

Development Committee

Tuesday, 23rd April, 2013

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Stalford (Chairman);
The High Sheriff (Councillor Kingston);
Councillors Austin, Hendron, Hussey,
Keenan, Kelly, Kyle, Mac Giolla Mhin,
Maskey, McKee, McVeigh, Ó Donnghaile,
Ó Muilleoir, 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 Aldermen Ekin and Stoker and Councillor Mallon.

Declarations of Interest

The Chairman (Alderman Stalford) declared an interest in respect of item 7(a), viz., 'Gilpin's Development' in that he had acted as Chairman of the steering group which had been set-up to oversee the formulation of the economic appraisal of the site. In addition, in respect of item 4(i), viz., BBC Proms in the Park, Councillor Spence reported that he was a member of the Board of the Ulster Orchestra.

It was noted that both the Chairman and Councillor Spence had been nominated by the Council to represent it on the bodies mentioned.

Belfast Community Investment Programme

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1. Background Information

- 1.1 At a special meeting of Development Committee on 25 March, Members approved a draft programme proposal in principle but requested that officers prepare a draft equality impact assessment and consider approaches to budget allocation.**
- 1.2 Members requested that a report on this work be brought back for consideration by Committee in April prior to the planned launch of a full public consultation in May. Similar parallel arrangements were also agreed for DSD political approval.**

- 1.3 There have been a number of developments since the March Committee meeting which will have a critical impact on the progress of the programme.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 From its initiation the Council and DSD made a strong commitment to engaging fully on the design and implementation of BCIP. This was based on the recognition that a new approach to community development in the city can only be successful with the active and positive involvement of the community and voluntary sector and other stakeholders.
- 2.2 As part of a sustained level of pre-consultation from summer 2012 the project team organised a series of engagement activities that included workshops, briefings and information sessions with Members, officers and representatives from the community and voluntary sectors. This has been a time-consuming process but has ensured that stakeholders have been involved in the development of BCIP from the outset. The most recent engagement event was a large workshop at City Hall in early February, attended by over 150 representatives of the community sector, which considered the initial ideas around grant design.
- 2.3 The pre-consultation engagement proved to be a fruitful process and greatly informed both the outcomes framework and the draft grant design adopted by Committee last month. There is genuine enthusiasm for the concepts behind BCIP and its outcomes. The sector in particular has been encouraged by the long term public sector commitment to community development that BCIP represents. Material for the pre-consultation work contributed to the proposed approach to formal consultation that was presented to members at Development Committee in March.
- 2.4 Working back from the planned open call for applications in October 2013, the current project plan calls for a public consultation on the programme proposal and the EQIA to begin no later than 8 May 2013 following approval by Council and the DSD Minister and submission to the Social Development Committee. If the start of consultation is delayed beyond this date then it is unlikely that the project will make its open call.
- 2.5 DSD officials considered this timescale for public consultation, and have concluded that they believe the available window of three weeks to analyse the consultation responses and amend the grant stream is too short to be viewed as credible. They therefore believe the project would not be in a position to meet its open call in October and implement the planned pilot funding year. They are preparing to engage the Minister, who will decide if these are unacceptable risks, given this timescale. Given the advice which has been provided to the Minister it is highly unlikely that he will decide to continue with the project within its current timescales.

- 2.6 That being the case his officials will have to consider alternative options, which will probably include the option of DSD dispersing its Neighbourhood Renewal funding independently of council for the period 2014/15.
- 2.7 Given this set of circumstances the Council is now in a position where a decision cannot be taken before the Council meeting of 2 June which in effect means the project cannot be delivered within the current timescales in any event.
- 2.8 Members may wish to note that this means that we will no longer be in a position to go to public consultation on the programme in May. Consequently, the BCIP project will not be able to go to open call for funding for 2014/15 under the terms of the current plan.
- 2.9 Council officers will continue to engage with DSD officials with a view to bringing a paper to the May Development Committee on the options for the future delivery of BCIP and the broader transfer of Neighbourhood Renewal resources under RPA which is due to come into effect in 2015.
- 2.10 This will include examining the implications for the Council's own grant schemes which are scheduled to end in March 2014."

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and noted that a further update would be submitted for consideration at its meeting in May.

Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action

Arising from discussion, it was reported that a request had been received from the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action seeking permission to address the Committee in order to raise a number of issues relating to the Belfast Community Investment Programme.

The Committee agreed to receive the deputation at a future meeting.

Notice of Motion - CS Lewis

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 3rd April, had referred the undernoted Notice of Motion, which had been proposed by Councillor A. Newton and seconded by Councillor Haire, to the Committee for further consideration:

“November will mark the 50th anniversary of the death of C.S. Lewis. Clive Staples Lewis was born in East Belfast on 29th November, 1898; his family home was on the Circular Road in the east of the City. He attended Campbell College before enrolling in Malvern College in 1913 and went on to receive a scholarship at University College, Oxford. After the outbreak of World War I, he enlisted in the Army in 1917. He was wounded at the Battle of Arras on 15th April, 1918 and was subsequently discharged from the Army in 1919.

C.S. Lewis is rightly considered to be one of the intellectual giants of the 20th Century and, arguably, the most influential Christian writer of his day. He is world-renowned for his writings and in particular the Chronicles of Narnia which have charmed generations of children across the globe.

