

# Development Committee

Tuesday, 21st August, 2012

## MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Stalford (Chairman);  
Aldermen Ekin and Stoker; and  
Councillors Austin, Kelly, Kingston, Kyle,  
Mac Giolla Mhín, Mallon, Maskey, McKee,  
Ó Donnghaile, Reynolds, Spence and Webb.

In attendance: Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;  
Ms. S. McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives;  
Ms. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager; and  
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies were reported from Councillors Hendron, Hussey, Keenan and McVeigh.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 12th and 26th June were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 2nd July.

### Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

### National Association of Councillors – Training and Development Conference

The Democratic Services Officer reported that notification had been received from the National Association of Councillors regarding a conference which would examine issues concerning the contribution which the tourism and hospitality industries made to local economies. It was reported that the conference would take place in the Skiddaw Hotel, Keswick, from 28th till 30th September; that the delegate fee would be £400 and that travel costs would be in the region of £200.

The Committee agreed not to be represented at the conference.

### **Belfast Tourism Monitor**

The Committee noted the contents of the Belfast Tourism Monitor for 2011, together with the findings of the Northern Ireland Visitor Attitude Survey for 2011, and noted further that the figures and comments contained therein would be used by the Department to develop and inform future tourism initiatives overseen by the Council.

### **Belfast Music Tourism**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update on the arrangements for the hosting of the second Belfast Music Week in November, 2012. In addition, the Committee agreed to the undernoted:

#### **Music Week – External Showcase**

It was reported that the Council had been working in partnership with Tourism Ireland, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Invest NI in securing funding for Belfast Music Week, a programme for which would be launched in September. The official launch of Music Week would take place in London and would form part of a wider Belfast-flavoured showcase aimed at marketing the event to the wider music industry. It was anticipated that three bands from Belfast would be present at the showcase to promote Music Week. Accordingly, the Director sought the Committee's authority to cover the costs of flights and accommodation for the three bands, together with a publicist and a Council officer, to manage the event. He added that the associated cost would be no more than £5,600.

After discussion, during which it was agreed that the Corporate Communications Section would be consulted to determine whether the publicity associated with the showcase event could be managed by the Council, the Committee granted the approval sought.

#### **Erection of Plaque to Good Vibrations**

The Committee was advised that a request had been received to erect a plaque to mark the contribution which had been made to the Belfast music scene by the record label Good Vibrations, which had been established by the Belfast music promoter Terri Hooley. The Committee was reminded of the role which Hooley and the Good Vibrations label had played in the promotion of punk and new wave music in the City during the late-1970s and early-1980s. It was suggested that the plaque could be erected at the site of the former Harp Bar in Hill Street, which had become synonymous with punk rock music in Belfast. The cost associated with the erection of the plaque was £600.

The Committee granted the authority sought, subject to consideration being given to the formulation of a Council policy for the erection of future plaques to acknowledge prominent individuals associated with the music industry in Belfast.

### **Festivals' Forum Action Plan**

The Committee considered the undernoted report, together with a copy of a Festivals' Forum Action Plan, a copy of which was available on the Council's Modern.gov website:

**"1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.2 In 2011/2012 Belfast City Council's Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit invested over £400,000 into festivals across the city. This investment has been further bolstered in 2012/13 by £300,000 under the City of Festivals Phase 2 programme (supported under the Belfast PEACE III Plan by the European Union's European Regional Development Fund through the PEACE III Programme), which has awarded money to festivals including the Belfast Children's Festival, Féile, Festival of Fools and Orangefest to develop audiences among hard-to-reach groups and communities.**
- 1.3 Investing in a City of Festivals is identified as a priority under the Investment Programme 2012–15. The draft Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012–15 further recognises the city's varied and extensive festivals calendar as a strength, acknowledges the role festivals play in inspiring communities and commits to continuing to promote city of festivals as a key message for the city.**
- 1.4 The Festivals Forum provides a mechanism for the Council to engage with festivals in order to support and enhance the city's festival offering. The Forum currently has over 100 members from a wide range of community, arts and heritage organisations. All festivals applying for grant aid for Council are invited to become members. It meets bi-monthly to share information and discuss strategic and citywide issues. Achievements of the Festivals Forum to date include joined-up billboard and banner fields campaigns promoting Belfast as a city of festivals; training courses and events, including a cross-border networking day; and a new ticketing-system pilot. A copy of the Festivals Forum Charter, which details the purpose, vision and principles of the Forum, is included at appendix 1.**
- 1.5 A £30,000 budget for the Festivals Forum has been included in the Departmental budget for 2012/13. An additional £20,000 has been secured from PEACE III to implement specific actions from the Peace III City of Festivals programme, including cross-border networking, evaluation and training and skills development.**

**2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 Since its establishment in 2006, the Forum has developed and grown. It has office bearers and subgroups that work voluntarily, and the Council also contributes staff time. However, as its remit and membership continues to expand, the Forum would like to hire staff to support it further. This is currently not possible as the Forum is not a legal entity. As a result, the Forum has asked for assistance in exploring the feasibility of it becoming a legally constituted organisation independent from the Council.
- 2.2 Other key objectives and actions in the Action Plan include: ongoing support for the billboard marketing campaign; a series of shared resources to share knowledge and promote best practice; and training and skills development.

**3 Resource Implications**

**3.1 Financial**

£30,000 towards the implementation of the Festivals Forum Action Plan has been included in the Departmental budget for 2012/13.”

The Committee noted the report and endorsed the contents of the Festivals' Forum Action Plan for 2012/2013.

