

Development Committee

Tuesday, 4th September, 2012

MEETING OF Development Committee

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

In attendance:

Apologies

Apologies were reported from Alderman Ekin and Councillor Hendron.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st August were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd September.

Declarations of Interest

In respect of item 2 viz., George Best Belfast City Airport – Economic Impact, Councillor Ó Muilleoir indicated that he was Managing Director of the Belfast Media Group which was in receipt of sponsorship from the Airport.

George Best Belfast City Airport - Economic Impact

(Mrs. S. Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services, Mr. B. Ambrose, Chief Executive, and Ms. K. Best, Commercial and Marketing Director, George Best Belfast City Airport, attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Development tabled a report for the information of the Members. He reminded the Committee that, on 30th September 2011, the Minister for the Department of the Environment had announced that he had initiated a public process to modify the existing planning agreement between that Department and the George Best Belfast City Airport (GBBCA). On 21st March, the GBBCA had submitted a request to the Department of the Environment to vary the terms of its 1997 Planning Agreement, which had been modified in 2008, under Article 40A(1)(a) of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. The Airport had requested that the 'Seats for Sale' restriction be removed from the Agreement and replaced with a noise contour control cap and other noise control measures and, as that would be a significant modification to the existing agreement, the Minister had invited representations from the local community and other interested parties.

The Director advised the Committee that Officers from the Development Department had previously assisted colleagues in the Health and Environmental Services Department with regard to the appraisal of the economic and environmental information, which had consisted of three future growth scenarios for the airport, together with a draft Article 40 Agreement, which had been provided with the application for the removal of the 'Seats for Sale' restriction. A response to the

consultation had subsequently been submitted by the Health and Environmental Services Committee to the Department of the Environment. Within that response it had been recognised that the removal of the 'Seats for Sale' restriction and the introduction of a noise contour had potential economic advantages and, if introduced properly, would provide some protection to local residents. However, the proposed contour was considered to extend over a large area and there was uncertainty regarding the methodology employed to determine the three growth scenarios. The Council response had reflected those concerns and had requested that the air traffic forecasts and the growth scenarios should be reviewed with consideration given to a smaller contour which would be better placed to achieve the balance between the environmental and economic considerations that the Minister was seeking.

The Committee was advised that the Planning Appeals Commission had set a date of 26th November for the Public Local Inquiry to consider the request for the removal of the 'Seats for Sale' restriction from the existing agreement and that, in advance of the inquiry, the Council would be requested to submit a Statement of Case in respect of the proposed revision. In that regard, a special meeting of the Health and Environmental Services Committee, to which all Members of the Council would be invited to attend, would be held on 20th September, 2012 to consider the Statement of Case in advance of it being submitted.

The Director of Development reported that the Chief Executive of the George Best Belfast City Airport, Mr. B. Ambrose, and the Commercial and Marketing Director, Ms. K. Best were in attendance and were admitted to the meeting by the Chairman.

Mr. Ambrose informed the Committee that the George Best Belfast City Airport was a key strategic gateway to Northern Ireland, with over two million passengers during 2011, consisting of an equal mix between business and leisure. He reported that the Airport was a key contributor to economic and social development within Northern Ireland and was a major employer within East Belfast, employing in the region of one thousand four hundred staff. He reported further that the George Best Belfast City Airport was one of the most restricted airports within Europe in respect of its operating hours, number of aircraft movements and seats for sale and that it was seeking, therefore, to vary its current Planning Agreement to remove the seats for sale limit and to introduce a noise contour control cap and other noise control measures.

Mr. Ambrose advised the Committee that the airport was mindful of its impact on the community and the environment and that it undertook a number of corporate responsibility activities in the form of school visits, the provision of work experience and educational partnerships. He advised further that by 2030 it was anticipated that the Airport would attract four million passengers and that it would further develop its network focussing on attracting business and leisure routes to Western Europe.

Mr. Ambrose and Ms. Best then answered a number of questions put by the Members in relation to the percentage of Northern Ireland residents using the airport and not, therefore, contributing to the economic benefit of the City; the possible growth scenarios and resultant plans to ameliorate any negative impact on residents; the noise contour control cap; the possible affects of the current restrictions upon the promotion of an international strategy; connectivity issues; the potential for new employment opportunities and apprenticeships; and the situation which would arise in the event of no change to the current arrangements.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Ambrose and Ms. Best for their presentation and they left the meeting.

The Director of Development informed the Committee that it would have been beneficial if the Airport had recruited an independent company to undertake the economic impact analysis as evidence to support its case. The Director undertook to raise that matter again with the Chief Executive of the George Best Belfast City Airport.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and the presentation provided by Mr. Ambrose, and noted further that a draft Statement of Case would be issued for Members' consideration in advance of the Special Health and Environmental Services Committee on 20th September, 2012.

Belfast's Economy Consultation - Lagan Canal Trust

The Committee was advised that, as part of a public consultation exercise, the Council had been invited to respond to a draft Strategic Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Engineering Report in connection with the Lagan Canal and locks of the Lagan Corridor from Belfast to Lough Neagh, which had been considered to be fundamental to the possible future capital development of the project and which were to be completed by 2012.

The draft Strategic Environmental Assessment had been prepared following previous work which had determined that the plan to reopen the Lagan Canal from Belfast to Lough Neagh would be likely to have a significant environmental impact, and the Preliminary Engineering Report (copies of which were provided on the Modern.gov system) consisted of a review of the existing documentation, updated drawings, surveys and cost planning which would inform the potential to re-open the Lagan Navigation from Belfast Harbour to Lough Neagh.