This Council acknowledges the fitting tribute to be paid to C.S. Lewis by the erection of a memorial stone at Westminster Abbey’s Poets’ Corner and agrees that we, as the elected representatives of the City in which he was born, should not allow the landmark 50th anniversary of his death to pass without marking it in a fitting way. This Council is proud to claim C.S. Lewis as one of our most famous sons and, accordingly, agrees to give early consideration as to how this noteworthy event should best be marked.”

With the permission of the Chairman, Councillor A. Newton outlined the importance of the anniversary of the death of C.S. Lewis and requested that the Committee agree that a report be submitted to a future meeting which would outline the options available for the Council to mark the event. He requested also that consultations be undertaken with the Friends of Belmont Park, the East Belfast Enterprise Park, the East Belfast Community Development Association and a range of local residents’ groups prior to any report being formulated.

The Director pointed out that the Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development had been due to meet with the East Belfast Partnership Board regarding a proposed C. S. Lewis Festival and he undertook to consult with the groups identified by Councillor A. Newton.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to the course of action outlined and noted that a report in this regard would be submitted for consideration at the meeting scheduled for 21st May.

Party Briefings

Social Deprivation in Belfast

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 4th February, had referred the above-mentioned Notice of Motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Corr and seconded by Councillor McVeigh, to the Committee for consideration. Accordingly, whilst there had been reservations expressed in respect of the Council’s ability to address meaningfully the issue of social deprivation, the Committee, at its meeting on 19th February, had agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting which would outline the steps which the Council could take on a corporate level to address the issue.

The Director indicated that the matter had been considered by the Party Leaders at its forum on 13th February and they had agreed, given the Council's role in, amongst other things, employability initiatives, early intervention schemes, neighbourhood renewal and fuel poverty, that a corporate mapping exercise be undertaken to assess how the Council could address the issue in a coordinated manner. In addition, the Party Leaders had agreed that the implementation of the Review of Public Administration would provide additional opportunities to strengthen the Council's ability to address the issue.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed, as an initial step in the corporate mapping exercise, that Party Briefings be provided, to those Parties who so wished, in order to ascertain Members' views in respect of the Council's future role in addressing social deprivation.

Retail Support Plan 2013/2014

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 5th March, it had been advised that a full evaluation of the Council's Retail Support Plan for 2012/2013 would be undertaken to enable it to be amended to address the evolving retail sector across the City. The Director pointed out that over the past year there had been a significant growth in the number of active traders' groups and such a development had impacted on the Council's ability to deliver support to, and manage the expectations of, the various traders' groups. Accordingly, as part of the re-evaluation process, the Director suggested that Party Briefings be provided during May to ascertain Members' views in respect of the contents and scope of the Council's Retail Support Plan for 2013/2014.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

Belfast Restaurant Week 2014

The Committee considered the undernoted report

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 At the Development Committee 22 May 2012, Members agreed to support Belfast Restaurant Week for a three-year period commencing in 2012.**
- 1.2 Belfast Restaurant Week 2012 attracted match funding from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Tourism Ireland, the Pork and Bacon Forum and the private sector. Additional support was delivered via social networking, marketing and communications.**

1.3 The success of Belfast Restaurant Week 2012 which took place from 6 to 13 October has been measured by: the number of participating restaurants, the success of the sell out events delivered during the week as well as the excellent positive PR it generated for Belfast and our world class food offer.

1.4 In summary:

- **82 restaurants registered to participate offering special menus and added value offers.**
- **30 highly popular events were delivered by the sector, attracting significant media interest and coverage.**
- **Two showcase events were hosted in BCC venues including the 'Battle of the Chefs' at St George's Market and 'An Evening with Charles Campion' at the City Hall.**
- **Public feedback has been extremely positive and there is a clear indication that food tourism is a very important, sustainable product to capitalise on.**
- **Innovative and high profile marketing campaign delivered**
- **BRW2012 has established a strong sector working group with a commitment to ensuring the food offer and service in the city is world class.**
- **The PR value generated from the Belfast Restaurant Week campaign is valued at £151,000.**

1.5 The aim of Belfast Restaurant Week aligns with the pledges contained in the Investment Strategy and the Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 to 2014. Belfast Restaurant Week is also integral to the development of the Food Tourism product, increase trade, encourage excellence in service, celebrate the importance of the restaurant/food sector for the local economy and employment, and to showcase the best of local food, producers and fresh produce.

1.6 The objectives of the Belfast Restaurant Week 2013 are to:

- **Increase the number of culinary events**
- **Increase footfall and mid week dining**
- **Promote eating out as an activity during that week**
- **Showcase new and cultural food offering**
- **Promote dining experiences for a range of lifestyles**
- **Promote local produce, excellent chefs, skills and wealth of the food offer**

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 It is crucial to build on the success of BRW2012 and ensure that BRW2013 creates more economic impact and support for the restaurant/hospitality sector. It is therefore necessary that adequate resources and support are in place to achieve the aims and objectives.**
- 2.2 BRW 2013 (5 to 12 October 2013) – year two planning is underway and it is proposed that additional funding will be sought to support BCC investment.**
- 2.3 A key stakeholder Steering/Working group has been established to implement the plans as well as a Sector Steering Group to ensure that BRW2013 delivers for the industry.**
- 2.4 To instigate registration it is proposed that BRW2013 will be launched to the industry on Thursday 9 May 2013 with a launch to the consumer in August 2013.**