**City Events - Update**

(Mr. G. Copeland, City Events Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1 Relevant Background Information**

**1.2 Background**

Over that last decade and half Belfast City Council has developed an annual programme of events alongside one-off events. The programme spans the calendar year from the annual St Patrick's Day concert and parade in the spring, to the Christmas Lights Switch-on in the winter, and includes sporting events funded via the Council's 'Support for Sport' scheme.

## **2 Key Issues**

### **2.1 Outputs from the 2011 MTV EMAs and Belfast Music Week**

The key summary outputs from the event are as follows:

- 1.2 billion – the number of people who watched the MTV EMAs across the globe
- 669 million – the number of media news opportunities generated
- £22 million – the total economic impact for Belfast
- £10 million – the amount of additional tourism revenue for the city
- 8,000 – the number of room nights booked in Belfast hotels
- 2,399 – the number of media articles released
- 100% - the percentage of people who would recommend attending Belfast Music Week events

As Members can see the 2011 MTV EMAs, alongside Belfast Music Week, was truly a landmark event for Belfast - placing the city firmly on the world musical stage. The total public investment to stage the event was £840,000 (£420k from BCC and £420k from NITB). Given this figure the Council's return equates to a £25.00 return for every £1 of public monies invested. Members are also asked to note that BCC's City Events Unit is working with NITB to investigate future international events on the back of the success of the MTV project. Details of these activities will be taken to Council once an analysis of such projects has been made.

### **2.2 Irish Dancing Championships**

In 2010 the Council was successful in its bid to stage the 2012 World and 2013 All-Ireland Irish Dancing events. Details of the 2012 World Championships outputs are shown below:

- Almost everyone (99%) of those who visited the Irish Dancing World Championships event would not have visited Belfast that day had the event not been staged.
- Rating of the Irish Dancing World Championships event by those who attended:
  - 81% of visitors rated the event positively and 63% rated it very positively
  - 74% stated that the event had met or exceeded their expectations

- 86% would recommend attending the event to family and friends
  - 90% intend to revisit the event in the future
  - Belfast City Council estimated that 15,500 unique visitors attended the championships
- Visitors from Greater Belfast spent on average £17.05 during their visit. In the case of visitors from elsewhere in Northern Ireland average spend was higher at £46.11 per head. Out of state visitors' spend per head was higher again at £180.85.
- Allowing for the direct and indirect expenditure generated as a result of this net additional expenditure the total estimated economic impact of the event is over £4,979,000 these being the monies brought to the City as a direct result of staging the Irish Dancing World Championships event.

The total Council investment in the event was £225,000, which means the return for every £1 of Council resource was £22.00.

- 2.3 As part of the Council decision process, to bid for the Irish Dancing championship, the city agreed to stage the All Ireland Irish Dancing Championships in 2013 (23 October to 1 November). This event, despite its title, is almost on a par with the World Championships, with an expected 10,000 plus attendees – many from out-of-state. However, work on the extension of the Belfast Waterfront may have started and this will entail the removal of the Studio. This second auditorium would be essential to the dancing competitors. Therefore, Council Officers have looked at alternative venues: St George's Market; Ulster Hall; Whitla Hall; Presbyterian Assembly Rooms, the Hilton Hotel (officers preferred option) and other venues.

All of these spaces have the capacity to fill the 'second competition' venue gap. However, Members are asked to note that the Irish Dancing Commission will have the final decision on this matter. In addition these venues will entail additional costs for the Council, which is estimated to be in the region of additional £25,000 on top of the planned £200,000 agreed by Council.

Members are therefore asked to agree to this additional cost if the Irish Dancing Commission agrees to one of the alternative venues. It should be noted that the Commission may not wish to use any of these venues and may chose to move the event to another city.

**2.4 Outputs and Update on the Council's 2012/13  
Events Programme To Date**

Table 1 below indicates some of the initial outputs from events staged, to date, as part of the Council's 2012/13 programme. Further analysis of these events is currently underway and this information will be reported back to Members in due course.

**Table 1**

<b><u>Event and Date(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Additional Details</u></b>
City Hall Live Site Screen	To date sixteen events have been staged at the City Hall's Live site in the current financial year. This equates to an audience of 28,730 at all the events staged. In addition a series of events will be delivered around coverage of the London 2012 Paralympic Games.
Titanic Centenary programme	Initial estimates show that over 100,000 people attended the Council lead celebrations. Further analysis is still being undertaken and details will be presented to Members.
Olympic Torch Relay	An estimated 10,000 people came to final event in the regional element of the Olympic Torch relay at City Hall. It is also estimated that tens of thousands came out to welcome the Olympic Torch to Belfast as it traversed the city.
Land of Giants 30 June	Despite the very inclement weather nearly 18,000 came to this amazing outdoor event, which was part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad programme.
European Pipe Band Ch/ship, 28 July	Nearly 10,000 attended this event, which took place on Saturday 28 July. A full economic survey of the event was undertaken and this will be provided to Members at a later date.
Paralympic Flame Festival 25 August June	This event is part of the London 2012 Paralympic Games. A symbolic flame will be lit on the steps of Stormont and then traverse across Belfast, arriving into the grounds of City Hall in the early

evening. Once in the grounds there be entertainment and sports espousing the Paralympic Games themes. As part of the event the Paralympic 'Agitos' (the symbol equivalent to the Olympic Rings) will be unveiled on the façade of City Hall and will stay in situ until the Paralympic Games close on the 9 September. Over 5,000 free tickets will be issued for the event via the Belfast Welcome Centre.