The Committee considered the undernoted response to the consultation exercise:

2.1 The Strategic Environmental Assessment

Council are content that the SEA references a number of key City Plans and Strategies including; Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (Draft); Belfast City Council: Corporate Plans; Belfast City Council: Local Economic Development Plan; Belfast City Council: Open Space Strategy – ‘Your City, Your Space’, Belfast City Council: Cultural Tourism Strategy, Developing Belfast’s Opportunity; Belfast City Council: Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism 2010-2014; These documents set the economic development and recreational framework for the area and there is consistent reference to the aims to improve the amenity of the canal and its corridor.

2.2 The environmental report is compatible with the Council’s priorities, however it would benefit from reference to Belfast City Council Investment Programme 2012-2015 Draft and the development of a more comprehensive list of open spaces within the 1.5 mile economic corridor of Belfast; Page 56 Table 4.9 Parks Gardens and Demesnes.

2.3 Our Environmental Protection Unit of the Health and Environmental Services Department have stated that they are fully supportive of the intentions of the Lagan Canal Trust to achieve the restoration and revitalisation of the Lagan Canal and its corridor and would be particularly involved once the plan is live in terms of noise, air quality and contaminated land. Furthermore those areas detailed in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive that would potentially involve the Environmental Protection Unit are those relating to:

- 1. The risks to human health or the environment, and**
- 2. The exceeding of environmental quality standards or limit values.**

2.4 The Environmental Protection Unit would therefore request that they are consulted at each stage of the project where noise, air quality and contaminated land are potential issues.

2.5 **Re-opening the Lagan Navigation from Belfast Harbour to Lough Neagh (Preliminary Engineering Report)**

The Preliminary Engineering Report accurately reflects the Lagan Canal Scoping Report that was conducted by Scott Wilson Consultants on behalf of Belfast City Council in 2008. This Engineering Report is therefore consistent with the Council's previous study."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the draft response and requested that further consideration be given as to how future consultation documents be presented to the Members.

Procurement Update

The Committee noted that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 24th August, had authorised the attendance of the Chairmen of that Committee and the Development Committee and Party Group Leaders, or their nominees, to participate in a future visit to Manchester to focus upon its construction scheme and the work which was being undertaken to engage with existing suppliers.

Arising from the discussion, the Director undertook to submit, to a future meeting of the Committee, an update on the roll-out of the scheme including information as to how the Council would ensure that companies were aware of the opportunities which would be coming on-stream; the introduction of a portal for information and communication purposes; and training for companies on how to apply and compete for opportunities.

Noted.

Northern Ireland Parliamentary Group on the United States of America

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the Northern Ireland Assembly inviting it to provide its views on the newly-established Northern Ireland Parliamentary Group on the United States of America.

The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission had agreed that, due to Northern Ireland's strong relationship with North America, there was merit in forming a Northern Ireland Assembly Parliamentary Group on the USA, which was a similar approach to that taken at Westminster where there was a British-American Parliamentary Group.

The Committee was informed that the Northern Ireland Assembly Parliamentary Group on the USA would focus on producing a report to consider its role and value to justify its long-term future, including the level of interest amongst its members; appointing an Executive Committee, its aims and priorities and potential activities to be undertaken; and an assessment of the resources required for the Group's work and any external funding which may be available to it. The initial focus of the Group appeared to be the engagement with USA delegations visiting the Assembly; the development of links with USA legislators on mutual areas of interest; and the exploration of economic and cultural opportunities which would be of benefit to Northern Ireland.

The Head of Economic Initiatives informed the Committee that the Council had been selected to be a respondent due to its historic relationships with the USA dating back over fifteen years. She reminded the Committee that the Council was currently reviewing its international relationships in general and that that project had included a review of international relations activity between the Council and its key stakeholders; the agreement of key priority areas; and the building of a collaborative approach to international relations and marketing across the City. Key Belfast/USA relationships over the past fifteen years had included Friends of Belfast, World Trade Centre, Nashville, New York/Boston/Washington, and Silicon Valley/Hollywood.

The Head of Economic Initiatives had recommended that the Committee endorse the undernoted response:

“The Council is currently developing an International Relations Framework and an International City Marketing plan. The focus is on internationalisation, connections, partnerships and investment and we think the establishment of this Assembly Group is timely for both sides.

As part of this process we have engaged with a number of key stakeholders in the City (who are also active on a regional level) to gather their views and find out about their international work. From our previous and current experiences, we think that the critical parts to the success of this group are:

- Find out what is currently happening in the locality/region
- Develop a set of priorities
- Create an agreed local narrative
- Develop criteria for success

At first instance it is proposed that the Assembly Group conducts a NI audit on the existing relations with the USA. It seems from the Council’s own audit that many Councils, Colleges, and Universities have formal and informal links with the USA.

We believe it is important to set down criteria on where and why the group will engage with the USA on specific areas. We suggest that priority areas should include:

- Investment and funding
- Trade and new business opportunities
- Partnerships
- Cultural and social exchange
- Political and diplomatic connections

Consistent and coherent messages are very important in establishing new partnerships in the USA. There are many organisations in NI being involved in the USA, organising inward and outward visits many times in a year, often to the same locations but with different messages. This group could lead on establishing one NI narrative around economic, political and cultural issues.

Working together will be of major importance in this era of public sector cuts. We would be very keen that we establish relationship with the Assembly group early on, both through the political level and the officer level via the group secretariat. It would be very beneficial if the Council would have an ongoing input into the work of the group.

