective views of District Councils in Northern Ireland on Traveller Issues • BCC Inter-agency Community Safety Group deals with policing & community safety issues within Belfast. • NIHE Traveller Consultative Forum addresses accommodation issues only. • Traveller Health Action Zone Group dealt with health issues however it has been stood down.
1.7	Unlike all other jurisdictions within Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland does not have a high level, multi-agency grouping dealing with all aspects of quality of life issues that impact on the Traveller community.

2	**Key Issues**
2.1	Many of the issues which impact on the health and well being of Travellers are therefore beyond the scope of any one agency. The recent publications in relation to Traveller health and education, the decision about responsibility for site provision, the new Caravan's Act and the emerging focus on litigation as a mechanism for ensuring that Traveller's rights are respected, all reinforce the need for specific and focused action in order to address the ongoing inequalities. Community Planning provides a new region wide impetus and framework within which to co-ordinate efforts in order to produce better results for Traveller people.
2.2	Within this context of need and opportunity, the service held a series of conversations with service providers and support agencies in order to scope the options for improved collaborative working in the city. This is in line with council's strategic theme to provide leadership and strategic direction for shaping, developing and managing the city. It will also allow Council to be proactive in working better together in order to improve services and the quality of life of the least advantaged people and inform how we make best use of our Traveller Liaison Officer resource in collaboration with others.
2.3	The gap identified by many of the people we spoke to was 'a framework to encourage and support multi agency work'. Agencies felt that a Belfast city approach could be developed as part of a regional approach, providing an accountability framework at local level for implementation. The expressed aims of the people we met are for a new model for working with Travellers. This would include an effective process for engaging Travellers and those with responsibility for Travellers, in order to impact on the determinants of health and quality of life.
2.4	Last month, BCC hosted an initial workshop to explore how invited agencies could jointly plan in order to increase levels of co-ordination of activity, synergy between initiatives and sharing of practice and developments.
2.5	The workshop was attended by senior representatives from key agencies including: BCC, Belfast HSCT, PHA, DoE Planning Service, Department of Education, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, NICCY, Department for Social

	Development, Equality Commission, NICEM, Bryson Charitable Group, An Munia Tober, Local Government Partnership for Travellers.
2.6	As a result of our conversations, participants agreed that Belfast needs to re-ignite interest and action if it is to see a step change in the quality of life for Travellers. The establishment of a new Belfast Inter-Agency Forum on Travellers (BIAFT) would shine a light on and initiate action to address inequalities. Any newly established Forum should deal with strategic issues however the desire expressed by all was that it should become a model for getting things to happen in a joined up way.
2.7	The purpose of the Forum will be to: - Provide leadership and influence matters relating to Travellers in the Belfast area - Encourage collaborative working and integration of policy and response - Promote strategic cohesion with shared vision, values, priorities and resources across organisations - Create operational synergy, leading to improved outcomes - Maintain a positive and attentive attitude in dealing with Traveller disadvantage - Provide a strong voice to advocate for equality of opportunity for Travellers.
2.8	There was consensus on the following proposals: i. Ask Belfast City Council to convene a new Inter-Agency Forum ii. Seek participation and some resource from OFMDFM to ensure that there is administrative support for the Forum iii. Invite around 15-20 nominees from across the public and third sectors to join the Forum iv. Seek nominees with the experience and authority to speak for their organisation on matters relating to Travellers v. Ensure that there is inclusive Traveller representation on the Forum vi. Recruit an independent chair, charged with ensuring that an action plan is developed, agreed and implemented vii. Meet quarterly (initially), commencing June 2012 viii. The work of the Forum should cover the main areas identified in the range of official studies and reports produced, including: - Education - Employment and Training - Health and Wellbeing - Housing and Accommodation - Children and Young People
2.9	It was agreed that special attention would be given to addressing: • Public awareness, attitudes and prejudices • Traveller engagement, empowerment and representation.
2.10	Potential Forum Members: The following organisations were identified, in no particular order of preference, as being appropriate members and it was suggested that they be asked by the Council to nominate a representative to attend the Forum. – Belfast City Council

	− Lisburn Borough Council − Belfast and South Eastern Trusts − OFMDFM − Local Government Partnership on Travellers − Travellers' Representative − Local Commissioning Groups − Department of Employment and Learning − PSNI − Human Rights Commission − Equality Commission − NICCY − Department for Social Development (DSD) − Department of Education (DE) − BELB/ESA − Belfast Metropolitan College − Barnardos − Toybox.
2.11	Any further Council commitments would require Committee / Council approval.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Staffing and related facilitation costs are within 2012/13 revenue estimates.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	The planned approach will support positive compliance.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to support the establishment of a Belfast Inter-Agency Forum on Travellers and the pro-active participation of BCC.

6	Decision Tracking
	Officer Responsible: Cate Taggart

7	Key to Abbreviations
BELB:	Belfast Education & Library Board
BHSCT:	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
BIAFT:	Belfast Inter-Agency Forum on Travellers
DSD:	Department for Social Development
DE:	Department of Education
ESA:	Education & Skills Authority
NIHE:	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NICCY:	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People
NICEM:	Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
OFMDFM:	Office of First and Deputy First Ministers
PHA:	Public Health Agency
PSNI:	Police Service Northern Ireland

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Community Development Strategy
Date:	26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen Director of Development ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Catherine Taggart, Community Development Manger

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present to members the final draft of the Corporate Community Development Strategy. This report also describes the results of the public consultation which has shaped the final document.
1.2	Following approval the strategy will also be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for noting due to its cross cutting nature. It will then be presented to the Cross-Party Reference Group on Community Planning (which CMT had previously identified as the key political reference group for the strategy).
1.3	Community development activity lies at the heart of much of the council's work. It is the approach we use to build the capacity of communities to become active agents in improving their city and neighbourhoods. It's an enabling approach that encourages people to come together to influence the decisions that affect their lives; to define needs; to create solutions and services for their community; and ultimately to help each other make a difference.
1.4	While there has been much academic effort focused on defining 'community development' there has been relatively little success in establishing a common understanding or shared agreement across sectors on the nature and role of community development in Northern Ireland. Such agreement is important – it is the basis for designing joint interventions; ensuring targeted grant support; and properly measuring impact. Some have argued that the relative failure of previous intervention in parts of the city have, in part, been down to this failure to agree with communities on what we to need to achieve and how best to do it. In recent years no organisation has led strongly on this challenge. In discussions

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1.5	across the sectors prior to developing the strategy there was significantly strong support for the idea that the council, as civic leader, is in a unique position to make the case for community development across the various sectors. This is perhaps the central argument for developing a strategy for council – it allows us to build broad consensus on the nature of community development work in the city; its tools; techniques; and its outcomes. And it helps us identify opportunities and challenges for our own services in contributing to such outcomes.
1.6	Following an extensive pre-consultation programme, which included workshops for Members, officers and our partners in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors, a draft community development strategy was presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources committee in June 2011. This draft was accepted as a basis for public consultation which ran through the latter half of 2011. This final draft incorporates the results of the consultation and the specific implications for the council which is presented in the form of a three year action plan.