**Belfast Autumn  
Fair, Saturday  
15 and Sunday  
16 September**

This event is run in cooperation with BCC Parks and Leisure incorporating their traditional Autumn Flower Show. This event normally attracts an audience of 12,000 people.

**Monster Mash  
Sunday  
28 October**

This event has attracted an audience in excess of 25,000 and in the last few years has been staged in Titanic Quarter, outside the Odyssey complex. Since 2010, the event has taken place on a Sunday, allowing for an earlier start time and fuller programme to accommodate families. This has proved successful in attracting substantial audience numbers. It has also allowed the event to be staged at this location as it tends not to clash with major concerts at the Odyssey Arena.

**Christmas  
Switch-on,  
Saturday  
17 November  
and programme**

Details of family orientated artists for the event will be given to Members at Committee. However, Members are asked to note that due to crowd management difficulties in 2011 that there will be no guest viewing area for Councillors, and their guests, adjacent to the stage. This is part of the overall safety review the event, which will also be accessible via free tickets (site capacity of will be limited to 10,000). The positive effects of this site alternation, was evident at the recent Olympic Torch Run Celebration which did not include a guest viewing area. As stated the event would be family orientated and linked to retail activity during the day of the 17 November.

The remainder of the 2012 Christmas programme includes a schools carol concert at the Belfast Waterfront (organised in conjunction with the Belfast School of Music) and live music at City Hall's continental market. Members are asked to



note that Council officers have received a number of presentations connected to potential ice rinks that would operate during the Christmas period. These projects could potentially take place at Custom House Square and have no Council resource implications. However, the events could be cross-promoted in order to encourage increased footfall into Belfast during the Christmas retail period.

St Patrick's Day,  
Sunday 17 March  
2013

This planned event encompasses a carnival parade and live concert to mark the day. Parade participants come from across the city with the event attracting out-of-city and out-of-state visitors.

#### **2.5 Halloween 2013**

Over the last decade or more both BCC and Belfast Festival at Queen's have operated large-scale public events at the end of October, with both normally taking place within one week of each other. Members are being asked for their agreement that will permit Officers to explore how both these events could be brought together in a manner that fulfils both organisations requirements. Details of any draft proposal would be brought back to Council for its endorsement, but any delivery process will need to ensure that BCC will oversee the production and management of the event.

#### **2.6 Event Tenders**

In October 2010 Members gave the Department permission to go to tender for an Event Production Tender. However, after a lengthy process the Council were unable to appoint a suitable contractor. Therefore, Members are being asked to grant permission for Officers to retender this work as two separate contracts (one for production personnel and the other for production infrastructure). This route has been agreed with colleagues in the Council's Procurement Unit, with input from Legal Services. The contract would be over a four period.

#### **2.7 Event Tenders for Tall Ships 2015**

Members are requested to give permission for the issuing of three tenders connected to planned 2015 Tall Ships event. These tenders are:

- Continental Market
- Ships Hospitality
- Fun Fairs

There would be no Council financial implications connected to these tenders.

### 3 Recommendations

Committee are requested to:

- Note the outputs from the stated events and approve future arrangements for the 2012 Christmas Lights Switch-on
- Approve up to an additional £50,000 of expenditure for the All-Ireland Irish Dancing event in 2013 for an alternative second venue. This would be subject to the Irish Dancing Commission agreeing to a second venue other than the Belfast Waterfront Studio
- Seek approval to develop a Halloween event with Belfast Festival at Queen's for 2013
- Seek approval for the issuing of event tenders and to give the Director of Development delegated authority to approve suitable qualified contractors."

During discussion, a number of Members congratulated the City Events Unit for the work which had been undertaken in hosting the MTV Europe Music Awards and the Committee was apprised of the range of major events, such as the Brit Awards, the World Pipe Band Championships and the All-Ireland Fleadh Ceoil, which the Council might seek to host in future years.

The Committee adopted the recommendations as set out within the report and agreed that reports in respect of the undernoted matters would be submitted for consideration in due course:

- the feasibility of the Council incorporating and promoting a specifically alcohol-free event within its St. Patrick's Day celebrations; and
- the feasibility of the Council bidding to host a major Europe-wide arts-based event in future years.

### Creative Industries

The Committee considered the contents of a Belfast Creative Sector Review, which had been carried out by EKOS Consultants, together with Council Creative Industries Action Plan for 2012/2015, copies of both documents were available on the Modern.gov website.

The Director outlined the principal aspects of the Action Plan for Creative Industries and indicated that its key elements would be to support micro-businesses and newly-established businesses, together with developing infrastructure and providing strategic co-ordination at a City level. A copy of the Action Plan is set out hereunder:

**“(A) Definition**

The creative industries are defined as ‘those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent, and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property’

**(B) Strategic Focus**

The focus of the Council’s creative industries plan is on enhancing business competitiveness; promoting economic growth; and enhancing the profile of city as a dynamic, creative capital. BCC Economic Development Unit’s future engagement with the creative industries will focus on three main areas:

1. Provision of business support to micro-businesses
2. Developing a supportive environment and infrastructure that will allow the creative sector to thrive; and
3. co-ordinating city strategies for arts and culture, cultural tourism, events and creative industries to provide a creative vision for the future of the city.