3 Resource Implications

BRW2013 requires a budget of approximately £60,000. The sum of £40K has been identified for BRW2013. On approval additional funding will be sought from:

- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)**
- Pork and Bacon Forum**
- Food NI**
- Contributions from each participating restaurant**

4 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

- 1. Approve a budget of £40,000;**
- 2. Approve Officers seeking funding and sponsorship**
- 3. Approve an industry launch during May 2013;**
- 4. Agree that officers explore links with other food events taking place throughout the month; and**
- 5. Approve calls to procure to secure services linked to delivering Belfast Restaurant Week 2013.**

The Committee adopted the recommendations, subject to officers exploring the feasibility of extending and promoting the scope of Belfast Restaurant Week to additional areas beyond the City centre.

Belfast Music Week

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1. Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware that at a meeting of the Development Committee in March 2012, approval was given for the sum of £60,000 to deliver Belfast Music Week 2012 in order to achieve a legacy from the MTV EMA Awards, give a concentrated focus on the promotion of indigenous musicians, to show Belfast’s rich musical heritage, thriving contemporary musical scene and promote and highlight the city’s distinctiveness. This included appointment of a coordinator to promote equality of opportunity, good relations to ensure clarity of vision.

1.2 Visit Britain’s research shows that 21% of potential visitors are inspired to choose a destination because of the music or bands of that country, and approved a Music Tourism Action Plan in order to celebrate Belfast’s rich musical heritage. The Music Sector in Belfast has grown significantly over the past three years and now plays a key role in the overall economic development of the city. With a rise in musicians and bands making headlines in the international marketplace and new and innovative music businesses based in Belfast, BCC is playing a significant role for this industry.

1.4 The aims of Belfast Music Week are:

- **To increase the profile of Belfast as an exciting weekend break destination to actively travelling young adults across UK, ROI and Europe and maximise the economic return from music tourism.**
- **To showcase and strengthen Belfast’s position on the world stage as a primary destination for music, entertainment and culture.**
- **To increase the number of musicians doing business internationally.**
- **To promote and enhance a confident, positive, exciting image of Belfast through delivering world-class events.**
- **To bring together all sectors of the community from Belfast and across the region whilst improving community cohesion.**

1.5 Tourism Ireland (TI) and Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) are committed to developing the music offering and tourism access to both live music and additional product development. To this end, they work with Belfast City Council to maximize the tourism industry opportunities and ensure they are visitor ready. Belfast Music Week is in line with Tourism Ireland new target market for Belfast following the recent segmentation exercise ‘social energizers’ and ‘culture seekers’, and the NITB brand in delivering an event that is ‘uniquely NI’ and promotes the best of indigenous music. The event meant that Belfast’s

local scene could target demographics both internationally and locally that we have not had the opportunity to reach before.

Key Issues

2.1 Belfast Music Week 2012

Belfast Music Week (winner of Best Event at the NI Tourism Awards) took place from Sunday 4 to Sunday 11 November 2012 and had a total economic impact of over £2.08 million for the city as compared to £1.86 million in 2011 (Millward Brown Ulster). The celebration of local bands and venues, as well as the wider music industry and community, featured live music performances, workshops, seminars and networking events and gave a chance to see legends and breaking talent, and to appreciate the ongoing success stories and a musical city.

2.2 A summary of the key outputs from 2012 are as follows;

There were over 250 events (170 in 2011)

- 70 venues were used across the city (45 in 2011)
- Events were attended by 41,041 people (33,500 in 2011)
- Belfast Music Week PR reached 7.86 million people
- Two thirds (67%) would not have visited Belfast that day if the events had not been staged
- 99% of attendees said they would recommend attending Belfast Music Week events
- The number of people attracted to the Belfast Music Facebook site increased from 1,800 in October 2012 to 14,250
- 77% of the attendees were between 16-34yrs
- Media coverage was 100 % positive and surpassed the achievements of BMW 2011
- The total value of positive local PR alone, ascertained by Northern Ireland Media Monitoring, was £282,801

2.3 Belfast Music Week has enabled NITB and Tourism Ireland to position Belfast's image and perception of the destination and create appeal with a younger audience. Key messaging focuses on why there has never been a better time to go to Belfast and most of all, offering the unique indigenous music proposition which helps to position Belfast as a unique modern short break destination.

2.4 Belfast Music Week 2013

Approval is now sought to deliver Belfast Music Week 2013 (Mon 11–Sun 17 November). Partners (including TI, NITB, Invest NI, British Council, BVCB) and the music sector desire Belfast Music Week to take place again because;

- There is nothing equivalent in the city and it fills a product gap - a festival of completely indigenous music. It is hence easier to promote nationally and internationally as it is distinctive to Belfast.
- It encourages the music sector to work in partnership rather than in competition with each other, due to Council taking a co-ordination role.
- It increases national and international music media visits to the city.
- It showcases and gives local bands a unique opportunity to perform in front of national and international music industry

2.5 A neutral co-ordination role is required to ensure Belfast Music Week is open to all live music providers and to ensure clarity of vision, aims and objectives. It will also ensure there are no programme clashes and that the sector work in partnership rather than in competition. Headline events will continue to be profiled to maximise exposure, the venues and hospitality sector will be encouraged to programme live music and representation of genres such as classical, traditional, jazz, folk will continue. Partnerships will be identified and the sourcing of external funding.

