

Development Committee

Tuesday, 9th April, 2013

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Ó Muilleoir (Deputy Chairman) (in the Chair); the High Sheriff (Councillor Kingston); Alderman Ekin; Councillors Austin, Hussey, Keenan, Kelly, Kyle, Mac Giolla Mhín, Mallon, Maskey, McKee, McVeigh, Ó Donnghaile, Reynolds, Spence and Webb.

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

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of the Chairman (Alderman Stalford) and Alderman Stoker.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 5th, 19th and 25th March 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 April.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Cartoon Finance Conference 2013

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been playing a key role in supporting the development of the creative industries in Belfast, since 2004, with a key focus on the film, television, digital media, music and design sectors.

1.2 A key element of the Council’s investment programme is to help support the development of the key growth sectors in Belfast and with the recent investments in the film, television and animation sectors, Belfast is rapidly building a profile as a growth area in these industries.

- 1.3 Invest Northern Ireland and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) are currently working on a proposal to bring a major conference to Belfast in November and have approached BCC to explore their interest in being a partner in this venture.
- 1.4 'Cartoon Finance' is one of four global business events that CARTOON, the European Association of Animation Film, has been organising for the last 24 years with the support of the MEDIA Programme of the European Union
- 1.5 The Cartoon Finance conference regularly attracts around 250 European animation professionals and addresses topics around sources of financing and how producers can increase revenues from their animated TV series. Public and private funding, new business models, licensing and merchandising, legal issues are also explored to allow professionals to capitalise on their investment and maximise opportunities for economic return.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The creative industries have been identified in a number of recent economic strategies and studies as being central to the future economic growth of Northern Ireland. The majority of creative businesses are based in Belfast and recent investments in the creative infrastructure – e.g. opening of two new studios at Titanic Quarter, redevelopment of Paint Hall studios – are central to capitalising on this potential growth.
- 2.2 Belfast City Council's work in supporting creative businesses has focused on business development initiatives, capability development programmes and infrastructure investment. With the growing importance and investment in the local animation and television industry and the development of new animation and visual FX courses in our colleges and universities, there exists a real opportunity for Belfast to become a centre of excellence in this field. Hosting a renowned conference such as Cartoon Finance, will help further Belfast in achieving this ambition.
- 2.3 Cartoon Finance is a 2 and half-day conference that is aimed at covering financing topics linked to animation TV series. Around 17 – 20 speakers from the professional world come and present on a range of topics with the aim of exploring ways to diversify sources of financing and increase revenues for animated TV series.

- 2.4 **Cartoon Finance has been running for more than 20 years and has taken place in many cities around Europe with last year's event hosted in Dublin with great success.**
- 2.5 **By hosting the Cartoon Finance conference in Belfast, local animation companies will have the opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills, and help them understand the market to maximise the return of their productions.
The conference will also provide the opportunity for local studios and production companies to attend high level training at a reduced cost and animation students also have the opportunity to attend the sessions and face the key issues of the industry.**
- 2.6 **The total cost of hosting the Cartoon Finance Conference is 60,000 Euros. Invest Northern Ireland and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure have each committed 20,000 Euros to help bring the event to Belfast and have approached Belfast City Council to confirm whether we can make a similar allocation towards the event.**

3 Recommendation

The Committee is requested to approve a maximum of 20,000 Euro to host Cartoon Finance in Belfast.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Collaboration between Belfast and Bilbao

The Committee was advised that the Lord Mayor (Alderman Robinson) had received correspondence from the Office of the British Ambassador to Spain, Mr. Giles Paxman, which had encouraged collaboration between Belfast and the City of Bilbao. That had arisen from a visit to Belfast by the Head of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, Mr. Taleb Rifai, who had been impressed by the tourism potential of Belfast and, given the similarities between the two cities, had suggested that the Council might wish to explore areas of mutual benefit in respect of tourism, the arts, education and economic development. The Director pointed out that Belfast had formerly established links with Bilbao and indicated that Mr. Paxman and Mr. Rifai had suggested that it would be beneficial if the Council undertook a trade mission and that, if deemed appropriate, such a visit should be led by the incoming Lord Mayor.

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting which would outline the feasibility of the Council undertaking a trade mission to Bilbao and it was agreed that the incoming Lord Mayor, the incoming Chairman and the Deputy Chairman (or their nominees), together with two officers, be authorised to attend.

Belfast Waterfront Hall

Catering, Bars and Restaurant Contract

The Director reminded Committee that, at its meeting on 10th January, 2012, it had agreed that, in order to allow for the undertaking of a full economic appraisal of the contract for the provision of catering, bars and restaurant services at the Waterfront Hall, it had been agreed to extend the then current contract with Mount Charles Catering until 30th September, 2013. He pointed out that, given that the extension to the Waterfront Hall was not due to be completed until the spring of 2016, it would be appropriate to re-issue the tender for the service for a two-year period commencing in September, 2013, and ending in September, 2015. He indicated that the scope of the contract would be re-evaluated thereafter.