2	**Key Issues**
2.1	**What is community development?** The strategy (see **Appendix 3**) provides a basis on which to build a shared approach to community development in Belfast while at the same time describing how the council can best contribute in terms of its resources and services. It includes a conceptual model that describes the key aspects of community development work. This model will be shared with our partners in the community, voluntary and statutory sectors and will form the basis for agreeing future joint community development approaches and outcomes.
2.2	Our full definition states that community development is *'…the main means by which we can be better engaged with local people and support their involvement in improving the city and its neighbourhoods. It enables people to come together to: influence or take decisions about issues that matter to them and that affect their lives; define needs, issues and solutions for their community; and take action to help themselves and make a difference.'*
2.3	**The main strands of Community Development activity**: To achieve these aims the strategy identifies four main strands of community development activity. (In practical situations these strands become intertwined and are mutually reinforcing):
2.4	**Strand 1: 'Core community development'** Working with communities and individuals to build up a critical mass of active citizens, associations, groups and networks that provide the foundations for communities to articulate their needs, issues and purpose and to begin to understand how to work best together and with local and central government bodies.
2.5	While other parts of the council undoubtedly contribute to such work, our Community Services section is in a unique position in that core community development is its core aim. It forms the basis of the Community Support Programme and is likely to be the key aim of the new joint Council/DSD Community Development Infrastructure Programme.

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2.6	**Strand 2: 'Engagement that works'**: Communities need to have the ability to engage effectively within their own communities (geographical or otherwise); with other communities; and with public agencies to ensure that their services meet their needs. Groups therefore need the skills and information necessary to identify priorities, seek consensus and propose solutions. From the deliverers' perspective, councils and other public bodies must acquire the skills and capacity to engage meaningfully and effectively with communities in such a way that it influences the design and delivery of our services.
2.7	Again, engagement is an increasingly important strand of work across the council and will be a key capacity for successful Community Planning and will support sustainable action to successful deliver the Investment Programme. Currently, Community Services act both as channels or facilitators for local engagement. Other services with a strong engagement element include Good Relations, Parks and Leisure, Community Safety, Health Development and Cleansing Services.
2.8	**Strand 3 - Building effective partnerships:** Increasingly, more formalised partnership-working is at the heart of many of the relationships between communities and service providers in our city.
2.9	The specific community development contribution to partnership working is providing the support for community organisations and service providers to co-design, monitor and evaluate services that address local need. They also need to be able to understand the wider interlocking social, economic and environmental issues which impact on local areas. The Council's work on the BIG Lottery Community Planning has clearly established the importance of successful community development as the seedbed on which Community Planning will grow.
2.10	**Strand 4 - Shared service design and delivery:** Although not always relevant or appropriate, in some instances communities may wish to move to a position where they are the co-deliverers of local services. Community groups become delivery partners in meeting local needs, developing community assets and delivering local and central government aims.
2.11	In our Investment Programme we have made specific commitments to building social economy enterprises and supporting such initiatives as alternative financing and the use of social clauses. In doing so we have established the importance of our existing community and voluntary infrastructure as a relatively untapped source of sustainable economic development. This strand is about working with the sector to build on the capacity and skills that exist to support local economic development. There are obvious areas of work here in which a community development approach can support the community transfer of assets; social financing; employability initiatives; and direct service delivery by the community and voluntary sector on behalf of the council and its partners.
2.12	**Public consultation response:** The consultation on the final draft was substantial. 130 organisations, representing community, voluntary, and statutory organisations were invited, as part of pre-consultation work, to participate in a series of workshops to discuss the potential shape and content of a community development model and strategy. The initial content was also guided by UK best practice advice and support from Community Places, from Gabriel Channan, an independent adviser on community involvement, engagement and development and former research and policy director at the Community Development

	Foundation and from Dr Brendan Murtagh at QUB. The council then undertook a three month public consultation process that included sending copies of the draft document directly to approximately 300 organisations and networks to seek their views.
2.13	In the response to the consultation there was consistent recognition of the importance of community development work to the city and its value to the citizen and in enhancing the work of organisations in both the statutory and third sector. There was broad support for the council taking a lead in this area and that given our civic leadership role we were in a unique position to encourage greater understanding of the nature and importance of community development and to foster a shared approach to both delivering community development work and measuring its impact. (More details on the consultation are attached as **Appendix One**.)
2.14	**Opportunities for partnership working:** Since the council started work on its strategy a number of other organisations have begun developing their own community development strategies or frameworks. These include the Public Health Agency, the Health and Social Care Board, the Rural Community Network, the East Belfast Community Development Association and the Department for Social Development.
2.15	Staff from Community Services have worked with all of the above organisations to maximise opportunities between the council's strategy and these emerging initiatives. There is substantial alignment in the critical aspects of strategies – particularly around outcomes frameworks, capacity building, engagement and the importance of community development to service design and delivery. The PHA and HSCB are keen to work with the council on promoting this role and wish to develop joint pieces of work. While the DSD's own Ubrand Regeneration and Community Development Policy framework remains at an early draft stage the Department has adopted the ideas behind the council's strategy. They have also agreed these will form the basis for an outcomes framework for the joint £6million Community Development Infrastructure Programme that is currently in development.
2.16	**Implementation plan:** The development of the strategy was led by a Touchstone Group that included the directors of Development, Parks and Leisure and Health and Environmental Services. The group examined a series of opportunities that can begin to embed community development practice across services; contribute to determining and measuring our community impact; and building more effective engagement structures. It was developed with the understanding that the opportunities emerging from the new strategy are not necessarily entirely new initiatives. Instead the emphasis has been on how approaches to community development can support and enhance current activity.
2.17	Officers in Development Department are now working with colleagues across Council to draft a robust implementation plan which will identify action and link each initiative to a particular community development strand; identifying the lead service and the targeted outcome of the work so we can report progress and impact.
2.18	These discussions will be particularly important as the Community Development Strategy consultation was in advance of the publication of the council's

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	Investment Programme. It will thus be important to identify and confirm how best the community development strategy can contribute to the effective delivery of the programme.

3	**Resource Implications**
3.1	It should be noted that many of the pieces of work identified in the implementation are contributing to existing initiatives and programmes and will thus be resourced from within existing budgets. Those which have been identified as the responsibility of Community Services have been included in the Development Department budget for 2012 to 2013.

4	**Equality and Good Relations Considerations**
4.1	Drawing on the evidence from pre-consultation work with councillors, traders, officers; and the analysis of the substantial twelve week public consultation exercise; and with support from the council's Equality Officer, it has been confirmed that the strategy has no substantial negative equality implications and thus will not require a full Equality Impact Assessment.