2.6 Showcasing of Belfast Music Week with Tourism Ireland

UK Music Industry research shows that music tourists contribute at least £864m a year to the UK economy and they spend a quarter more in the UK than the average overseas visitor. This is key to developing the youth market, especially in terms of Europe and easily reaching an international market with an event of international stand out appeal. From these findings UK Music has issued a list of recommendations with the immediate goal of increasing the number of overseas music tourists and key to this is external showcasing.

2.7 Belfast City Council has received many offers for music industry and media showcases for Belfast Music in order to preview to the visitor market, generate coverage, and encourage export of music businesses, including GB, ROI and Europe. These are currently being considered in the context of the Integrated Music Action Plan for Belfast to ensure clarity both internally and externally and a further report will be brought to Committee in relation to a three year plan.

2.8 In advance of this, approval is sought from Members to avail of three immediate opportunities which have arisen for Summer/Autumn 2013. Following investigation, they are thought to be of high priority by the local music sector and are in line with BVCB, NITB, Invest NI and TI plans.

- London Showcase – in partnership with Gibson Guitars, BVCB and Tourism Ireland
- Berlin Music Week – in partnership with Tourism Ireland and the British Council
- Sea-sessions Rol – in partnership with NITB

2.9 Tourism Ireland has confirmed support but recommended early engagement: 'Music continues to be a major theme for our promotion of Belfast. Tourism Ireland remains very positive about co-operative marketing proposals for programmes and showcases in our markets. Tourism Ireland will take the lead on many of these and there will be others - perhaps where there is a creative industries sector focus - where Tourism will provide a supporting role. The potential within the music and entertainment industry for positive publicity was effectively tapped by the Belfast Music Week launch in London last year and Tourism Ireland looks forward to supporting similar promotions for the 2013 music week. We would urge early engagement so that it can be integrated with other promotions.'

2.10 Approval is sought to contribute a total of £6,000 of the Belfast Music Week budget in order to raise the profile of Belfast's live venues, festivals, businesses and artists via showcasing across the year. The budget is to contribute to the cost of flights and accommodation of artists, a publicist (selected via Tourism Ireland liaising with Corporate Communications) and one officer where appropriate. To ensure transparency of selection, an expression of interest will be widely circulated and assessed and scored by a panel of music industry and media.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Finance

£60,000 to deliver Belfast Music Week 2013 and Belfast Music Tourism Product and Showcasing Development which has been provided within the Departmental Budget 2013/14 action plan.

4 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

1. **Approve a budget of £60,000 (which has been provided within the Departmental Budget 2013/14 action plan) and the appointment of a Belfast Music Co-coordinator for Belfast Music Week 2013**
2. **Utilise £6,000 of the £60,000 to support three external showcases in partnership with Tourism Ireland, NITB, British Council (liaising with Corporate Communications and BVCB)**
4. **Agree that officers work in partnership with Tourism Ireland, NITB, DCAL, Invest NI, commercial sponsors and the music sector to leverage further funding for Belfast Music Week**
5. **Support international industry and media, in partnership with relevant agencies, to attend Belfast Music Week 2013**
6. **In light of the music plan, to agree to host a workshop at City Hall with key individuals and businesses from the Belfast Music Industry to which all Members of the Committee would be invited."**

The Committee adopted the recommendations, subject to consideration being given to providing additional opportunities for emerging local bands to showcase their talents throughout the week-long event.

Belfast Business Awards

The Committee was reminded that the 2012 Belfast Business Awards had been held in the City Hall on 8th November. The ceremony, which had been attended by 330 guests, had included eleven categories and attracted over 120 entries. The event was delivered on behalf of the Council by Belfast City Centre Management and income had been generated by sponsorship and ticket sales for the event. However, in net terms, the cost incurred by the Council in delivering the ceremony was in the region £20,000, with an additional £9,000 being paid as a management fee to Belfast City Centre Management.

The Director reported that, given the current economic climate, it had proved difficult to secure private sponsorship for the 2013 awards. He pointed out that, whilst the event had been delivered on the Council's behalf, there remained a significant level of internal administration associated with the awards. He explained that, given the current range of activities carried out by the Economic Development Unit as part of the Investment Programme, it had become increasingly difficult to allocate sufficient resources to oversee the Council's remit in the delivery of the event. Accordingly, the Director outlined the undernoted options for the Committee's consideration:

Option 1

- Consider refocusing the awards to promote a distinct aspect of business in the City, such as the Digital Belfast. Such an option would reflect the growing importance of technology-focused growth and would be in line with the super-connected Belfast initiative, together with innovation-led developments such as the Digital Hub. Should the Committee endorse this option, consideration might be given to working with a relevant partner in the delivery of the event.

Option 2

- Proceed as in previous years and work with Belfast City Centre Management in organising the awards and take the lead role on communication, registration and judging as well as overall project delivery responsibility, which would include financial management; and

Option 3

- Agree not to become a lead partner in the event in 2013 but request that Belfast City Centre Management organise the awards using Council branding.