**(C) Sector focus:**

Belfast City Council will focus support on those industries that offer the greatest return on investment and have been identified as the high growth creative sectors in the City. These are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Film and television</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feature film</li> <li>○ Short films</li> <li>○ Television production</li> <li>○ Visual effects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Music</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Singers and songwriters</li> <li>○ Bands</li> <li>○ Music business</li> <li>○ Distribution and promotion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Digital media</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Animation</li> <li>○ Web development</li> <li>○ Media technologies</li> <li>○ Mobile content</li> <li>○ Games design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Design</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Graphic design</li> <li>○ Fashion design</li> <li>○ Branding</li> </ul>

**(D) Key actions, objectives and targets**

**1. Business Support**

**Objectives**

- Enhance the number of new creative start-ups
- Improve the turnover levels of participating businesses through targeted business support activity, including business mentoring
- Support creative businesses in accessing new markets and international business events and opportunities e.g. South by South West; Irish Technology Leadership Group (ITLG) initiatives etc.

**Targets**

- 160 companies participating in business development and support activities
- Increase turnover of participating businesses by average 20% from baseline
- Support 10 new start-up businesses

**2. Supportive business environment**

**Objectives**

- Develop and deliver demand stimulation programme for creative businesses with the aim of entering new markets, reducing cost base, developing new products / services and boosting innovation and economic competitiveness.
- Undertake feasibility assessment of infrastructural requirements to support growth of creative sector and pursue funding opportunities, if appropriate
- Promote greater collaboration between creative businesses through networking and engagement

**Targets**

- 500 creative and design companies participating in awareness-raising and infrastructure investment activities, as part of Super Connected Cities Project
- 100 creative business engaging business mentoring, developing 10 new collaborative products or services
- Viability of new creative hub explored; external funding confirmed (if appropriate)

### 3. Strategic co-ordination

#### Objectives

- Create consensus with key partners (Invest NI, Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), Arts Council for Northern Ireland (ACNI) regarding key target sectors within creative industries and respective roles to play in their development and promotion
- Align strategies for creative industries, arts and culture and cultural tourism in Belfast

#### Targets

Agreement on key sub-sectors and role of respective agencies in their development

- Consensus within Council regarding development and promotion of the creative sector, including cultural tourism; creative businesses and international promotion.”

After discussion, the Committee agreed to endorse the contents of the Action Plan.

### York Street Interchange Proposals – Council Response

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### “1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The existing York Street Interchange is a key junction on the strategic road network which links three of the busiest roads in Northern Ireland, the Westlink and the M2 and M3 motorways. It is the main gateway to Belfast from the North, provides access to the port of Belfast as well as facilitates local traffic movement. It is considered that the existing traffic signal control at the York Street junction causes delays and congestion particularly at peak times, therefore DRD Roads Service have identified a number of options to remove the bottleneck.
- 1.2 Four options (A, B, C and D) aimed to improve traffic flow on the strategic road network have been proposed. The options will provide direct links between the Westlink and the M2 and M3 motorways by creating new flyovers and/or underpasses below the existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail bridges.

## 2 Key Issues

### 2.1 Details on the four options are outlined below:

- Option A proposes movement between the M2 and Westlink via underpasses below ground level and Westlink to M3 movement also via an underpass. The M3 to Westlink movement will remain signalled controlled. This option is the lowest cost of approximately £72m.
- Option B proposes movement between M2 and Westlink (southbound) via a new bridge over existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail bridges, which will be approximately 18 metres above existing ground level. The movement between Westlink and M2 (northbound) and Westlink to M3 (eastbound) will be via an underpass below existing ground level and under new York Street bridge. The movement between the M3 to Westlink (westbound) will be via new bridge over York Street. This option has the highest estimated cost at approximately £100m.
- Option C proposes movements between M2 and Westlink via underpasses below existing ground level underneath a new York Street bridge and existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail Bridges and Westlink to M3 movement via an underpass below existing ground level and new York Street bridge. The cost is approximately £98m.
- Option D proposes movements between M2 and Westlink via new bridges over existing Lagan Road and Dargan Rail bridges, approximately 18metres above existing ground level, Westlink to M3 movement via traffic signal controlled junctions at York Street and Nelson Street and M3 to Westlink movement via new bridge over York Street. The cost approximately £95m.

### 2.2 Key issues

- Options B and D propose separate flyovers which will be 18 metres above ground level. These options could have greater potential impact on the surrounding communities in terms of their visibility and the raised road profile adjacent to the Henry St and Portland Place communities.

- Option A and C propose the movements between the strategic roads via underpasses which will be less visible but have potential to cause further severance from the city centre for communities in the north of the city.
- Option A & D will have signalled controlled junctions at York St for traffic moving from the Westlink to M3 which will result in an interruption to the traffic flows for this route.
- A mapping exercise carried out by the Council estimates the amount of residual land which may be available for potential development / regeneration as a result of each proposed option is as follows:

Option A – 5.24 hectares  
Option B – 5.47 hectares  
Option C – 3.99 hectares  
Option D – 6.28 hectares

- The proposed separate flyovers in Options B and D will potentially have less land take than the underpasses. However, the height of the proposed road infrastructure is 18 metres above ground level which could cause blight to the regeneration potential of the surrounding sites.
- The Council would recommend that measures are in place to ensure land in the area affected by any of the proposals is considered for public realm improvements, possible development or for improving pedestrians and cycling connections. The issue of 'left over' land in connection with road development should be assessed and considered for regeneration opportunities rather than become unused and potentially unsafe areas.
- The Council would recommend that government agencies take a joint approach to assess the regeneration impact of land associated with the transport proposal. Opportunities to create employment uses or attractive and safe open space should be maximised. This proposal is particularly important given the location within the inner city and directly adjacent to a number of city neighbourhoods.
- The Council would recommend that the road infrastructure is designed to improve connections to the north of the city and improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists including consideration of the

potential to actively use spaces below the flyovers and cover some of the proposed cut sections.