5	**Recommendations**

5.1	Members are requested to:
	
	    i. Agree the final draft of the Community Development strategy.
	    ii. Note the ongoing development of a robust implementation plan across Council to ensure delivery against targeted outcomes.

6	**Documents Attached**
Appendix 1:	Response to the Public Consultation
Appendix 2:	Final draft of the Community Development strategy 2012 to 2015

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Appendix 1: Response to the Public Consultation

Drawing on the results of this work a workshop and an all-Party briefing (August 2011) were held for Members to finalise a consultation draft. The council then undertook a three month public consultation process that included; sending copies of the draft document directly to approximately 300 organisations and networks to seek their views; publishing the strategy on the council website and promoting its availability; organising facilitated workshops for key statutory, community and voluntary organisations; and public workshops in north, south, east and west Belfast.

The public consultation also included presentations to the Belfast Area Partnership Boards and Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships; briefings for staff and senior council officers; and presentations to the council's Equality Consultative Forum and the Youth Forum.

The key finding from the consultation was that there was considerable support for the council in taking a lead in this area and that given our civic leadership role we were in a unique position to encourage greater understanding of the nature and importance of community development and to foster a shared approach to both delivering community development work and measuring its impact.

There was consistent recognition of the importance of community development work to the city and its value to the citizen and in enhancing the work of organisations in both the statutory and third sector.

Key challenges identified during the public consultation included:
- The need to consider the relationship between the role of the elected representatives and community development work;
- The nature of community organisations and 'active' citizens;
- The need to draw together the wealth evidence and experience to build a renewed vision for continued improvement of CD practice in Belfast.
- Encouraging a shared emphasis on an asset-based approach; recognising the importance of existing community infrastructure as a basis for shaping intervention.
- Emphasising the critical role that community development work has to play in supporting Good Relations particularly given Belfast's post-conflict environment. We are operating in a fairly unique environment and our approach to community development must be informed by this drive towards a shared city.
- Taking a CD approach that recognises that the nature of community is not restricted to one defined by geography but which might also include communities of interest, communities of identity or communities of action.
- In earlier drafts of our strategy we used the metaphor of building blocks to describe aspects of community development work. This was challenged by many as too mechanistic and not reflective of the nature of the work where groups or communities move between strands at different times and in different circumstances.

Belfast City Council's
Community Development Strategy
2012 to 2015

This draft published June 2012

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Copies in alternative formats are also available on request from Community Services.

Contents

Preface

A central aim of the council's new Investment Programme is to enhance the quality of life for people in Belfast by improving our services to communities. We have committed substantial resources to achieving this aim over the next three years with multi-million pound support for a range of new initiatives, on-going community programmes and a series of funds targeted at delivering social impacts.

This investment is based on the understanding that Belfast has a rich history of pioneering voluntary and community action. By working with and investing in the organisations and individuals that represent this unique resource, we believe that together we can deliver substantial social impacts at a time when the city faces many serious challenges.

It is long accepted that community development plays an important role in promoting participative democracy and in unlocking the capacity of individuals, community organisations and their public servants to help identify and then address some of our most challenging societal problems of disadvantage, poverty, social injustice and inequality. Community development activity is often the basis for the kind of interventions needed to tackle the multiple challenges faced by our communities. It is the process where ordinary people come together to make decisions and take action about the issues that matter to them and that affect their lives. Without it the work of any organisation seeking to work with communities to tackle complex social issues becomes much more difficult.

We hope that you agree that this council community development strategy is a welcome contribution to delivering on our ambitions for Belfast. It offers a framework for our continued investment in core community development both in the form of officer support and our substantial grant programme. The strategy gives us the opportunity to work with our partners – in the community, voluntary and statutory sectors – to define, shape and measure the solid contributions that community development activity makes in our neighbourhoods and communities.

We believe the strategy is a necessary foundation stone for designing the kind of collaborative approaches that are needed to tackle persistent, complex issues including those associated with deprivation, health, safety and good relations. Specifically for the council, it has allowed us to build a challenging plan of action for the next three years that will influence the shape and quality of our services to Belfast's citizens.

We look forward to continuing to work with others in achieving this aim.

Councillor Deirdre Hargey
Chair of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

June 2012

Introduction

Community development can be thought of as both the means by which we work together to support communities and to describe the outcomes we wish to achieve. Community development is thus both an approach to how the council should go about its work and an overarching aim in itself. It can be thought of as both an occupation (for example, the role of a community development worker in a council) and as a way of working with communities. As such it has a fundamental role to play in supporting and shaping how the council plans and delivers its services.

This is also true for our statutory partners and will become more central when Community Planning legislation is introduced to Northern Ireland. At the heart of Community Planning is a commitment by statutory organisations to engage in a co-ordinated way with communities in the design and delivery of public services.

A new strategy for the council

While the council has supported a community development approach in many aspects of its work over the years, this has often been in isolation of any wider framework or strategy for community development. (This situation has changed somewhat in recent months with a number of organisations developing their own strategies including the Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency, the East Belfast Community Development Agency and the Rural Community Network. The council has welcomed these initiatives and has committed to supporting these strategies.)

Research[1] and experience from Belfast and from elsewhere across Europe has demonstrated the importance of community development in ensuring that quality public services are delivered effectively.

While much good community development work has been done with the council it has become increasingly apparent that a well defined position on community development would have obvious benefits for our services. It would allow us share practice across the council and with our partners. It would also support staff in building professional skills in community development. A strategy would also allow us to define the outcomes the council wishes to achieve from community development work. This would allow us to measure more clearly the community impact of the work of the council. If successful such a framework could be shared with our partners across the community, voluntary and statutory sectors in the city.

Consulting on the strategy

We spent much of 2011 engaging with our councillors and staff, the community and voluntary sector, and with our statutory partners, to develop a strategic approach to community development that could support this shared approach. The council has been guided in its thinking by the expertise of organisations such as Community Change and by academic work from Dr Brendan Murtagh at Queen's University and Gabriel Chanon, former director of research and policy at the Community Development Foundation.

In our engagement and in our public consultation on the draft strategy there was considerable support for the council in taking a lead in this area. At a series of

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[1] For example *Civil Renewal* (Dick Atkinson, Brewin Books, 2004); and *The Community Development Challenge* (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2007)

workshops and briefings our approach has been informed by the views of groups from across the community, voluntary and statutory sectors.