The Director explained that the costs associated with each option would vary, however, options 1 and 2 would be likely to involve a commitment of approximately £30,000, in addition to the use of significant staff resources. In respect of option 3, a request would, most likely, be submitted for financial support from the organising partner, but there would be limited implications for staff resources.

Discussion ensued in respect of the options outlined and Members expressed concern that, given that there had been income derived from sponsorship and ticket sales for the event in the past, the Council was still incurring significant costs in hosting the ceremony despite the fact that it was being delivered by an external organisation. The point was made that there existed a plethora of similar-type events in Belfast and, accordingly, the Council might wish to reassess, over an interim period, the specific value of the event in light of the significant costs incurred in its delivery.

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Webb,
Seconded by Councillor Reynolds and

Resolved – That the Committee agrees not to proceed with any awards event in 2013.

City Dressing Plan

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1. Background Information

1.1 Members approved the Patterns of the City - Belfast City Dressing Plan in December 2011. The plan was commended as Tourism Partnership Initiative of the Year at the Northern Ireland Tourism Awards 2012.

2 Key Issues

2.1 BCCM has contracted Image Zoo to proactively sell sites specifically under BCCM remit. To ensure that commercial hire does not have a detrimental effect on the look of the city and there is a consistent approach to city dressing design, a policy has been developed and endorsed by the City Dressing Steering Group

2.2 It should also be noted that BCCM and Image Zoo generate income from the hire of sites. In these cases BCC will recoup a percentage of the hire fee which will be used for ongoing city dressing maintenance.

2.3 Flag fields have been sited at key locations which offer the festivals forum a cost effective opportunity to promote their festivals/events. There is an opportunity to streamline the administration and hire of these sites and potentially to generate income to help support the maintenance and ongoing costs of city dressing.

2.4 BCC has been approached by several Community Groups (Ormeau Road and Shankill/Donagall Roads). They are keen to explore the possibility of city dressing being implemented in their specific areas. The approach to the *Patterns of the City* concept is to engage with community groups through workshops and developing patterns unique and inspired by their area. There is an opportunity to further use the concept of city dressing to build a collection of patterns that can be integrated into the Belfast Story and Belfast brand identity.

2.5 It is proposed that the ongoing city dressing plan will continue to roll out city dressing to new locations and ensure that key events are showcased at specific times.

2.6 The concept of city dressing extends to dressing/wrapping dilapidated buildings which have been led by Building Control during 2012. The Court House has already been identified as a site which would benefit from hoarding/wrapping to enhance the look of this area of the city. With Crumlin Road Gaol open as a visitor attraction it is important that the general area is enhanced and attractive to visitors.

3 Recommendations

3.1 The Committee is requested to:

- 1. Approve the City Dressing Policy and agree a budget of £80,000 in both 2013/14 and 2014/15;**
- 2. Approve to ring-fencing a portion of the city dressing budget to dressing the Court House, Crumlin Road;**
- 3. Approve working with community groups to implement city dressing workshops and branding in their areas;**
- 4. Agree that officers seek opportunities by quotation to streamline the work involved in the management and hire of flag fields with key festivals and event organisers.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations and it was agreed that consideration be given to providing additional banners to mark the 25th anniversary of the holding of Feile an Phobail in August, 2013.

City Access Guide - Phase II

The Director reminded the Committee that Belfast City Centre Management's Public Space Action Group had, in conjunction with a range of partners, including the Council, launched the initial Belfast City Centre Access Guide in November, 2011. That initiative had sought to promote accessibility to the City centre and had made a number of recommendations in that regard.

Accordingly, the Director reported that Belfast City Centre Management had proposed that the second phase of the study be undertaken and, to this end, the Department for Social Development and Translink had agreed to provide funding to assist in the undertaking of that study in the sum of £6,000 and £3,000 respectively. It was reported that the total cost would be £12,000 and Belfast City Centre Management had approached the Council to make a contribution of £3,000 towards the costs.

The Committee agreed to authorise expenditure in the sum of £3,000 towards the costs of undertaking the study.

Eurocities Affairs Forum

The Director informed the Committee that the Council had been afforded an opportunity to host the Eurocities Social Affairs Forum on 17th and 18th October, 2013.

He explained that the event, which would attract approximately 80 delegates from across Europe, would focus on the issue of social innovation and would afford the Council an opportunity to showcase its achievements in this regard, as well as providing a valuable opportunity to discuss key issues relating to social affairs and emerging European Union funding opportunities. It was reported that the costs associated with hosting the Forum would be £3,000 and that a steering group would be established to oversee preparations in this regard.

The Committee agreed to host the Forum as outlined and authorised the associated expenditure.

BBC Proms in the Park

The Committee was advised that the BBC was proposing to host its Annual Proms in the Park at the Titanic Slipways on Saturday, 7th September. The Director reported that the total cost of hosting the event would be £410,000, the Council's contribution to which would be £100,000, provision for which had been included within the events' budget. The 'Proms' would be broadcast live by the BBC and had, in 2012, attracted an audience of 8,000 to the outdoor event. It was pointed out that free tickets would be distributed by way of an open public call by the BBC.

A number of Members expressed concern that BBC Northern Ireland had, in previous years, not broadcast the finale of the event, which included renditions of 'Land of Hope and Glory', 'Jerusalem' and the National Anthem, to the outdoor Belfast audience. Further concern was expressed that, given the significant demand for free tickets for the event, the BBC might consider charging a nominal fee in order to recoup its costs, which, in turn, would reduce the Council's contribution.