**2.3 There are a number of proposed developments in the vicinity of the road infrastructure proposals that could be affected:**

- **City Quays (the site borders Corporation Street to the east) The City Quays proposal is for 120 residential units and mixed use development. A section of the underpass proposed in Option A and C will border Corporation Street and will be below ground level. There will be land available in Options B & D between flyover proposal and Corporation Street which could be potentially developed to create a buffer or intermediate land uses.**
- **Nelson St, Little Patrick St, Little York St, Great Georges Street – This site is zoned for social housing in Draft BMAP and is subject to a planning application by NIHE for 64 social housing units and a second planning application from a private developer for Apartment Development of 217 units. The road proposals will impact the site as follows:**

**Option A - three lanes of traffic are proposed on Great Georges St with signalised junctions**

**Option B and D - a new M3 to Westlink bridge is proposed which will run adjacent to the site**

**Option C - M3 to Westlink underpass is proposed**

- **Corporation Street (next to Sinclair Seamen's Church) There is a planning application for 44 residential units 13 storeys with commercial units at the ground floor. The M3 on slip (2 lanes) is in close proximity.**
- **Proposed University of Ulster Campus York St: the proposal to upgrade the York Street interchange should take account of the proposed UU campus development on York Street. The major upgrade to the strategic road network will have implications for local traffic movements in the north of the city and the accessibility of the new campus. Any increase in the efficiency of the proposed junction arrangements that the York Street interchange should deliver positive impacts for the northern city centre area and surrounding communities. There could also be**



potential surplus road space within the surrounding network and opportunities for the redesign of the Dunbar Link. The reduction in road space could contribute to enhanced connectivity within the city centre and the integration of the areas to the north of the Frederick Street Dunbar Link axis.

- 2.4 The proposed options could have a potential impact on the design and orientation of the proposed commercial, educational or residential units and would need to be considered in the final layout of the buildings. The proposed road will also have implication in terms of noise, air pollution and visual amenity which should be fully assessed.
- 2.5 There are also implications for the wider area in relation to the potential impact on Air Quality. Based upon air quality modelling data provided to the council to date, it appears that Option B could provide for the greatest potential for improvements in ambient nitrogen dioxide levels for residents living directly adjacent to the A12 Westlink in locations such as Great and Little George's Streets. However, rerouting of road traffic will also result in a small worsening in nitrogen dioxide levels along Garmoyle Street for Option B. These conclusions are based upon air quality modelling data provided to the council by Roads Service and its consultants. Therefore, it is understood that the data is not reflective of the impact of forthcoming local developments such as the University of Ulster Belfast Campus or Royal Exchange. In addition, the air quality assessment does not appear to have characterised the impact of the proposed road re-profiling on the potential for regeneration of the 'Little Italy' area, which is centred on Little Patrick Street, and its environs. The full response relating to air quality is outlined in Appendix 2.
- 2.6 All the proposed options will have implications in relation to adjoining areas or communities and the potential for future regeneration. The issues relate to the extent of land affected by the different proposals and the potential impacts on existing or proposed regeneration schemes. From the information provided it is difficult to quantify what these might be beyond the purely physical land take implications. As noted above the flyover options B and D would result in lower land take for the development of the new infrastructure and based on limited data available for assessment these options are likely to have more favourable outcomes for air quality.

- 2.7 In the consideration of all the options it is suggested that the Committee seek assurances that: the road infrastructure is designed to improve connections to the north of the city and improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists (including consideration of the potential to actively use spaces below the flyovers and cover some of the proposed cut sections); and the final designs consider the potential for reallocation of surplus road space within the surrounding network and opportunities for the redesign of the Dunbar Link.

3 **Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the Committee consider the potential implications arising from the outline options and if appropriate select a preferred option as the basis for a response to the Department for Regional Development.”

A lengthy discussion ensued during which concern was expressed in respect of the level of meaningful engagement which the Department for Regional Development had entered into with the Council in respect of the proposals. The point was made that, whilst additional and viable options had been identified to re-develop the interchange, the original four options proposed by the DRD had not been amended in any significant form.

A Member suggested that, should the Committee fail to endorse a particular option for the re-development, it might be a matter for each of the parties on the Council to comment individually. However, a further Member pointed out that, given the regional and strategic importance of the project, it would be prudent for the Council to endorse corporately one of the options outlined.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to the following course of action:

- that an ad-hoc cross-party working group would be established to examine whether a consensus could be reached in respect of the Council's preferred option for the re-development; and
- that the findings of the working group would be presented for the Committee's consideration in September to assist in the formulation of the Council's response in the matter.

**Active Travel Projects**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 20th March, it had endorsed two Council proposals for consideration under to the Department for Regional Development Active Travel initiative. It was reported that the Council had been successful in securing £700,000 for the establishment of a Public Hire Bike Scheme, which would enable the establishment of 30 docking stations and provide 300 bikes for hire across the City. The Director indicated that further reports would be submitted to the Committee outlining how the scheme would be implemented and managed, together with an outline of the potential revenue costs to the Council.

Noted.

**B-Team Dissemination Event**

The Committee endorsed a programme of activities which would be held to coincide with the hosting by the City of the international 'B-Team' Dissemination event from 10th till 13th September.