We believe that there are a number of organisations who could play an important role and asset to the group, besides the Council, Queen’s University, University of Ulster, Belfast Metropolitan College, the Belfast Education and Library Board for example. Also, the group could exploit the existing lasting relationships such as International Fund for Ireland and Irish Institute of Pittsburgh.

Finally we would suggest a joint calendar of planned inward and outward visits to the USA from the NI Assembly to Invest NI, Local Councils, Chambers and Universities.”

The Committee endorsed the response as outlined and approved the recommendation that the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee, or their nominees, and the Director of Development, meet with the Assembly Group as appropriate.

Cities of the Isles, Glasgow, October 2012

The Director reminded the Committee that the City of the Isles Partnership was a small network of six City Councils in the United Kingdom and Ireland, namely Belfast, Cardiff, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Liverpool. Since 2000, these Cities had met annually to share urban regeneration experiences, develop joint projects and establish a co-ordinated approach to issues of strategic importance. It was reported that the next scheduled meeting of the organisation would take place in Glasgow on 24th and 25th October at a cost of £250 per delegate.

The Director then provided an overview of the programme of events which Glasgow had formulated and reported that the discussion would focus on two key themes, viz., youth employment, including apprenticeships and training; and using sport as a tool to engage with young people. He pointed out that Glasgow had seen significant investment and regeneration in the last two decades. However, despite that growth, the city had a major problem with economic inactivity, particular to a number of its neighbourhoods. It had been chosen as one of the pilot 'city strategies' that had been supported under the previous government and much of the learning from that experience was being utilised by those partners working on Belfast's employability and skills strategy. It was reported further that Glasgow would host the Commonwealth Games in 2014 and that the discussion in relation to young people and sport would offer an opportunity to consider the potential legacy of investment in sport and its role in engaging young people.

The Committee authorised the attendance at the event of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Committee, or their nominees, together with a maximum of two officers, at a cost of £250 per person.

Global India Business Meeting 2013 Update

The Head of Economic Initiatives reminded the Committee that it had previously agreed to support the hosting of the Global India International meeting in 2013. Following Committee approval, work had been ongoing to progress the contractual negotiations and secure arrangements. The proposed dates for the Global India meeting were 24th and 25th June, 2013, with the opening taking place in the City Hall, the main event in the Waterfront Hall and the closing dinner in Titanic Belfast. Delegates would select from a variety of accommodation but it was likely that a city centre hotel would be used as the main venue for guests.

The Committee was reminded that the total cost for hosting the event was in the region of £160,000. The Council had previously agreed to provide support to a maximum of £100,000 and Invest NI had agreed to provide up to £40,000. Additional finance was being sought from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Tourism Ireland and the university sector.

The Head of Economic Initiatives informed the Committee that the programme would include contributions from a series of international and local speakers examining global economic issues of particular interest to the Indian Sub-Continent. There would be a dedicated session on 'Doing Business in Belfast' which would be delivered in conjunction with Invest NI. The Council would also have the opportunity to influence the programme content to showcase Belfast's competitive edge and contemporary and forthcoming business opportunities. Local delegates would have the opportunity to interface with Chief Executives of leading Indian firms and business to business meetings would be arranged in parallel with the Conference.

The Committee noted the progress of the Global India Business Meeting 2013 and noted also that officers would pursue vigorously the additional finance required to ensure a satisfactory outcome to the existing shortfall.

(Councillor Ó Muilleoir, Deputy Chairman, in the Chair.)

Shaping Belfast

Belfast Tourism Forum

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 **Belfast City Council, Northern Ireland tourist Board (NITB) and Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) agreed a tourism framework for the city, the Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010–2014, which was launched in March 2011. The Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework (BISTF) 2010-2014 identifies a range of tourism priorities and projects for the city, many of which are now being realised including the extension to the Belfast Waterfront Hall, the relocation of the Belfast Welcome Centre and the development of local tourism destinations.**
- 1.2 **One of the recommendations within the BISTF 2010–2014 was to ensure better integration between the delivery bodies for tourism across the city. The Framework identified the need for a Belfast Tourism Forum which would have representation from the main public sector agencies and statutory bodies that impact on tourism development as well as main industry bodies such as Pubs of Ulster, Northern Ireland Hotel Federation, Northern Ireland Tour Guides Association.**
- 1.3 **At an operational level, the Forum is supported by an officers group, representing Belfast City Council’s Tourism and Events teams, Belfast City Centre Management, Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau and NITB. This ensures better integration and efficiency at an operational level.**
- 1.4 **The current representation on the Belfast Tourism Forum and the Terms of Reference is attached as Appendix 1.**
- 1.5 **The first meeting of the Belfast Forum was in March 2011 and launched the start of implementing the BISTF 2010–2014. A 12 month action plan was prepared to identify the key actions to be undertaken in 2011/2012 and reports were made at quarterly meetings on progress. Subsequent meetings also identified key topics for discussion, for example;**

Meeting 1, March 2011; Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework;

Meeting 2, June 2011; GB Market and barriers to growth;

Meeting 3, Sept 2011; City Events and 2012 Our Time, Our Place Campaign;

Meeting 4, Dec 2011, Industry engagement and communications;

Meeting 5, March 2012, Research Trends and Visitor Satisfaction;