The Committee agreed to provide support in the sum of £100,000 towards the hosting of the event and the City Events Manager undertook to convey the specific Members' concerns to the organisers.

Rabo Direct PRO12 Celtic League

The Director reported that the official launch of the RaboDirect PRO12 Celtic League would take place at Titanic Belfast on 26th August. He explained that the Council had received a request from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to ascertain if it would wish to host an official dinner which would form part of the launch. The Director indicated that the proposed dinner would attract 120 to 150 guests, which would include government representatives, international press and media, together with prominent representatives of the various clubs and rugby officials. He added that the event in the City Hall would afford the Council a valuable opportunity to showcase the City to an international audience and enhance Belfast's status as a sporting destination, especially within the context of the re-development of Ravenhill and the Irish Rugby Football Union's bid to host the Rugby World Cup in 2023.

The Committee agreed to meet the costs associated with the hosting of a dinner, which it was noted would be in the region of £9,000, subject to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee granting the use of the City Hall for this purpose.

Royal Scottish Pipe Band Championships

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 In February 2013 Members were updated in regard to the Council’s engagement with the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA) and their related championship events. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to bid, and if successful, stage a major piping championship event in 2014 and 2015. In addition to request permission from Council to engage and work with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) in creating a bid to secure the World Pipe Band Championship for the period 2016 to 2018.
- 1.2 On the 16 October 2012 the Committee agreed to bid for the RSPBA Champion of Champion event in 2013. Unfortunately the Council was not successful in securing this event. This information was reported at February’s Committee and Members agreed that a further report be brought back to Council.

2 Key Issues

Belfast International Piping Championship

- 2.1 Officers have met and engaged in discussions with the RSPBA in regard to a new championship that the Association wish to create. This event would be a replacement to the Cowel Championship which comes to a close this year. The new event would be one of the Associations ‘big five’ competitions which include: the World; European; British; Scottish and All-Ireland events.
- 2.2 RSPBA has indicated that it would be their intention to look for bids for an event that would be equivalent to the European and British competitions. They have also indicated that this new opportunity would take place in June 2014 and 2015. The RSPBA have indicated that the annual cost to Council would be circa £180,000 and would include an annual £80,000 fee to the RSPBA. It is estimated between 100 and 120 bands would attend this event and bring in an estimated £212k to £1.3m additional economic activity to the city.
- 2.3 Officers have also investigated the current market rate for such bids. Evidence of this process indicates that the above figures would be on a par with other potential bidding regions and cities.

- 2.4 Senior RSPBA Officials have also indicated that any bid from Belfast should focus on a one day competition and that their preferred site would be within Stormont estate. This is despite Officers encouraging the Association to look at a range of BCC owned parkland.

2.5 World Pipe Band Championship, 2016-18

Officers are also seeking approval to engage with NITB in developing a bid for the Championship. This event is estimated to currently generate between £10-11 million for Glasgow. With the average total cost of staging the event £550,000 per year. From this the RSPBA would be paid around £110,000 as a fee. Given this information Members are asked to consider that BCC and NITB develop a bid based on a figure of £600,000 per year – if approved this would be split equally amongst both parties. Given the economic benefits it would mean a £16.00 return for every £1 of public sector investment for the city.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

- As Members may be aware the Council has set-up a special reserve fund for events in the period 2013-15. Within this a sum of £240,000 has been allocated for a piping event.
- The total two year cost would be £360,000 to bid and deliver the 2014 and 2015
- Belfast International Piping Championship (BIPC)
- A BCC input of £300,000 per year commitment to bidding for the World Pipe Band championships in 2016, 2017 & 2018. This would be subject to match funding from NITB or other government departments.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 That officers bid to host the Belfast International Piping Championship in 2014 and 2015 at a cost £240,000 over two years which would include an annual fee to the RSPBA and, if successful, that costs would be met from within the Council's reserve for this purpose.

- Should the Committee wish to increase its offer to £360,000 then a request would have to be made to the SP&R Committee for the additional funds.
- Develop a bid for the 2016-18 World Championship at a cost of £300,000 per year. This would be subject to match funding from NITB or other government departments. And if successful to stage the event in the stated years.

The Committee agreed that a bid be prepared to host the World Championships in 2016, 2017 and 2018 and to request that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agree to increase the specified reserve by £120,000 to accommodate the proposal to host a Belfast International Piping Championship in 2014 and 2015 at a cost of £180,000 per annum.

Rural Development Programme

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that at the Development Committee of 14 November 2007, approval was given for Belfast City Council to cluster with Lisburn City Council and Castlereagh Borough Council for the delivery of Axis 3 of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) under the name the Lagan Rural Partnership (LRP).**
- 1.2 Council representation on the LRP is based upon the proportion of the resident population eligible for assistance through the NIRDP. On this basis the membership of the LRP is 7 Lisburn City Council, 3 Castlereagh Borough Council and 1 Belfast City Council.**
- 1.3 In September 2008 a final Rural Development Strategy was submitted to DARD and as used to apportion the funding allocation to the cluster. In January 2009 the final allocation of RDP Axis 3 funding amounting to a total of £8,691,556 was allocated to LRP of which £7,306,576 was to be circulated through grant funding through Axis 3 funding measures.**
- 1.4 The cluster allocates funding under the following 6 measures:
 - 1. Farm diversification**
 - 2. Business creation and development**
 - 3. Encouragement of tourism activities**
 - 4. Basic services for the economy and rural population**
 - 5. Village renewal and development**
 - 6. Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage****
- 1.5 Calls for funding applications are opened periodically for each of the above measures throughout the duration of the programme. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) requires all funding to be allocated to projects by the 31 December 2013 with all projects completed in full by 31 December 2014.**