There was recognition of the importance of community development work to the city and its value to the citizen and in enhancing the work of organisations. This final draft of the strategy incorporates a number of challenges and suggestions from those with whom we consulted. Key challenges included:

- Considering the relationship between elected representatives and community development work
- The nature of community organisations and active citizens
- The need to draw together the wealth of evidence and experience to build a renewed vision for continued improvement of CD practice in Belfast. The council, as civic leader, is in a unique position to encourage this.
- The shared roles and responsibilities of organisations within partnership arrangements.
- Encouraging a shared emphasis on an asset-based approach; recognising the importance of existing community infrastructure as a basis for shaping intervention.
- Emphasising the critical role that community development work has to play in supporting Good Relations particularly given Belfast's post-conflict environment. We are operating in a fairly unique environment and our approach to community development must be informed by this drive towards a shared city.
- Taking a CD approach that recognises that the nature of community is not restricted to one defined by geography but which might also include communities of interest, communities of identity or communities of action.
- In earlier drafts of our strategy we used the metaphor of building blocks to describe aspects of community development work. This was challenged by many as too mechanistic and not reflective of the nature of the work where groups or communities move between strands at different times and in different circumstances.

What's in the strategy?

This final strategy does not attempt to address all of these challenges. Indeed given the nature of CD work it would be inappropriate for us to attempt to do so. The strategy instead provides a common basis on which to engage with communities, councillors, and our partners on these subjects and work towards shared approaches. We do this by offering a number of elements:

1. **A working definition of community development**
2. **Our vision, aims and underpinning values**
3. **A community development model to share across Belfast**
4. **Developing an outcomes framework**
5. **An outline implementation plan specifically for the council**

Community development in Belfast

A working definition

There are many definitions of 'community development'.[2] However, for our purposes a simple definition that can be shared widely is:

> 'Community development activity is the main means by which we can be better engaged with local people and support their involvement in improving the city and its neighbourhoods. It enables people to come together to:
> - influence or take decisions about issues that matter to them and that affect their lives;
> - define needs, issues and solutions for their community; and
> - take action to help themselves and make a difference.
>
> It is a long-term, value-based process which targets positive social change.'

Our vision and aims

Belfast City Council would suggest that a shared vision for community development is that all the communities of Belfast will become engaged, effective and enterprising.

- By **engaged** we mean that communities will be inclusive towards all their members and will have the skills and confidence to work positively with public agencies, with other communities and with elected representatives.

- By **effective** we mean that communities will be skilled in meeting their own needs, in prioritising and articulating needs in relation to public agencies, and will be able to negotiate solutions and assist change and development.

- By **enterprising** we mean that communities will be places of creativity and energy where economic value is multiplied, investment is attracted and opportunities expand.

Implied in all of these dimensions, and underlying them, is the necessity for individuals and communities to be active on numerous issues and interests for their own and others' benefit in order to improve the quality of life for all.

Community development as a professional approach is informed by a core set of values which are now recognised by the National Occupational Standards[1] We provide more detail on these standards in **Appendix One**. Briefly they underpin:
- Social justice
- Self-determination environment
- Working and Learning Together
- Sustainable Communities
- Participation
- Reflective Practice

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[2] It's often useful to think of community development in terms of what it isn't or what the characteristics of a community might be if there is weak or poor community development activity. We examine these ideas in Appendix Two.

It is important to note that adopting a community development approach can contribute directly to the council's aims of improving quality of life. Communities that are challenged, or have weak community infrastructure, can greatly impede our ability to deliver on our corporate priorities. Successful community development activity can foster an environment in our neighbourhoods that makes what we do much more effective.

A shared model of community development

To achieve the dimensions of engaged, effective and enterprising communities requires a full range of community development methods, each with its own characteristic outcomes.

These can be considered as four strands of community development practice, though in practical situations they become intertwined and mutually reinforcing. It's perhaps useful to think of the strands as the branches of a tree with our value and principles underpinning the entire approach:

The four strands correspond broadly to the dimensions in the following way:

- To assist communities to be widely active and generally effective, and also to underpin the other dimensions, requires **Core Community Development.**

- For communities to be engaged requires that some of the community development effort focuses specifically on **Engagement** and, at a more structured level, on **Partnership** working.

- For communities to be enterprising requires that some of the community development effort focuses on **Shared Service Design and Delivery**.

Communities, groups and organisations may focus on one or more strands at different times and in different situations. However, the idea of Core Community Development, the trunk of our tree, with CD values and principles at its root is likely to form the substantive basis of all community development activity.

Four strands of community development

1. Core community development work
2. Engagement that works
3. Building effective partnerships
4. Shared service design and delivery

Strand 1 - Core community development

Working with communities and individuals to build up a critical mass of active citizens, associations, groups and networks that provide the foundations for communities to articulate their needs, issues and purpose and to begin to understand how to work best together and with local and central government bodies.

Strand 2 - Engagement that works

Communities need to have the ability to engage effectively within their own communities (geographical or otherwise); with other communities; and with those who deliver services to ensure that such services meet their needs. Groups therefore need the skills and information necessary to both identify priorities and propose solutions. From the deliverers' perspective, councils and other public bodies must acquire the skills and capacity to engage meaningfully and effectively with communities.

Strand 3 - Building effective partnerships

Increasingly, more formalised partnership-working is at the heart of many of the relationships between communities and service providers in our city. For this to work well community organisations and service providers need the capacity to co-design, monitor and evaluate services that address local need. They also need to be able to understand the wider interlocking social, economic and environmental issues which impact on local areas. Such partnerships might range from loose collegiate arrangements to more formal structures.

Strand 4 - Shared service design and delivery

Although not always relevant or appropriate, in some instances communities may wish to move to a position where they are the co-deliverers of local services. Community groups become delivery partners in meeting local needs, developing community assets and delivering local and central government aims.

The entire basis of the work of the council's Community Services is predicated on a community development model that has a particular focus on **core community development** activity. However, most services across the council already contribute in a variety of ways to community development goals that cross all four strands.

On the next few pages we examine each of these strands in a little more detail. We briefly define each strand and identify how the council currently supports it. We also give consideration to how the council can develop its contribution in the future and how we can begin to measure our impact.

Strand 1 - Core community development

What is this?

This 'trunk' is about developing active citizenship and positive networks and relationships in and between communities. Through community groups, associations, environmental, residents' and other local voluntary groups this strand builds the foundations for communities to articulate their needs and issues and begin to understand how to work best with each other and with local and central Government bodies. This is often an organic, bottom up response to a local need or issue.

Who currently does this?

The council's support for this strand in communities is primarily the work of **Community Services**. While work elsewhere in the council certainly contributes to the strand, it is uniquely the central aim of Community Services.

Where do we want to go?

There are a number of areas of work the council is already involved in, or could pursue over the longer term, to strengthen its contribution to this strand. These might include:

- Build a shared community outcomes framework that can contribute to the measurement of the community impact of the council's work;
- Strengthen and improve the quality of community activity which in turn builds social capital[3].
- Develop a volunteer framework which supports active citizenship internally and externally.
- Provide support and advice to new and emerging community groups.
- Manage and support our community facilities as accessible assets for communities and groups to use.
- Provide grant aid in support of community groups' activities and facilities and for area based networking and capacity building.
- Work to identify and meet specific CD training needs across council.
- Promote community development skills and knowledge across the council as part of our organisational development programme.
- Ensure that front-line council workers understand the role of community activity, groups and networks and respond to and support them where appropriate.