Meeting 6, June 2012, Review Workshop on the impact of the Tourism Forum

- 1.6 Some of the key outputs from the Belfast Tourism Forum have included a meeting with the Minister for Tourism to discuss tourism priorities for the city, whereby both Members of Development Committee and the industry representatives presented a joint approach; the development of a new programme of industry support 'Destination Belfast' funded by BCC and Invest NI and the roll out of a programme of support for local tourism destinations.
- 1.7 Overall a number of additional workshops and industry sessions have been held due to the work of the Tourism Forum and in summary a minimum of 200 businesses/organisations have participated in these.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 In June 2012, representatives of the Belfast Tourism Forum attended a facilitated workshop to review progress and identify the best way forward for the Forum.
- 2.2 In general there is support for a Belfast Tourism Forum and recognition that Belfast City Council is best to lead on this. Whilst the previous action plan captured all the key priorities, it was perhaps too detailed and the Forum members wished to develop more strategic work streams. The main topics, areas raised during the workshop, fell under the following headings;
- Strategic Coordination – including better and more regular research
 - Branding & Marketing – how best to maximise on Titanic message and reinvigorate the city brand
 - World Host City – Belfast needs to be committed to customer care and service and should attain World Host City status
 - Belfast Destinations – work has commenced on developing local destinations across the city and this should continue
 - Products and Programmes – music, food, literature, city events are all areas which have and continue to receive investment – what are the next themes, experiences that visitors will be drawn to?
- 2.3 The next meeting of the Belfast Tourism Forum is planned for 25 October 2012. The Belfast Tourism Officers Group has met to discuss the findings of the workshop and each organisation has agreed that their priorities for tourism fit within these workstreams. It is therefore proposed that the officers begin populating these workstreams for presentation to the next meeting of the Belfast Tourism Forum. The next meeting will also provide a platform to update stakeholders on the World Police and Fire Games and opportunities for 2013.
- 2.4 To date, Belfast City Council's representation on the Belfast Tourism Forum has included the Chair and Deputy Chair of Development Committee, Director of Development, Head of Economic Initiatives, Tourism, Culture and Arts Manager and Tourism Development Officer. It is recommended that this remains the same, however should the Chair/Deputy Chair be unavailable,

that other Members can be approached to ensure that there is political representation at these high profile meetings.

3 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 3.1 There are no specific equality or good relations considerations attached to this report.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members agree that the Belfast Tourism Forum continues and that work streams are developed for Strategic Coordination, Branding & Marketing World Host City, Belfast Destinations, Products and Programmes.
- 4.2 The Chair and Deputy Chair or their nominated representatives attend the next meeting of the Belfast Tourism Forum.”

Appendix 1

Belfast Tourism Forum

Aim

To oversee the implementation of the Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 – 2014.

Terms of Reference

1. To agree actions arising from the Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework and monitor and review its progress, providing regular feedback to Development Committee.
2. To develop and establish sign up and ownership amongst key stakeholders to an operational annual city tourism workplan which will include key actions, research and monitoring, an internal and external communications plan and reporting structure.
3. To spread the benefits of tourism to communities across the city through establishing/developing linkages with community led tourism projects.
4. To prioritise and co-ordinate the implementation of tourism projects and programmes for 2012/13 and monitor and review progress, providing feedback to the co-ordinating Steering Group, Development Committee and other groups as appropriate.
5. To provide two way communication between the wider tourism industry and Development committee on tourism activities, opportunities and issues.
6. To communicate tourism developments, tourism performance (via the Council's Belfast Tourism Monitor) and opportunities to wider tourism industry across Belfast.
7. To consider relevant Best Practice models elsewhere and share information.
8. To regularly review all funding opportunities.

9. To advise Belfast City Council on a range of tourism related issues.

Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly.

Reporting

Quarterly updates to Development Committee.

Representation on Belfast Tourism Forum

ACNI
Area Partnership Boards include East Belfast Tourism Group, Fáilte Feirste Thair and Greater Shankill Tourism Group
BCCM
Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce
Belfast Hills Partnership
BVCB
DCAL
DETI
DOE
DRD
DSD
Good Food NI
Hotel Federation
Invest NI
NI Tour Guide Association
NIEA
NITB
People 1st
Pubs of Ulster
PRONI
Queen's University of Belfast
Titanic Foundation Limited
Tourism Ireland
University of Ulster

Representation may be added subject to topic / actions for discussion at the Forum Meetings

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Visual Arts Feasibility Study

The Committee was reminded that the new draft Cultural Framework for 2012 until 2015 noted that the Council would take a leadership role on the strategic alignment and co-ordination of the cultural and arts sector and would provide opportunities for organisations to develop and diversify their income streams and promote partnership working and collaboration.

The Director informed the Committee that the Council had been approached by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland requesting support for a needs analysis and feasibility study for visual arts in Belfast. Following comparative analysis with United Kingdom cities, it had been identified that Belfast needed to examine future provision of visual culture in order to compete nationally and internationally, including options for a hub, collaborations and mergers. The Director reported that the needs analysis and feasibility study would examine the potential for four or more arts venues to be co-located within one place or combined to form a new arts institute and hub for contemporary art, the aim of which would be to provide both a world class visitor destination and also to represent the artists, creative industries' practitioners and craftspeople living and working within Belfast.

The Director reported that the feasibility study would cost a total of £25,000. The Arts Council would provide 75% (£18,750) and the Committee was requested to consider providing support in the sum of £6,250.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to provide support in the sum of £6,250 for a needs analysis for visual arts in Belfast and a feasibility study for arts venues to re-locate and combine to form an arts institute.