2 Key Issues

2.1 To date £947,294 of grant funding had been approved by the LRP for projects located exclusively or partially within the Belfast City Council boundary. Key projects funded in the council area include the following:

- **Sustainable Mountain Bike Trail**
- **Belfast Hills Strategic Tourism Project**
- **Hannahstown Village Renewal**
- **Belfast Hills Rural Heritage Project**
- **Divis Trail System**

2.2 Over-commitment

To date LRP has committed £7,160,020 of funding to projects located across rural areas of Belfast, Castlereagh and Lisburn resulting in £146,556 of actual grant remaining.

2.3 However applications received by LRP which have been appraised but yet to be approved for funding indicate further grant requests totalling £781,498.96. If funding for these projects was agreed, this would present an over commitment for the cluster of £634,942.96

2.4 Following a review of the dropout rate and cost savings incurred on approved projects, the administration team of the LRP has identified an average attrition rate on approved applications i.e. the difference between the amounts approved in a letter of offer and the actual amount drawn down for expenditure. If applied to existing approved schemes, this would result in a possible release of £433,866 of committed grant funding. This would still mean a shortfall of £201,076.96 to meet requests for funding. It is important to note that this is an indicative rather than an actual figure. It is possible that the attrition levels could be much lower (or higher) than this.

2.5 Communication from the managing authority DARD has confirmed although they are not averse to the use of attrition in order to maximise grant drawdown, the financial responsibility of any over commitment would reside with the cluster councils. Should this occur, the financial responsibility for any over commitment would be apportioned to the three councils with Lisburn City Council meeting 7/11 of any shortfall, Castlereagh Borough Council meeting 3/11 of any shortfall and Belfast City Council required to meet 1/11 of any shortfall.

- 2.6 Based on an over-commitment of £634,942.96, this would mean a financial contribution of £57,722.09 for the Council. On the basis of an over- commitment of £201,076.96, the Council would be expected to pay £18,279.72 towards the costs.
- 2.7 Members should be aware that there is a service level agreement, endorsed by the Development Committee, which notes that “in the event that there is any shortfall in the funding of the Joint Council Committee it shall be met in proportion by each of the parties hereto according to Council representation on the Joint Council Committee. Lisburn City Council will meet 7/11 of any shortfall, Castlereagh Borough Council will meet 3/11 of any shortfall and Belfast City Council will meet 1/11 of any shortfall”
- 2.8 However it is considered that every effort should be made by the Secretariat to minimise the risk for the cluster councils and that any over-commitment should be avoided. As a result, it is proposed that Belfast City Council writes to the Secretariat to communicate its concerns and to note that it does not wish to make any over-commitment beyond available, existing funds. This proposal would not preclude the opportunity to fund additional schemes through the normal approval process, should additional resources become available from DARD.
3. **Recommendation**
- 3.1 The Committee is requested to agree to the issuing of a communication to LRP opposing any over-commitment of funding.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Pride of Place Awards 2013

The Committee was reminded that the Pride of Place Competition provided community groups from the throughout Ireland with an opportunity to showcase initiatives which have had a lasting and positive impact upon their communities. Since 2004, the Council had sponsored, with considerable success, the participation of several groups in the Competition. It was reported that the Council had been invited to nominate four groups to take part in the Pride of Place 2013 awards ceremony, which would take place in Londonderry on a date to be determined. The Director indicated that the following four groups had been identified as being suitable for entry in the competition:

Black Mountain Community Action Group

The Director reported that this Group was based in the Greater Shankill Area and sought to improve the quality of life of local residents through education, health, arts and culture and social well-being and aimed also to regenerate the area and to empower the local community.

Falls Partnership Initiative

The Falls Partnership Initiative had been established in 2005 as a broad-based community partnership for groups delivering projects and programmes in the Falls area. The aim of the partnership was to encourage coordinated and collaborative approaches which involved residents in decision-making and service delivery. It had established a strategy based on a range of interrelated programmes, including family support, Health and well-being, education and training, and children and young people.

New Lodge Arts

This community-based arts organisation worked specifically with young people within the New Lodge and wider North Belfast area. The organisation promoted dance, theatre, music, video, computer arts, literature and painting. Work with local young people had included the provision of projects, workshops, classes, performance opportunities, outreach and specifically those activities which made the arts relevant to the community.

Mount Vernon Community Development Forum

The Mount Vernon Community Development Forum was a local community-based organisation located within the lower North Belfast area which delivered local services and supported the delivery of a capacity-building programme. Over the past number of years, its work has sought to develop an 'integrated locality planning model' which has involved the establishment of a Community Interest Company.

In response to a Member's request, the Community Services Manager undertook to provide additional information in respect of the number of community groups which had participated in the scheme from the east of the City.