How do we know if we've been successful?

There are a range of outcomes we would wish to see from this strand and which could be shared across council and, over time, with our partners. They include:

- ✓ Community groups are flourishing and networks are vibrant across the city
- ✓ Citizens have access to a wide range of community groups and activities and are more active in their community.
- ✓ Community sector networks operate effectively and reach all relevant groups and organisations.

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[3] **What is social capital?** Briefly, it's the pattern and intensity of networks within and among communities and the shared values which arise from those networks. Definitions vary, but the main aspects include citizenship, 'neighbourliness', social networks and civic participation. OECD define it as 'networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups.'

- All community groups have access to use of affordable premises for meetings and activities.
- All community groups have reasonable and fair opportunities to access grants for activities.
- The needs and concerns of all sections of the community are articulated effectively.
- Disaffected or marginalised groups develop confidence, influence and negotiation skills.

How might we begin to measure success?

Indicators might include:

- Large-scale or micro surveys showing how far groups are confident of increasingly meeting their own objectives
- The range of issues addressed by groups
- How well groups attract and retain volunteers
- Whether groups have adequate resources and support
- Nominal Group Technique to measure social capital
- Quality of services, opportunities and environment enabling groups to function

Strand 2 - Engagement that works

What is this?

Communities and organisations can engage transparently to design and shape services to meet local need. It supports community groups to gain the skills and information they need to work together, and with others, to identify and articulate shared priorities and to propose solutions. Equally it develops the abilities and knowledge of people working in local government and public bodies to engage meaningfully and effectively with communities.

Who does this currently?

Engagement is an increasingly important strand of work across the council and will be a key capacity for successful Community Planning. Currently, Community Services act both as channels or facilitators for local engagement. Other services with a strong engagement element include Parks and Leisure, Community Safety, Good Relations, Health Development and Cleansing Services. Current activity includes the design of community engagement in the Titanic Quarter, the BIG Lottery Community Planning pilot and work on the redevelopment of Dunville and Woodvale Parks.

Where do we want to go?

There are a number of areas of work the council is already involved in or could pursue over the longer term to strengthen its contribution to this strand. These might include:

- Facilitate shared learning on community engagement within the council and with community and public sector partners.
- Develop the capacity to assist council departments to design and undertake community engagement.
- Engage with community centre users in developing programmes and management structures.
- Engage with user groups, advocacy groups and community networks to stimulate feedback and invite informed influence.
- Support the council framework for consultation and engagement that ensures we:
    - o engage communities to help inform and shape Council policy and decision making;
    - o work with partners in the public and community sectors to identify and apply good practice.
- Value the contribution that community development can make to the corporate themes and individual departmental objectives.
- Increase CD skills and make wide use of CD in the course of our work.

How do we know if we've been successful?

There are a range of outcomes we would wish to see from this strand and which could be shared across council and, over time, with our partners. They include:

- ✔ Services are improved and better targeted and delivered as a result of constructive dialogue between communities and council departments.
- ✔ Council engagement activity is responded to widely.
- ✔ Communities are influential in shaping services and decisions based on them are considered to have been arrived at in a transparent manner.
- ✔ Residents, community groups and voluntary organisations have good negotiating skills and use them effectively in relating to the council.
- ✔ There is a strong engagement culture across the organisation
- ✔ Staff have good skills for engaging with and responding to communities and use them effectively in relating to local residents and groups.

How might we begin to measure success?

Indicators might include:
- Reports showing how far resident influence is a factor in departmental decisions.
- Whether delivery of services is improved by community feedback.
- Whether groups testify to improved confidence and capability as a result of community development input.

Strand 3 - Effective partnership working

What is this?

This involves effective partnerships between communities and service providers that lead, co-design and monitor and evaluate services.

It builds the community capacity and resources needed to enable people to get involved in partnership structures and processes and to understand the wider social, economic and environmental issues which impact on local areas. These partnership structures can be for a particular geographical area or be city wide or focused on issues such as regeneration, health, safety, sports or the environment.

Who does this?

Our services are involved in formal partnerships for health, community safety, policing, education, neighbourhood renewal, older people and good relations. We also work collaboratively with organisations and communities at a more informal or operational level to deliver projects, services or to respond to emerging issues. The council also leads on Community Planning and is building capacity and learning on successful partnership working.

Where do we want to go?

There are a number of areas of work the council is already involved in or could pursue further over the longer term to strengthen its contribution to this strand. These include:

- Continuing to represent the council on all Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) Partnerships and relevant sub-groups
- Work with the SNAP team to facilitate communication between council services and the NR Partnerships so that the Neighbourhood Renewal programme can effectively influence local area service provision across our departments;
- Co-ordinate the council's work on its priority themes of improving services for children and young people and the Traveller community.
- Support, participate in, and (where agreed) lead city-wide, area and neighbourhood fora and partnerships which further the corporate aims and priorities. These include the Good Relations partnership; Community Safety Partnerships and the Strategic Health Partnership.
- Ongoing development of a Community Planning model for Belfast that ensures communities have an effective means of participating in community planning processes.
- Partnership work with communities for the successful delivery of neighbourhood projects, (eg) Connswater Community Greenway project.

How do we know if we've been successful?

There are a range of outcomes we would wish to see from this strand and which could be shared across council and, over time, with our partners. They include:

- Increased cooperation between Council services and community and voluntary groups and greater trust reported.
- Community representatives or advocates on partnerships have wide credibility in their own sector and effectiveness in relation to authorities.
- Better joint planning and collaborative working on key quality of life themes and local priorities, including shared contributions

- ✔ Community groups successfully create or negotiate multiple improvements to neighbourhood conditions.
- ✔ Evidence of a collegiate approach.
- ✔ Groups understand the Council's business and budgetary planning cycle.

How might we begin to measure success?

Indicators might include:

- ✔ Reports showing how far groups feel they can influence decisions of council departments and partner bodies.
- ✔ Increased joint use of facilities.
- ✔ Joint planning by communities and agencies.
- ✔ Better satisfaction with services as a result of cooperation.

Strand 4 - Shared service design and delivery

What is this?

Communities as co-deliverers of sustainable services such as social economy enterprises or community-managed assets. These meet local needs, develop community assets and help deliver local and central Government aims. They are supported through grant aid, contracts and earned income. Not all communities will wish to proceed to this stage.

Who does this?

Services across council have been exploring the option of working with communities in the direct design and delivery of services – and it's a direction encouraged by national government policy. Both **Community Services** and the **Parks and Leisure** department have a number of facilities that are directly managed by local community organisations and the council's generalist **advice services** are delivered by local advice consortia. In **Waste Management**, Bryson House deliver a kerbside recycling contract operation as a social economy enterprise.