Marketing Belfast

Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau Monitoring Report

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members at Development Committee agreed to contribute £1,842,465 towards Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau's (BVCB) marketing and visitor servicing plans in 2012/2013. BVCB was established in 1999 by Belfast City Council and has continued to receive financial support on an annual basis, using this support to lever funds from Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and the private sector. Financial support goes towards the following activities:

Marketing and Communications	£1,313,000
Visitor Servicing	£529,465

- 1.2 In summary, BVCB are responsible for:

- Attracting conferences to the city;
- Delivering co-operative campaigns in key markets e.g. working with the retailers to target the ROI market and working with air and sea carriers to target the GB market ;
- Attracting cruise visits;
- Servicing visitor enquiries;
- Booking facility for accommodation providers, venues, festivals and events;
- Producing a range of marketing materials including destination guides and the gotobelfast.com website;
- Advising members on opportunities;
- Promoting Belfast as a day trip destination via above the line and tactical advertising

- 1.3 The key activities above are grouped under Marketing and Communications, Conference Bureau/Business Tourism and Visitor Servicing.
- 1.4 The BVCB Board is representative of the sector and includes both private sector and 8 elected representatives from Belfast City Council. NITB sits as an observer, as do a range of interests including retail sector representatives.
- 1.5 The Development Committee on 24 January 2012 received a presentation from BVCB on their proposed targets for 2012/2013. After a significant period of review using international expertise of John Heeley, the Chair of European Cities Marketing, BVCB has identified 20 key performance indicators which will be monitored during the period 2012–2013. Committee endorsed this approach and Council's funding is dependent on satisfactory performance against these targets. Quarterly reports are provided to both the Board of BVCB and Belfast City Council; Quarter 1 (April–June 2012) is attached as appendix 1.

2 Key Issues

2.1 Quarter 1 Monitoring Report

Officers have reviewed performance at Quarter 1 and completed a monitoring review with BVCB's senior meeting.

- 2.2 Overall, BVCB's performance is on target as shown in Appendix 1.

2.3 Business Tourism and Cruise Visits

In summary, after a restructuring exercise, the conference team is now in place and BVCB are confident that they will exceed the number of conference wins in 2012/13 period. The number of cruises secured for 2013 has already exceeded targets and work continues to secure cruise ships beyond 2013/14 period.

2.4 Visitor Servicing

Between January and June 2012 Belfast Welcome Centre (BWC) welcomed 141,000 visitors through its doors, up 32% compared to the same period in 2011. BWC has handled 201,433 enquiries, up 41% compared to same period 2011 reflecting on-going strong interest in Belfast through positive media coverage and the Titanic effect. Visitor and enquiry figures for March and April were at a level that surpassed previous monthly highs recorded in 2007/08.

2.5 Marketing & Communications

There have been 2 campaigns in Quarter 1 and remaining campaigns for 2012/13 period are aimed at the Autumn 2012 and Spring 2013 period. Performance of Q1 campaigns are now subject to a new evaluation process which BVCB has introduced for the first time and results will be available for Q2. Good levels of partner income have been secured and 85% of sponsorship targets have been achieved. BVCB are reviewing sponsorship in line with the relocation of the BWC and are hopeful that this will present additional opportunities. Only 7% has been achieved against equivalent advertising spend generated via PR, however this is due to the lag time in the press publishing stories after a visit and the

time required to evaluate these. The level of journalist visits and media attention has been extremely high in Quarter 1 due to Titanic Belfast and the City's events programme; BVCB are confident that this target will be met.

- 2.6 At a city wide level, BVCB also tracks hotel performance in the city which provides an indicator of how the city is performing. Members will note that the Belfast Tourism Monitor figures presented last month for 2011 showed a decline in visitor numbers. However at their August board meeting, BVCB reported that Jan–June 2012 room occupancy is 70% (61.8% J-J 2011) which is up 13.2% percentage on last year; Jan–June 2012 room demand is up 14.2% compared to June 2011; Jan–June 2012 RevPar up 17.3% and Revenue up 18.3%. In conclusion, it is anticipated that 2012 tourism figures will be substantially up compared to 2011 and officers are working with Millward Brown Ulster who conduct the Belfast Tourism Monitor to develop an interim report for Committee before December 2012.

2.7 Audit Recommendations

Belfast City Council's Internal Audit Plan for 2011/12 provided for an audit of the Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau (BVCB). The audit was undertaken by the Council's Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) section. AGRS sought to ascertain the progress that BVCB had made as regards the development of effective governance arrangements, taking into account recommendations arising from previous audit reviews. A summary of AGRS report is available on the modern.gov website. A number of recommendations have been detailed within an agreed Action Plan with BVCB, including:

- The Policy relating to the Code of Conduct for employees;
- Guidance over potential conflicts of interest and gifts and hospitality;
- Audit and Finance sub-committee;
- Development of a Risk Management Strategy and embedding Risk Management across the organisation;
- The development of a comprehensive Fraud Policy/Fraud Response Plan;
- Development of a protocol document around the Election of Board Members/

- 2.8 Internal audit will carry out a follow up exercise in 6 months to ascertain the progress that has been made on implementing the recommendations.

2.9 Relocation of Belfast Welcome Centre

Development Committee will be aware that the Relocation of the Belfast Welcome Centre is a priority project within the Council's Investment Programme. Progress reports are made to SP&R committee. To date, funding has been secured from NITB and Council is awaiting a formal letter of offer for circa £750,000, a Project Board and Project Team has been established led by the Development Department and the design team is in the process of being appointed by Property and Projects. The aim is to relocate

the Belfast Welcome Centre by June 2013 into ground floor premises on Donegall Square North.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

Committee has agreed to an annual contribution of £1,842,465 in 2012/2013 and is included in the Department's budget. Based on satisfactory performance in Q1, it is recommended that the second tranche of payments worth £804,732.50 is released in October 2012.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 There are no specific equality or good relations considerations attached to this report.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Based on satisfactory performance in Q1, it is recommended that the second tranche of payments worth £804,732.50 is released in October 2012."