The Committee agreed that the contract be tendered under the terms outlined and noted that, under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, the Director would be authorised to award the contract on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender submitted.

Cleaning Services

The Committee was reminded also that, at its meeting on 10th January, 2012, it had agreed to extend, for a period of one year, the contract with Totalis for the provision of cleaning services at the Waterfront Hall. That decision had been based on the requirement for the future scope of the contract to be re-evaluated within the context of the proposed redevelopment of the building to incorporate conference and convention facilities. The Director pointed out that, given that the extension to the Waterfront Hall was not due to be completed until the spring of 2016, it would be appropriate to re-issue the tender for the service for a two-year period commencing in September, 2013, and ending in September, 2015. It was noted that the cost of the service would be approximately £230,000 per annum.

The Committee agreed that the contract would be tendered under the terms outlined and noted that, under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, the Director would award the contract to the most economically advantageous tender submitted.

Trade Mission to India

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 5th March, it had agreed to undertake a trade mission in April to India and would be represented thereat by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman (or their nominees). The Director reported that the visit would coincide with Invest NI's own trade mission to New Delhi and Mumbai, together with Tourism Ireland's promotional visit to those two cities, and this would afford valuable networking opportunities for the Council's representatives. Accordingly, the Committee was provided with an overview of the range of meetings and events which would be undertaken by the deputation, together with an outline of the key individuals from the business and tourism sectors who would host the Council's representatives during the visit.

The Committee endorsed the itinerary as outlined.

Belfast Public Bike Hire Scheme

The Director reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 19th March, it had agreed to initiate a tendering exercise for the delivery of Phase 1 of the Belfast Public Bike Hire Scheme on the understanding that a further report would be submitted to the Committee's meeting on 9th April which would outline the potential capital costs associated in extending the scope of the Scheme to include the Gaeltacht Quarter, the North Belfast Cultural Quarter and the Lower Newtownards Road. Accordingly, the Committee considered the undernoted report in this regard:

1. The capital cost implications of the extension to the original network are summarised below:

<u>Extension / Variations</u>	<u>Network/Stations</u>	<u>Additional Capital Cost</u>
<u>North Belfast</u> Inclusion link to Crumlin Rd Gaol / Mater Hospital	2 stations	£42,580
<u>West Belfast</u> Inclusion of link to Royal Victoria Hospital and Gaeltacht Quarter	4 stations	£85,160
<u>East Belfast</u> Link to Hollywood Arches	5 stations	£106,450
<u>Total estimated cost</u>		<u>£234,190</u>

2.1 The costs above have been derived from a research exercise which gathered estimated cost data for a number of existing schemes across the world and excludes the potential contribution to costs from advertising or sponsorship.

2.2 It should be noted that the linear extension of the network beyond the core city centre area will have additional revenue cost implications associated with the redistribution of the bikes. The experience from developed schemes highlights the importance of an integrated network to provide alternative drop off and pick up locations and to support natural redistribution through normal operations.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 The additional estimated resource implications for the capital costs for extending the scheme to the North, West and East of the city are outlined above.

3.2 There are ongoing revenue costs in relation to future operation which are not covered by the capital funding from DRD. The initial work carried out by the OBC estimated the revenue costs for the core network to be approximately £370,400 per annum. Any extension beyond the core network will result in additional revenue costs. There is currently no

provision in the approved Departmental budget for additional expenditure for the proposed bike scheme and the actual capital and revenue costs can only be confirmed following the procurement of the different contracts.

4 Recommendations

4.1 The Committee is requested to consider the additional capital costs associated with the extended scheme and if appropriate request the SP&R Committee to consider the allocation of the additional resources required.

4.2 Following completion of the first stage of the procurement process, further reports will be brought back to both the SP&R and Development Committees to inform the Investment Decision on the implementation of the scheme.

During discussion, a Member made the point that it would be inadvisable for the Committee to agree to extend the scope of the scheme without having considered the full revenue costs associated with its upkeep and maintenance. He pointed out that a business model for the operation of the original scheme had yet to be finalised and, therefore, the future financial implications for the Council were unknown.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Webb,
Seconded by Alderman Ekin and

Resolved - That the Committee agrees to recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agrees to commence a procurement exercise for the scheme based on two options, viz., the first on the original proposal and the second to include the extension of the scheme to the Royal Victoria Hospital, the Gaeltacht Quarter, the Crumlin Road Gaol and the Holywood Arches. It notes also that, in the interim period, the Director would liaise with the Public Health Agency and The Queen's University of Belfast to establish if those bodies would be willing to make a financial contribution towards the scheme.

Chairman