Where do we want to go?

There are a number of areas of work the council is already working on or could pursue over the longer term to strengthen its contribution to this strand. These might include:
- Support community-managed neighbourhood facilities through grant aid, service agreements and advice on management.
- Support community organisations in the development of social economy enterprises.
- Facilitate an area planning approach to maximise access to and use of community facilities in the council, public and community sectors.
- Provide advice and support to community managed facilities to enable them to become more effective and self sufficient.
- Promote and develop shared facilities and amenities with both the community and public sectors including new arrangements for co-production and management.

How do we know if we've been successful?

There are a range of outcomes we would wish to see from this strand and which could be shared across council and, over time, with our partners. They include:
- Community and voluntary organisations take on delivery of specific aspects of public services.
- Community assets are increased.
- Training and employment opportunities are increased through community organisations and social enterprises
- More social economy enterprises supply goods and services to the council and other public sector bodies.

How might we begin to measure success?

Indicators might include:
- Increase in volume of trading by community and voluntary organisations
- Increased user satisfaction with services provided by voluntary and community organisations
- Increased occupational training through these organisations
- Increase in employability through volunteering.

What are the likely roles?

Drawing together the various contributions suggested in each strand, a number of current and potential future roles emerge from the strategy for services across the council. These include:

Specifically for Community Services

- Provide **support and advice** to new and emerging community groups
- Manage and support **community facilities** as accessible venues for community activities and events.
- Support **community managed facilities** through grant aid, service agreements and advice on management.
- Provide **grant aid** in support of community groups' activities and facilities and for area based networking and capacity building.
- Develop a **volunteer framework** which supports active citizenship internally and externally.
- Promote **community development skills and knowledge** across the council as part of our organisational development programme.
- Strengthen and improve the quality of **community activity**
- Develop the capacity to assist council departments to **design and undertake community engagement;** facilitate shared learning on **community engagement**
- Engage with **community centre users** in developing programmes and management structures.
- Represent the council on all **Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships** and relevant sub-groups
- Work with the SNAP team to **facilitate communication** between council services and the NR Partnerships
- Co-ordinate the Council's work on its priority themes of improving services for **children and young people** and the **Traveller community**.

For all parts of the council

- Build a shared **community outcomes framework** that can contribute to the measurement of the community impact of the council's work;
- Ensure that **front-line council workers** understand the role of community activity, groups and networks and respond to and support them where appropriate.
- **Promote community development skills and knowledge** across the council as part of our organisational development programme.
- Work with Community Services to identify and meet **specific CD training needs**
- Facilitate shared learning on **community engagement**
- Support the council **framework for consultation and engagement** that ensures we:
  - o engage communities to help inform and shape Council policy and decision making;
  - o work with partners in the public and community sectors to identify and apply good practice.
- Support, participate in, and (where agreed) lead city-wide, area and **neighbourhood partnerships** which further the corporate aims and priorities. These include the Good Relations partnership; Community

       Safety Partnerships and the Belfast Strategic Partnership for health and wellbeing.

- Value the contribution that community development can make to the **corporate themes** and individual **departmental objectives**
- Ongoing development of a **Community Planning model** for Belfast that ensures communities have an effective means of participating in community planning processes.
- Build on SNAP's co-ordination role to ensure that the Neighbourhood Renewal programme can effectively i**nfluence local area service provision** across our departments.
- Partnership work with communities for the successful delivery of major regeneration projects (eg) the **Connswater Community Greenway** project and local improvement projects.
- Support community organisations in the development of **social economy enterprises.**
- Facilitate an **area planning approach** to maximise access to and use of community facilities in the Council, public and community sectors.
- Promote and develop **shared facilities and amenities** with both the community and public sectors including new arrangements for co-production and management (eg) developing the potential of those Community Services and Parks and Leisure facilities that are managed by community organisations or social economy enterprises.
- **Support in practical ways local community initiatives** which complement Council services and priorities (Neighbourhood Watch, local clean-ups, recycling, etc).

Measuring community development outcomes

The previous sections illustrate some of the expected outcomes and indicators for each strand. As part of the implementation of the strategy Community Services staff plan to work with others in the council to expand these initial ideas to construct an outcomes framework that will allow us to jointly measure our community impacts.

In the past it's often been assumed that measuring the impact of community development is difficult. However, evidence can take many forms and be collected at different points in the community development process.

Surveys of staff, councillors, communities and community venue users are already undertaken by the council periodically. These will be continued but their content will be reviewed to find ways to relate it more accurately to community development.

An outcomes framework for more continuous feedback through community development officers' reports and proposals for shared approaches with other departments. This framework will reflect 'theory of change' reasoning, ie:

➔ The work is being done in order to change something.
➔ What is it that needs to be changed?
➔ What is its present state?
➔ What is the desired state that we want to change it to?
➔ What actions are most likely to bring the change about?
➔ How will we recognise whether the change has happened or not?
➔ How will we judge whether the change was the result of the action taken?

Since it would be too onerous to collect evidence of everything that happens, a limited set of indicators will be established for a period to capture whether the community development process as a whole is succeeding in contributing its maximum value to the council's corporate themes.

Appendix 1:

National Occupational Standards for community development[4]

The National Occupational Standards outline clearly the skills, values and practice Principles required for community development work and have been developed to provide the basis from which we can promote effective and appropriate community development work practice.

The Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL) led the development and subsequent review of the National Occupational Standards through widespread consultation and endorsement within the community development work field.

Key purpose of community development work

The key purpose of community development work is collectively to bring about social change and justice, by working with communities to:

- Identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities
- Plan, organise and take action
- Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the action all in ways which challenge oppression and tackle inequalities.

Social justice
- Respecting and valuing diversity and difference
- Challenging oppressive and discriminatory actions and attitudes
- Addressing power imbalances between individuals, within groups and society
- Committing to pursue civil and human rights for all
- Seeking and promoting policy and practices that are just and enhance equality whilst challenging those that are not

Self-determination environment
- Valuing the concerns or issues that communities identify as their starting points
- Raising people's awareness of the range of choices open to them, providing opportunities for discussion of implications of options Values and practice principles of community development work Key purpose of community development work
- Promoting the view that communities do not have the right to oppress other communities
- Working with conflict within communities

Working and Learning Together
- Demonstrating that collective working is effective
- Supporting and developing individuals to contribute effectively to communities
- Developing a culture of informed and accountable decision making
- Ensuring all perspectives within the community are considered
- Sharing good practice in order to learn from each other

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[4] The standards identify community development work as an occupation in its own right, and are now held by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), the sector skills council for lifelong learning. For more info www.fcdl.org.uk

Sustainable Communities
- Promoting the empowerment of individuals and communities
- Supporting communities to develop their skills to take action
- Promoting the development of autonomous and accountable structures
- Learning from experiences as a basis for change
- Promoting effective collective and collaborative working
- Using resources with respect for the environment