Appendix 1

BVCB – Quarter 1 Performance against Targets 2012/2013

Key performance indicator	2012/13 targets	YTD Progress	% Achieved
Average number of unique visits per month to consumer web portal	59,000	49,837* ** <i>* EU Cookie Policy has had an impact on accurate acquirement of web statistics. We believe this will rectify itself quickly</i> <i>**This figure does not include mobile site unique visitors. The mobile site generates, on average an additional 10,291 visitors per month.</i>	84%
Key performance indicator	2012/13 targets	YTD Progress	% Achieved
Advertising equivalence from PR and press activity and media briefings	£4 million	£287,948 <i>Often considerable time lag between issuing stories or facilitating articles before going to press</i> 25m WOTS a positive	7%

		article (web & print) / programme relating to Belfast	
Number of travel trade leads secured	180	97 active leads	54%
Corporate sponsorship	£100,000	£85,000	85%
Partner income from leisure tourism campaigns and exhibitions	£346,000	<p>Leisure Tourism Campaigns:</p> <p>NI & ROI Festivals Campaign (Sept/Oct): £50,000 (UBBFQ)</p> <p>NI & ROI Retail Campaign (Nov/ Dec): £65,000 (DSD)</p> <p>GB City Break Campaigns: £62,500/ £75,000 inc vat (Stena/TI)</p> <p>GB City Break Campaigns: £41,667/ £50,000 inc vat (Flybe/TI)</p> <p>Exhibition Revenue: £300</p>	<p>Leisure Tourism Campaigns: 65%</p> <p>Exhibition Revenue: 4%</p>
Publications income from visitor guides	£60,000	<p>About Belfast Guide:</p> <p>£20,988 generated</p> <p>May/June, July/August & Sept/October (<i>to date</i>) editions</p>	35%
Key performance indicator	2012/13 targets	YTD Progress	% Achieved
GB city breaks campaigns: target ROI and estimated	15:1 / 70,000 / £5.7	2 campaigns completed in Qtr 1. 5 Campaigns planned for	

bednights and direct spend	million	rest of year. Monitoring ongoing - Evaluation underway with Stena Line(MBU) Research Tenders received for remainder of Ad campaign evaluation	
Island of Ireland retail and festival campaigns: target ROI and estimated visits (day visits/bednights) and direct spend	8:1 / 65,000 / £2.4 million	Activity to take place in Autumn//Winter (Christmas campaign). Monitoring to be put in place - Research Tenders received for remainder of Ad campaign evaluation	TBC
Cruise marketing: number of ships secured and resultant day visits and spend in 2013	50 80,000 £3.5 million	54 ships 108,000 passengers & crew £4.72 million spend	108% 135% 135%
Bednights and value of conference business won for the city by Belfast Convention Bureau in the 2012/13 financial year (category 1&2 conference wins)	21,000 delegates / 42,000 bed nights 62,000 delegate days £27.3 million	7,510 delegates 19,140 bed nights 21,640 delegate days £9.67m	36% 46% 34% 35%
Number of proposals/bids in 2012/13 for association conferences and associated target conversion rate	150 or £54.6m / 50% conversion	32 bids worth £19.2m	21% / 35%
Key performance indicator	2012/13 targets	YTD Progress	% Achieved

Conference accommodation booking fees	£30,000	£6,860	23%
Recruitment of new ambassadors	60	16	27%
Number of conference leads	200 / £100m value	24 leads generated worth £28.2m	12% / 28%
Number of bureau sales appointments/calls	110	44	40%
Membership fee income	£175,000	£63,216	36%
Membership retention rate	95%	96%	101%
Visitor throughput for TIC network / Total enquiries	371,300 / 495,000	163,734 / 237,456	44% / 48%
Gross profit margin and other income for TIC network	£351,000	£165,272 achieved to 31 July 2012	47%
Annual satisfaction index for TIC network	85-90%	Survey to be completed throughout the year.	N/A

During discussion, a Member raised concern in respect of the extent of the Council's financial contribution to the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau. The Director informed the Committee that the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau was one of three key players in delivering tourism to Belfast and he suggested that, in order to receive a collective viewpoint, the other two organisations viz., the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland Limited, be invited to attend a future meeting to provide an overview of their work and the challenges faced and to outline how the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau could support their marketing activities.

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed also to invite representatives from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland to attend a future meeting.

(Mr. G. Copeland attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The purpose of this report is to highlight to Members proposed plans for the delivery of the 2015 Tall Ships event in Belfast.

The Council meeting of October 2011 agreed that it would stage and contribute £1.3 million to the delivery of a Tall Ships Race event in 2015. The overall race, owned by Sail Training International (STI), will start in Belfast on the 2 July and finish on the 4 August. The ports taking part in this nautical escapade are:

- Belfast - (Thu 2 – Sun 5 July 2015) *Race 1*;
- Ålesund - (Norway, 15 – 18 July) *Cruise-in-Company non race*;
- Kristiansand - (Norway, 25 – 28 July) *Race 2*;
- Aalborg - (Denmark, 1 – 4 August)

As stated above the Council will contribute £1.3 million to the 2015 event. In 2009 the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge produced the following key outputs:

- Almost 750,000 people witnessed the event first hand, 500,000 attended the Belfast event;
- Visitors rated the event at an average 8.6 out of 10;
- Numerous port visits across Northern Ireland;
- 27 local trainees spent three weeks crossing the Atlantic Ocean;
- Many other local trainees, including those with disabilities, placed on other vessels travelling to and from Belfast;
- £1m of new quayside infrastructure;
- Creation of 90 jobs and hundreds of other employment / volunteering opportunities;
- £16m economic impact;
- Several industry awards;

1.2 2009 Tall Ships Audit Reports

Audits and analysis of the 2009 project were conducted. The first was a GATE review, which was undertaken by the Council’s Property and Projects Department. The outcome gave the project highest scores possible under each of the GATE criteria. In addition to the Council’s Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) completed a ‘Lessons Learned’ document and gave the event, including delivery and governance, a glowing endorsement.”