Noted.

**Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy  
Framework for Northern Ireland - Consultation**

The Committee noted the arrangements which had been put in place to co-ordinate a Council response to the above-mentioned consultation document and agreed to hold a special meeting, to which all Members of the Council would be invited, to consider the matter.

**Renewing the Routes Programme 2012/2013**

The Committee considered the undernoted report, together with a programme schedule, a copy of which was available on the Council's Modern.gov website:

**"1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 The Renewing the Routes Programme is local regeneration initiative that delivers local regeneration projects at targeted locations along the arterial routes within Belfast. Since 2004 the Programme has facilitated the investment of approximately £6.5 million across these key routes and neighbourhoods. This investment has acted as a catalyst for the delivery of a range of projects including: approximately 500 commercial frontage improvements; lighting schemes; environmental improvements; public realm enhancements; public art; community arts initiatives; landscaping; commercial alleygating; strategic tourism signage; facade cleaning and improvements to site boundaries or enclosures.**
- 1.2 Following Committee endorsement in February 2012 a four year rolling programme for local regeneration was agreed across the city. The target areas identified for the current financial year are the Newtownards Road and Ormeau Road.**
- 1.3 The Renewing the Routes team has also continued to work with strategic partners including the Belfast Regeneration Office (BRO) in a coordinated approach to delivering regeneration works in the identified target areas. There are opportunities to continue with this approach for the new areas, BRO have approached the Council to explore the potential for collaborative work for the areas identified as**

current programme priorities and in addition have requested consideration for similar environmental works on Cromac Street.

## 2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Since approval in February 2012, work has continued on the development of plans for the four target areas. Scoping and engagement work has expanded, in conjunction with relevant statutory and community contacts, including elected representatives for the areas.
- 2.2 The key common themes emerging from the scoping work with local Councillors and stakeholders were identified as:
- *Environmental improvements* - major issues facing the routes are dereliction or under used property and often poor general environments; requiring action to ensure improvements that can complement other developments;
  - *Built heritage* – the roads contain elements of historical or cultural significance that offer the opportunity to develop these local assets through architectural lighting, interpretive signage and heritage projects;
  - *Commercial improvements* – focus areas have been identified along the routes; the areas are hubs of activity with local shops, services and facilities serving the community. The commercial improvements will focus on supporting these;
  - *Environmental works*:-Targeted and sustained clean-up and graffiti removal campaigns working with local groups;
  - *Collaborative work* essential in maximising finite budgets, particularly with a joined-up approach to external funding opportunities with statutory agencies. The underlying objective is to maximise the impact of the Council's own contribution through internal joint working i.e. community safety, parks and leisure, economic development, building control, tourism and the arts and SNAP.
- 2.3 As part of the ongoing review of delivery the Committee is being requested to endorse the continuation of the current approach to the collection of contribution to commercial

improvement works. In light of the streamlined approach to the legal processes, now employed by Renewing the Routes in dealing directly with owners of commercial properties, it has been previously agreed by Council to seek a nominal contribution from owners towards the cost of the project of 10%. It is proposed that the approach of requiring a contribution from owners / occupiers is continued.

- 2.4 The previously utilised, direct delivery, approach to the procurement of proposed works and implementation is proposed to be continued for this phase of activity. The Renewing the Routes Team will work with Property and Projects in the procurement of architectural services and the proposed measured term contract for the contractors to carry out the works across all the areas. This strategic approach will help ensure efficiencies in project development, delivery timescales and budgets, whilst providing flexibility given the complex nature of some of the schemes.
- 2.5 Members will note the relevant area and Project Plan tables for each of the Newtownards Road and Ormeau Road are appended for consideration in additional longer list of projects is also provided should further resources become available (through external sources currently being actively pursued with potential project partners) or modifications to existing plans which will be subject to further Council approval.
- 2.6 The Belfast Regeneration Office has approached the Council to explore the potential partnership activity in the target areas and at Cromac Street. Following the successful delivery of previous joint initiatives BRO has requested that the Council assist with the development of complementary regeneration works on the two target routes and a commercial improvement programme for properties on Cromac Street.
- 2.7 The Department has requested initial proposals outlining works and associated costs for additional regeneration works within the Renewing the Routes agreed areas of the Newtownards Road and Ormeau Road in addition to Cromac Street. Approval is therefore being sought from Committee for the Team to provide assistance in the development and delivery of the potential complementary commercial regeneration activity.

### **3. Recommendations**

#### **3.1 Members are requested to:**

- approve the continuation of the approach to the commercial contributions;
- endorse the proposed Renewing the Routes programme for Newtownards Road, Ormeau Road as summarised; and
- approve the proposed partnership working with BRO to secure additional funding to complement the activity outlined and additional work at Cromac Street.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

#### **IMEX America Conference 2012**

The Committee was advised that the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau, Titanic Belfast and the Hastings Hotel Group would be hosting a stand to promote Belfast at the IMEX America Conference, which was due to take place in Las Vegas from 9th till 11th October. The Director explained that an opportunity existed for the Council to partake in the event and co-host the Belfast stand in conjunction with the partners listed. The Members were informed that the event was considered to be one of the most prestigious in the international exhibitions' calendar.