Participation
- Promoting the participation of individuals and communities, particularly those traditionally marginalised/excluded
- Recognising and challenging barriers to full and effective participation
- Supporting communities to gain skills to engage in participation Developing structures that enable communities to participate effectively
- Sharing good practice in order to learn from each other

Reflective Practice
- Promoting and supporting individual and collective learning through reflection on practice
- Changing practice in response to outcomes of reflection
- Recognising the constraints and contexts within which community development takes place
- Recognising the importance of keeping others informed and updated about the wider context

Roles and skills for community development work

Role A: Develop working relationships with communities and organisations
- Make relationships within communities
- Build relationships within and with communities and organisations
- Develop strategic relationships with communities, organisations and within partnerships

Role B: Encourage people to work with and learn from each other
- Contribute to the development of community groups/networks
- Facilitate the development of community groups/networks Roles and skills for community development work
- Facilitate ways of working collaboratively
- Promote and support learning from practice and experience
- Create opportunities for learning from practice and experience
- Support individuals, community groups and communities to deal with conflict
- Take action with individuals, community groups and communities to deal with conflict

Role C: Work with people in communities to plan for change and take collective action
- Work within communities to select options and make plans for collective action
- Contribute to collective action within a community
- Support communities to plan and take collective action
- Ensure community participation in planning and taking collective action
- Contribute to the review of needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities within a community

- Work with communities to identify needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities

Role D: Work with people in communities to develop and use frameworks for evaluation
- Support communities to monitor and review action for change
- Facilitate the development of evaluation frameworks

Role E: Develop community organisations
- Encourage the best use of resources
- Review and develop funding and resources
- Develop and evaluate a funding/resourcing strategy
- Develop people's skills and roles within community groups/networks
- Facilitate the development of people and learning in communities
- Develop and review community-based organisational structures
- Develop and maintain organisational frameworks for community-based initiatives Units imported from national occupational standards for management
- Contribute to planning and preparation
- Co-ordinate the running of projects
- Contribute to project closure

Role F: Reflect on and develop own practice and role
- Identify and reflect on own practice, knowledge and values
- Review own practice, knowledge and values
- Evaluate and develop own practice
- Identify and take action to meet own learning and development needs
- Review and meet own learning and development needs

Appendix 2: What is community development?

It's often useful to think of community development in terms of what it isn't or what the characteristics of a community might be if there is weak or poor community development activity. We illustrate these ideas below:

What it isn't[5]

- × **It isn't just for community development workers.** Anyone can perform in a community development role if they are given the training, resources and support to work with communities on the communities' own priorities from the start
- × **It isn't a 'quick fix'.** Community development is a long-term process, focusing on people and their needs and aims. This long-term approach is essential to ensure changes are sustainable and long-lasting.
- × **It isn't a 'numbers game'.** If five people turn up to a public meeting, these are the five people that the work starts with and grows from.
- × **It isn't a euphemism for 'Partnership working'.** Community development is the activity which enables many people to get to the partnership table in the first place. It is the way of working which challenges unrepresentative voices: talking with three 'community representatives' is not representative of the needs of the wider community if the representatives are not accountable to the communities and delegated to express the collective views of these communities. Community development enables many more voices to be heard and ensures they represent the diversity of opinions.
- × **It isn't merely 'Consultation'.** Community development is much more than consulting on decisions already made. It is about residents exploring their own needs and seeking the services which meet their differing needs.
- × **It isn't 'Tokenism'.** It won't provide the answer to all problems, such as a cheap way of providing services, demonstrating management efficiency or validating funding bids.
- × **It isn't just 'Volunteering'.** Volunteering does bring many benefits, including the opportunities to develop teamwork, community spirit and personal growth. But many people become involved in voluntary community activity because they cannot get the service they want, and have to provide it themselves. It is not necessarily because they want to be volunteers.
- × **It isn't the same as 'Community Engagement'.** Community engagement is generally initiated by agencies or people in positions of power to seek community involvement in planning and reviewing services or engaging in democratic life. It can be empowering if it leads to communities having an effective say in service provision or political decisions. It will also benefit from community development which builds the road of organised groups which others may find useful to reach people. However community development isn't merely a tool for community engagement; it starts from communities' own concerns. Community development helps communities reach out to agencies and other influential people when the issues require their involvement. Community development helps communities to develop clear ideas about what they want to say and the changes they are seeking from others, and then to

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[5] Community Development Exchange (2001) http://www.cdx.org.uk/community-development/what-community-development-isnt-about

consider which forums and networks will help them pursue their interests through their collective voices.

What does effective community development look like?

It's often easier to consider the role of community development work if we consider situations where it is weak or mostly absent.

Where there is no or weak community development a neighbourhood often has these characteristics:	Where there is effective community development a neighbourhood often has these characteristics:
× The most disadvantaged people receive poor quality services and are less able to express their needs. × Communities miss out on opportunities and are likely to be more excluded. × People are unable to agree issues and priorities or have them influence decision-makers. × Cultural differences are less likely to be respected. × There is less volunteering and fewer skilled community groups. × Public bodies find it difficult to engage with people and communities. × People who gain employment may move elsewhere thus reducing the pool of skills and spending in the area. × The area may have a poor reputation and fail to attract economic investment and opportunities. × People are less resilient and less capable of benefiting from wider economic change.	✔ People are more confident and able to shape the quality of their lives. ✔ There is more involvement and positive citizenship. ✔ Communities and their leaders better understand wider issues and how to influence change. ✔ There are opportunities for co-designed approaches to tackling issues by communities and public bodies. ✔ Areas have a better image; can point to improvements in quality of life; and are better able to attract economic investment. ✔ Young people who gain qualifications and employment are more likely to stay and the area is more likely to attract employed people, thus increasing spending within the local economy. ✔ Communities take more responsibility for developing their own services, enterprises and social economies. ✔ People are more capable and supported to take advantage of economic and employment growth in the wider city.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

[As of June 2012]

Councillor Deirdre Hargey (Chairman)
Councillor Gareth McKee (Deputy Chair)

Alderman David Browne
The High Sheriff Alderman May Campbell
Alderman Robin Newton
Councillor Tim Attwood
Councillor Patrick Convery
Councillor Matt Garrett
Councillor Tom Haire
Councillor Claire Hanna
Councillor Máire Hendron
Councillor Mervyn Jones
Councillor Danny Lavery
Councillor Conor Maskey
Councillor Patrick McCarthy
Councillor Jim McVeigh
Councillor Caoimhín Mac Giolla Mhín
Councillor Máirtín Ó Muilleoir
Councillor Adam Newton
Councillor Lee Reynolds

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Designing an outcomes approach for asset management at the neighbourhood level
Date:	26 June 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Catherine Taggart, Community Development Manager