“2 Key Issues

2.1 Management and Delivery for 2015

The ‘Belfast Tall Ships 2009’ Company, which was the special purpose vehicle created to deliver the event is still in operation, but its in a dormant state with zero business activity and only four registered Board members (Mr Trevor Anderson, Director of Port Operations at Belfast Harbour), Dr Gerard O’Hare (Chair of Tall Ships 2009 and

Board Member of Belfast Harbour Commissioners) and two City Councillors. The latter will be replaced on the new board and given the experience in 2009 it is proposed that the structural format of the company is replicated. The overall delivery format, based on the 2009 system, will include a number of key operational work groups and the re-establishment of a Tall Ships Assurance Board.

2.2 Board Representatives

The 2015 company would be tasked with the delivery of the 2015 event. As with the previous 2009 event, the Board of the Company would have Council representation in the form of two members, which would be proposed to be the Chair and Deputy Chair of Development Committee or their nominees.

It would also be suggested that the remaining Board members, alongside Council representation, would be from: Belfast Harbour (this is likely to be Dr O'Hare and Trevor Anderson); NITB; Titanic Quarter; Ocean Youth Trust (STI's endorsed sail training organisation in Belfast); Odyssey Trust, BCCM/BCTC and DSD's City Centre Regeneration Directorate.

2.3 Assurance Board

As in 2009 this group would be co-chaired by the CEO's of BCC and Belfast Port. It would have officer input from their respective organisations including BCC's AGRS section. Primary function of the Assurance Board would be to develop an assurance framework and to review risk issues of the project. This should be a much more straight forward process given the significant work put into the 2009 event.

2.4 Logistics and Operations

The City Events Unit, in partnership with other organisations in the City, but primarily the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, would deliver the event with oversight from the Tall Ships 2015 Board, Tall Ships Assurance Board and the various operational working groups. The Council will not only draw on the experiences of 2009, but also on the delivery of the City's annual Maritime Festival.

However, in order to deliver the event a number key public tenders would be issued and these would include:

- corporate ships hospitality;
- markets/food concessions inclusive of bars;
- fun fairs;
- sail training
- external financial management inclusive of HMRC & Companies House processes.

In addition the Council's City Events Unit would work with BCC's Cleansing Services Section to develop a tender for additional waste and environmental management services.

2.5 Marketing and Public Relations Management

In 2009 these elements were delivered via external contractors. However, for the 2015 event it would be recommended that BCC's Corporate Communications via an SLA with the new Tall Ships 2015 company deliver the marketing strategy for the event. This would include public relations and advertising activity.

2.6 Business Support and Staff Resources

It would be envisaged that the current City Events Unit structures would be supplemented with the appointment of a Tall Ships Business Support Assistant (grade Scale 5) and would link with the Department's HR and Financial sections. This post would be for a two year period from October 2013.

2.7 Volunteering & Community Development Opportunities

One of the successes of the 2009 event was the opportunities for trainees, some drawn from BCC's community networks. There would be a request that similar inputs to the event are developed for the 2015 event. In order that this could happen it would be recommended that an allocation of staff input from Community Development. In 2009 this was led by John Nelson, Community Development Manager, who inputted to the recruitment and training process for sailing trainees. It would also be envisaged that this section of the Council would work closely with Volunteer Now on the recruitment of volunteers for the event. It would be hoped that these two strands would contribute to the employability outputs that have been identified in the Council's Investment Programme. This will be achieved via training that will develop talent sets that will improve volunteers' and trainees' employability and skills – so taking the outputs of the Tall Ships 2015 race beyond the event.

2.8 Partners

The key partners to assist in the delivery of the event would be based on the 2009 model. BCC would lead with operational assistance from Belfast Port. Promotional and marketing activity would be led by BCC's Corporate Communications Section supported by BVCB, in association with NITB and Tourism Ireland. Both BCCM and BVCB would provide input to customer servicing and liaising with the retail, and hospitality sectors in Belfast. Oversight security would have input from PSNI and BCC.

In addition there will be considerable Council input across a range of departments/sections e.g. Chief Executives, Legal Services; Environmental Health, etc.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Finance

It is estimated that the 2015 cash costs of event will be in the region of £2.3m. BCC's contribution will be profiled over three financial years. Details of this will be developed in conjunction with the Department's Business Support Manager.

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Amount</u>
BCC	£1,300,000

NITB	£600,000
DSD	£100,000
Sponsorship	£150,000
Income streams	£150,000
<u>Total</u>	<u>£2,300,000</u>

As the above table shows there would be a notable level of partner funding required. Therefore, it would be the intention of Officers to start applying to these organisations on approval of Tall Ships 2015 update paper by Council. The Council's input to the event would be spread over three financial years 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16. After discussion with the Director of Finance and Resources, it is recommended that the permission of the Strategic Policy and Resources (SP&R) Committee be sought, to include provision for the Council's funding of Tall Ships 2015, in the specified reserve which has been established by SP&R Committee for Major City Events.