The Director pointed out that, given the imminent extension of the Waterfront Hall to incorporate a dedicated conference and exhibition centre, attendance at the event would afford the Council valuable international marketing opportunities for the new facilities. He recommended that the Committee authorise the attendance at the event of the Waterfront Hall's Revenue and Business Generation Manager and pointed out that the total costs of attending the event, including delegate fee, stall-hire, travel, accommodation and subsistence, would be £4,100.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

#### **St. George's Market**

##### **Attendance at the Lammas Fair**

The Committee was advised that Moyle District Council had invited upwards of 40 traders from St. George's Market to participate at the annual Lammas Fair in Ballycastle on Monday 27th and Tuesday 28th August. The Director reported that a significant portion of a marquee had been allocated to the Belfast traders and this would provide a valuable opportunity for the Council to promote St. George's Market to a wider audience.

The Committee agreed to allocate £1,000 towards the production of promotional literature for St. George's Market which would be distributed at the Lammas Fair.

### **Loyalty Points Scheme for Casual Traders**

The Committee was advised that the Traders' Committee of St. George's Market was seeking authority to introduce a loyalty scheme to manage the allocation of stalls to casual traders at the market. The Director reported that such a scheme would acknowledge the loyalty which certain casual traders had shown to the market and would eliminate the concept of 'first come, first served' in the allocation of stalls to casual traders, especially at busier times of the year.

The Committee endorsed the introduction of the loyalty scheme.

### **Northern Ireland Museums' Council – Consultation Document**

The Committee endorsed a response to the above-mentioned consultation, a copy of which was made available on the Council's Modern.gov website.

### **2012 Older Volunteer Award**

The Committee was reminded that the Older Volunteer Award had been established to recognise the significant contribution which older volunteers had made to the work of organisations and groups across the City. It was reported that the 2012 Older Volunteer of the Year awards ceremony was scheduled to take place in the City Hall on 5th December and that the Lord Mayor would present the awards. The Director pointed out that Volunteer Now, an organisation based in the City, had offered the Council £500 in sponsorship towards the hosting of the ceremony in 2012 and 2013.

The Committee agreed that it would accept the offer of financial assistance from Volunteer Now towards the events and agreed also that hospitality in the form of a finger buffet be provided at the ceremony.

### **Volunteer Framework and Pilot 'Investors in Volunteers' Planning**

The Committee considered a report in respect of the above mentioned matter and after discussion endorsed the undernoted Volunteer Framework and Pilot Investors Policy:

#### **"1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Community Services involves volunteers as an intrinsic part of its work. Volunteering should be a mutually beneficial experience with the organisation, volunteers and service users all benefiting.**
- 1.2 To ensure this mutual benefit it is crucial for Community Services' to examine and consolidate its existing volunteer management and development practices.**

- 1.3 Good volunteer management practice currently exists across the service. The development of a volunteer policy and associated procedures will embed this good practice and contribute to its consistent application across the service.
- 1.4 By providing a positive, high quality volunteering experience, Community Services will be better placed to attract, involve and retain volunteers.
- 1.5 As well as supporting our own volunteers, Community Services also supports volunteering across the sector through:
  - its grant aid programme
  - the Area Support team; and
  - the Toolbox training programme we have developed for community groups

## **2 Vision and Values**

- 2.1 As already noted, Volunteering is defined as “the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside (or in addition to) one’s immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice’.
- 2.2 The Community Services section values volunteer involvement in its work as an expression of active citizenship. We recognise the integral role volunteering plays in the community development process.
- 2.3 We support and encourage volunteering that builds connected, cohesive, competitive and confident communities.
- 2.4 Community Services values the involvement of volunteers in our work as they help reflect the interests, needs and resources of the communities we serve. Volunteers bring a unique perspective to all our work and we recognise them as a core part of our team, with a distinctive but complementary role alongside paid staff. Involving volunteers enables us to enhance the benefits we can offer to citizens.
- 2.5 We value volunteering across the community and recognise the important contribution volunteers make to all aspects of community life as well as the many vital services which they deliver. As a funder of community organisations we seek to encourage a local environment which supports volunteering to grow.



- 2.6 Volunteering is a mutually beneficial experience. Community Services benefits from the skills, experience and enthusiasm of volunteers, and in turn we believe that volunteers gain personal benefits, such as improved health and wellbeing and skills development, from their volunteering experience. We are committed to managing volunteers in a way that ensures the needs of both parties are met.
- 2.7 Belfast City Council strives to be a diverse and inclusive organisation operating within a diverse and inclusive city. As part of Belfast City Council Community Services is committed to ensuring equality of access to high quality volunteer opportunities and equality of treatment for our volunteers in all our policies and practices.

### **3 Volunteer Roles**

- 3.1 Community Services offers a range of roles for volunteers that bring added value to our work. Volunteers are involved at appropriate levels in roles which complement, but never substitute, the work of paid staff.
- 3.2 The role or task of the volunteer is identified prior to the placement of an individual at a given location. All volunteers are provided with a written role description, outlining the purpose, tasks and main expectations of their role. This role is reviewed with their immediate supervisor at least once a year.
- 3.3 Volunteers will not be asked to fulfil the roles of paid staff in times of industrial action. They may continue with their regular tasks but will not be asked to undertake additional duties.

### **4 Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers**

- 4.1 Community Services is committed to making volunteering an inclusive process in which people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse skills can participate. We wish to see all sections of the community represented amongst our volunteers. Volunteering opportunities are widely promoted, and we will endeavour to make recruitment and selection materials available in formats accessible to any individual or group, upon request. We aim to review, the make-up of our volunteers on a yearly basis to identify and target any under-represented groups

- 4.2 Community Services implements a fair, effective and open system in the recruitment and selection of volunteers and treats all information collected in this process confidentially.
- 4.3 All potential volunteers must complete a registration form, attend a matching meeting and provide references. Additional measures may be implemented depending on the nature of the volunteer role, and criminal records checks are conducted where appropriate.
- 4.4 The recruitment and selection process is conducted by an appropriately briefed/trained staff member and aims to ensure both parties give and receive sufficient information to assess whether the volunteering opportunities available match the potential volunteer's interests, skills, qualities and needs.