1	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	At both a national and regional level, there is heightened policy interest in community ownership and the management of assets. The 2007 Quirk Review of Community Management and Ownership of Public Assets signalled that the transfer of public assets to community-based organisations should become a mainstream rather than an exceptional activity and in England this policy has been developed through the Localism agenda. Regionally, through the Concordat agreement between Local and Central Government and the Voluntary & Community Sectors, there is a commitment to 'investigate the potential for community asset management and ownership in NI'.
1.2	Practice across the UK and Republic of Ireland demonstrates the real opportunity for community empowerment offered by asset transfer and experience shows that it works best as part of a wider strategy of good partnership working between communities, the third sector and the public sector. The underlying premise of such transfers is that in delivering sustainable local outcomes it is important to have communities fully involved in the design and delivery of services and that asset ownership and/or management is a vehicle to support community empowerment.
1.3	In summary, communities can be supported to become stronger and more sustainable by assisting them to obtain and develop assets such as land or buildings. These enterprising community organisations actively involve and benefit the communities they serve by working towards improving the services and/or facilities for their community and by demonstrating their proposals are sustainable in the long-term, taking into account the environmental, social and economic impacts of their work.
1.4	This notion of enterprise and associated culture change regarding the interaction between the community sector and funders, customers and service users can be at the heart of any Asset Transfer programme. It can contribute to a new understanding regarding the balance between public and VCS delivery of community based services. Close community involvement in the asset based

	project should also be expected to contribute to a move away from a dependency culture. Any associated programme will support a more strategic engagement between council and the sector and will require us to work closely with the sector to support them and increase their skill levels to work towards organisational sustainability
1.5	Here in the Council the development of any policy for committee consideration around community asset transfer is likely to be our own practice to date and will be further influenced by a number of internal emerging and interlocked pieces of work.
1.6	We've noted some of the main strands below and the lead service: *(i)* <u>Assets Management strategy</u> (Assets Board) – putting in place a strategy for the council's entire estate under which any community transfer policy would sit. *(ii)* <u>Community Development strategy</u> (Development) – which has the potential to describe and measure the **social outcomes** we want to achieve and some of the approaches to working with communities in trying to achieve them. To an extent the CD strategy should be answering the broader question of 'why we would want to transfer assets to communities?' *(iii)* <u>Neighbourhood assets framework</u> (Development) – This would sit under the Assets strategy but with the specific focus of determining the best use of our assets in achieving outcomes at the local level (in relation to the assets of other stakeholders in each area)
1.7	The inter-departmental Neighbourhood Assets group will design and implement an outcomes-focused framework for the management of council's land and property assets at the neighbourhood level. The framework will fall within the context of the emerging corporate **Assets strategy** which is concerned with the wider strategic management of the entire council estate. The framework will be focussed on the subset of the council's estate – that it, those land and property assets that have a local importance within a small geographical area or within specific communities. Such assets might include such assets as community centres, playgrounds and small parks but will not include strategic or citywide assets.
1.8	The ambition is to seek opportunities to improve the management and programming of the council's physical assets and to collaborate with our partners who have their own local assets. As outlined, the model would be developed with reference to other corporate strategies such as the new Investment programme, the Asset Management strategy, Active Belfast, Open Spaces and the Community Development strategy. It would also reflect developments in the external environment including, for example, the emerging Social Investment Fund and the DSD/Council Service delivery pilot.
1.9	Any emerging plans will be presented or Member consideration and agreement.

2	**Key Issues**
2.1	As noted, the Asset Management Board now provides a strategic oversight to the implementation of an assets strategy which would include the development and implementation of the proposed model. The inter-departmental task and finish group will be required to deliver the various work packages associated with

	the development of the model.
2.2	This group reports directly to the Assets Management Board and is chaired by the director of Development with representatives from relevant departments across council.
2.3	There are a number of key elements required in the development of a model and a detailed project plan will be developed to manage the work but will include the following broad areas of work: i. Best practice research for the model ii. Management information system for local assets: iii. Outcomes framework: iv. A criterion-based decision-making framework: v. Piloting activity
2.4	The Community Foundation Northern Ireland (CFNI) is an independent grant making charity committed to supporting projects that engage local people in making communities and the region a better place to live and enabling communities to work collectively to help themselves. CFNI has been exploring the opportunities and models for co-operation and collaboration between voluntary and community sector organisations including the sharing of premises and overhead costs and sharing of staff, particularly back office staff. In doing so, they are also exploring the scope, potential and feasibility of Asset Transfer and Ethical Property Development in Northern Ireland.
2.5	In doing so CFNI propose the commissioning of a robust consultancy study to frame opportunities and related risks and recommend how the issue could be taken forward.
2.6	They suggest any study should be progressed in partnership and therefore jointed commissioned by DSD, the Council and CFNI given the current and planned future responsibilities for urban regeneration and community development.

2.7	The terms of reference, would be jointly agreed, but could be drafted to include:
	
	– A review of best practice in ethical investment property in the UK and elsewhere to draw out lessons and implications of that best practice for potential ethical investments in property in Northern Ireland
	
	– To develop a financial model of a Northern Ireland ethical property investment fund and to apply the model to a range of at least 6 actual potential ethical property investments in Belfast and elsewhere in Northern Ireland to draw out in each case:
	
	    ✓ The financial return on investment
	
	    ✓ The social return on investment
	
	    ✓ The regeneration return on investment
	
	– To develop an indicative priority list of potential projects for an ethical property investment fund for Northern Ireland taking account of financial, social and regeneration returns.
	
	– To assess the main barriers and constraints to the establishment of an ethical property investment fund in Northern Ireland and how they might be addressed

	− To consider a range of organisational forms and structures for an ethical property investment fund in Northern Ireland and to recommend a preferred structure, taking into account inter alia regulatory compliance and taxation issues
	− To identify potential Third Sector, Public Sector and private investors in an ethical property investment fund for Northern Ireland, in each case detailing their requirements for returns and other criteria for investment
2.8	To make recommendations to CFNI, DSD and the Council on their respective roles in carrying forward an initiative to establish a sustainable ethical property investment fund for Northern Ireland
2.9	CFNI suggest this joint approach with DSD and the Council, in whose area most of the identified opportunities for investment are located, will offer a opportunity to test the model which it has identified against best practice in ethical investment in property and to test the model in relation to a range of potential real investment properties in Belfast and elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	CFNI estimate a maximum cost of £50,000 + VAT for a three month study split equally across the partners. DSD have already indicated their support for the proposal.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	At the conceptual stage of the project there are no equality implications. However these will be considered at the design and implementation stage.

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Members are asked to agree to jointly commission and fund a robust consultancy study to frame opportunities and related risks of Asset Transfer and Ethical Property Development in Northern Ireland.

6	Decision Tracking

Further to Committees consideration of the report:

Time line: Reporting Officer: Director of Development