3.2 Value in Kind

The vast majority of this element will be supplied via Belfast Port and is connected to harbour and marine facilities. In 2009 it is estimated that Belfast Port contributed circa £400,000 inclusive of staff and operational costs for the event. Therefore, there would be an expectation of similar requirement for the 2015 event.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 As with all major civic events, public events like this have the potential to bring together people from a wide range of backgrounds and therefore promote good relations in the city.

5 Recommendations and Items to Note

5.1 Council are asked to note and approve the following:

- Proposed make-up of the Tall Ships 2015 Board and the creation of an oversight assurance board
- Permission, subject to Council approval, for BCC's Officers to start applying for partner funding
- Request that Council nominate two Members to the Tall Ships 2015 company
- Request permission of the SP&R Committee to include provision for the Council's funding of Tall Ships 2015, in the specified reserve which has been established by SP&R Committee for Major City Events."

After discussion, during which the City Events Manager confirmed that the Harbour Commissioners had signed a Heads of Agreement to support the event, the Committee adopted the recommendations. It was noted that the City Events Manager would explore in further detail the possibility of including community representatives, via the various Partnership Boards within the City, on the Tall Ships Board and the inclusion of the Sea Cadets within the volunteering and community development opportunities via the Ocean Youth Trust which was the Sail Training International's endorsed youth sail training organisation and agreed volunteering programme provider.

World Chamber Federation Biennial Congress 2015

The Director submitted, for the Committee's consideration, the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 **Belfast City Council has received correspondence from the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce (NICC) who is currently competing to host the World Chamber Federation's Biennial Congress in 2015.**
- 1.2 **Hosting the event represents huge opportunities, including the economic impact of potentially 2000 delegates from 40 countries over 4 days, to increase the profile of Belfast and Northern Ireland on the world stage with the potential to establish further trade links.**
- 1.3 **Previous host cities have included, Marseille; Seoul; Quebec City; Durban; Istanbul; Kuala Lumpur; Mexico City; and Doha, Qatar which is scheduled to host the 2013 World Chamber Congress.**
- 1.4 **Following an initial expression of interest in March, Belfast has now been shortlisted alongside Biarritz, Geneva, Gothenburg, Liverpool, Lyon, Manchester and Torino as potential hosts.**
- 1.5 **Given the Waterfront extension, the Odyssey is the main proposed conference venue.**

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 **NICC is already being supported by Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) and will be eligible for the conference subvention scheme.**
- 2.2 **In NICC's correspondence they have outlined a range of ways in which organisations can support their bid including a simple statement of letter of support, being involved in the advisory committee, participating on the site inspection, contributing to the business or hospitality programme or sponsorship.**
- 2.3 **Given Belfast City Council is already supporting the NICC via BVCB, officers recommend that a letter of support is sent along with details on use of the City Hall for an event reception.**
- 2.4 **This is a landmark bid for Belfast and the level of political and business support could be a key differentiator for the city against other competitors.**

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 **There are no specific equality or good relations considerations attached to this report.**

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 **Members agree to write a letter of support for NICC to host the World Chamber Federation's biennial Congress in 2015."**

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Expo Real 2012 Event - Munich

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The Expo Real event takes place each year in Munich, Germany. It is Europe’s largest business-to-business trade fair for commercial property and investment. The 2012 event will take place from 8-10 October 2012.
- 1.2 Expo Real comprises an exhibition (involving over 1600 exhibitors from 72 countries) as well as an extensive conference programme involving 400 speakers on a range of topics within the real estate, investment and financial markets.
- 1.3 The event is expected to attract 37,000 participants to include exhibitors showcasing their property and investment portfolios and representatives from the property sector including developers, investors and architects as well as representatives from economic regions and cities.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Members will be aware that there is a significant volume of work under way to develop an international marketing and promotional strategy for the city. This has been included as a priority within the Council’s Investment Programme 2012-2015. It is expected the future strategy will consider how Belfast can position itself as an international destination in order to attract talent and investment and grow visitor numbers.
- 2.2 Showcasing Belfast on an international platform is expected to be a key focus of the future strategy. Events such as Expo Real offer the Council a platform to target and promote the city’s investment potential to international companies.
- 2.3 A number of priority investment and promotion activities/events have been identified in the course of the research for this work. These include Expo Real and MIPIM. Members will recall that Belfast City Council was involved in MIPIM in the past but did not attend in 2012. A report on the way forward on this – as part of the wider international marketing work – will be presented to Committee next month.
- 2.4 It is understood that representatives from Belfast Harbour are planning to attend Expo Real to explore the potential of this event to identify and target potential investors for their development sites. It may be appropriate to consider attending the event with them in order to look at the potential wider interest for the city.
- 2.5 Given that the scale of the opportunity is unclear at this stage, it would be recommended that Belfast City Council attends in an observer capacity only, and therefore there would be no requirement to have a stand at the event, at this stage. However, if it was considered that the event was a viable proposition for attracting potential inward investors to the city, it may be appropriate to consider having a stand – along with other partners from the city – in future years.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The cost of attending EXPO REAL 2012 in Munich is approximately £1,500 per person. This is inclusive of delegate fees, flights and accommodation costs.

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 There are no specific equality or good relations implications attached to this report.

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that that the Chair and Deputy Chair of Development Committee or their nominees attend the EXPO REAL 2012 event in Munich on 8-10 October along with one officer to consider and review the potential of REAL EXPO as a platform to promote the investment potential of the city in future years.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation and noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting on the outcomes and benefits of attending the event.

Chairman