## **5 Management of Volunteers**

- 5.1 All volunteers are provided with a written letter of welcome which outlines the expectations and responsibilities of both the volunteer and Community Services. This agreement may be reviewed at any time, with the consent of the volunteer and his/her supervisor including during the initial review meeting and at the end of the settling in/taster period.
- 5.2 All volunteers are provided with an induction within six weeks of commencing their voluntary work. For one off and short term volunteer role opportunities induction should take place prior to the volunteer beginning the actual volunteer role.
- 5.3 The induction provides:
- background information on Community Services and the work of Belfast City Council
  - an explanation of its structures and procedures
  - a description of the volunteer role and the work team
  - an outline of how the volunteer will be supported, including practical information deemed necessary.
- 5.4 During the induction period new volunteers will receive written information on relevant legislation, organisational policies and codes of behaviour. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to discuss any issues or matters of concern with the volunteer supervisor during regular meetings or as otherwise mutually agreed.

- 5.5 All volunteers are allocated a named member of staff as their supervisor with an alternative identified should the designated supervisor be unavailable.
- 5.6 All volunteer placements are subject to a settling in/taster period, the length of which will depend on the nature and hours of the voluntary work. Volunteers are given additional support during this period ending in a review meeting between the volunteer and his/her supervisor to ensure both parties are satisfied with the arrangements.
- 5.7 The named supervisor can provide day to day help and guidance on any issue related to the voluntary work. The supervisor is responsible for providing regular support to and supervision of the volunteer. The frequency, duration and format of this support and supervision is agreed between the volunteer and his/her supervisor at the end of the settling in/taster period.
- 5.8 Community Services aims to reflect the voluntary nature of its relationship with volunteers in all our policies and procedures for managing their involvement. The volunteer's designated supervisor will deal with minor complaints or grievances about or by volunteers or their work through the usual support and supervision procedures in the first instance.
- 5.9 However we recognise our duty to protect the well-being and interests of our volunteers, staff and service users and therefore operate a formal complaints procedure in the case of more serious complaints. In the case of particularly serious offences, as specified in the Code of Practice, this process may be bypassed and/or the subject of the complaint asked to leave. Where a criminal offence is suspected the matter will be handed over to the police.
- 5.10 Community Services recognises the important role that volunteers fulfil. We also appreciate the importance of seeking volunteers' ideas and opinions at regular intervals. Gathering feedback and opinions from volunteers will be of benefit to both parties. We endeavour to communicate with volunteers and seek their views and opinions in appropriate ways and on a regular basis.
- 5.11 In order to effectively monitor the work carried out by volunteers and how they are managed, a personal file is maintained for all volunteers. This will include contact details and other relevant personal information, the initial application forms, details of the recruitment and selection process,

agreements made, hours worked, records of supervision, training undertaken and complaints or grievances received or made. All such information is treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and volunteers are entitled to inspect all such information pertaining to them.

- 5.12 Volunteers with Community Services are fully protected by the Council's public liability and personal accident insurance whilst carrying out their voluntary role as agreed with their volunteer supervisor. Drivers should, however, check with their own insurance company to ensure they are adequately covered whilst using their cars in connection with their voluntary work.
- 5.13 Community Services will provide adequate and appropriate facilities, equipment and resources to enable volunteers to fulfil their roles.
- 5.14 We will reimburse volunteers' out-of-pocket expenses for travel and subsistence (e.g. lunches) when agreed with their volunteer supervisor and submitted on a standard Volunteer Attendance and Expenses Claim Form accompanied by proof of expenditure.
- 5.15 Community Services operates appropriate procedures for volunteers and their supervisors to deal with matters of concern, A volunteer's supervisor provides support and supervision, identifies training requirements, countersigns expenses claims and any other duties deemed necessary for the appropriate and effective management of any volunteer.
- 5.16 All Community Services staff required to undertake such duties are provided with the necessary training in relation to management, supervision, support and if appropriate training of volunteers.

## **6 Training**

- 6.1 Community Services is committed to encouraging volunteers to improve their personal and professional effectiveness in order to fulfil their potential.
- 6.2 Volunteers may choose to attend any appropriate in-house training that they feel is relevant to their voluntary role, after discussion and agreement with their supervisor and subject to the availability of places.

- 6.3 **Volunteers may request financial and/or practical support from their volunteer supervisor to attend external courses where these have a clear relevance to the volunteer's work. All requests will be subject to available funding.**
- 6.4 **Following agreement from their supervisor, volunteers attending approved training – internal or external – may do so within their normal hours of voluntary work and may reclaim out-of-pocket expenses.**
- 7 **Monitoring and Review of the Policy**
- 7.1 **This policy is regularly monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it reflects the nature of volunteering within Community Services and any legislative requirements.”**

**Belfast City Centre Management –  
Night Time Economy Award**

Councillor Kingston reminded the Committee that Belfast City Centre Management had been successful in the category 'Developing the Evening and Night Time Economy' at the Association of Town and Country Management awards which had been held in July.

The Committee agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Lord Mayor requesting that he consider hosting a reception to acknowledge the achievement of Belfast City Centre Management.

Chairman