After discussion, the Committee approved the entry of a maximum of four groups as outlined and approved also the attendance at the awards of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, the Director and the Project Officer (or their nominees), together with a maximum of three persons per external project at the ceremony, and authorised the payment of the competition entrance fees, travelling, accommodation and subsistence allowances in connection therewith, which, it was noted, would be approximately £5,500.

Consultation Documents

Future Railway Investment

The Committee endorsed a draft response to the Department for Regional Development's consultation on the future of railway investment in Northern Ireland, a copy of the response was available on the Council's Modern.gov system.

Arts Council

The Committee endorsed a response, a copy of which was available on the Council's Modern.gov system, to the above-mentioned Arts Council's consultation entitled: 'Ambitions for the Arts – A Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Arts in Northern Ireland 2010/2018'.

Gilpin's Site Development - Feasibility Study

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 In May 2012 The Development Committee agreed to support a review the viability of any future redevelopment, technical constraints and potential options for the Gilpin's site, Sandy Row. The key component was to identify the needs and aspirations for the site through a comprehensive and inclusive consultation process.**
- 1.2 The study was intended to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the identified options, the resources required to carry through and ultimately the prospects for success. The Committee agreed the format of a steering group for the project and the approach which recognised the view of members as central in the development of the feasibility study and any final draft report.**
- 1.3 The Terms of Reference for Copius were refined through meetings with the Steering Group and the feasibility study was completed in two conjoined parts. The first part was a detailed technical appraisal of the site to establish land value, and whether or not the building could be redeveloped. The second part was community based consultation and research exercise to establish what local and city wide needs could be supported through the redevelopment of the building.**
- 1.4 The study was intended to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the identified options, the resources required to carry through and ultimately the prospects for success. The Committee agreed the format of a steering group for the project and the approach, which recognised the view of members as being central in the development of the feasibility study and any final draft report.**

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The final public meeting for the feasibility study was held on the 28 November 2012 and the draft Report completed in December**
- 2.2 The scale of the building and wide-ranging nature of need suggested a multi-stranded solution, in terms of uses and potential configurations, within a structured holistic concept. The report contained three options for the site which had a number of common elements identified as the “Spine” for the feasible development.**
- 2.3 Incorporating the common Spine elements was considered to contribute to the creation of a scheme that satisfies the core requirements of the consultation, the building and the wider area. The spine is therefore consistent through the three shortlisted, with the only significant change being that on floor two, which will then provide either of the following:**
- Option 1: an open plan 2nd Floor for a large user (suitable for a Gallery)**
 - Option 2: a 2nd floor that is spilt up into smaller units (Micro Business)**
 - Option 3: an additional floor of ‘community owned’ for rent apartments**
- 2.4 The options were the subject of financial analysis as part of the feasibility. However, it is highlighted that the simplified financial forecasts that may be subject to change based on a number of potential issues. The uncertainty around borrowing and other costs associated with different ownership structures are emphasised necessitating consideration and agreements on the future governance structures. It is recommended that this should be clarified in advance of developing fundraising strategies and a completed business case.**
- 2.5 The report concluded that at even at this early stage, each of the 3 options are considered to be sustainable, viable and feasible in terms of the running costs and management of any facility option mix agreed. It should be recognised that this viability excludes the consideration of the acquisition or build costs and any borrowing or repayment obligations in respect of the up to £6m required to deliver the proposed options.**

- 2.6 The report concludes with a series of suggested “Critical Path, Recommendations and Next Steps” in relation to Land Acquisition, Management & Governance and Technical Assistance. The critical steps are identified, in order to ensure clarity and manage expectations; these steps are also applied to an illustrative timeline. The timeline suggests a likely period of 5 years before any facility is operational.
- 2.7 In summary the report identifies that:
- there is a clear and robust evidence of need for investment in Sandy Row
 - the redevelopment of Gilpin’s would be widely supported by the community
 - in financial and practical terms, the redevelopment of Gilpin’s is feasible and sustainable (on the basis of substantial support for the initial capital investment).
- 2.8 The report suggests the positive result of the Feasibility Study necessitates that further work to be undertaken. The justification of the capital resources needed for the development – considered in the Feasibility Study to be in the region of £6m – would require a Business Plan encompassing a full Economic Appraisal.
- 2.9 There are a number of issues raised by the “positive” feasibility report in terms of the completion of the commission and any next steps that may be considered appropriate. In recognition of the feasibility study development and the necessity for any proposal or priorities to be assessed within the context of the ongoing work in the local area it is suggested that the draft Final Report is considered in the first instance by the South Area Working Group. This would ensure that any recommendations in respect of the feasibility recommendations take account of the local priorities and proposals arising from the Local and Social Investment Funds.
- 2.10 This consideration at the Area Working Group also provides the opportunity for the prioritisation of further project development taking account of current a future funding opportunities that may be available in respect of both developmental work and final delivery. The Area Working Group report should consider the options for further work that may be required in relation to: the identification of the significant capital resources required; development of a Business Plan / Economic Appraisal; potential ownership / management structures; local community capacity building and emphasise that this work would also have to be a precursor to any proposals for acquisition.

- 2.11 Following confirmation of support from the Area Working Group the final Draft report could, if appropriate, be further considered by Council in respect of any recommendations as to the proposed approach to the potential further development or continuation of the project support.

3 **Recommendation**

Members are asked to approve the submission of a report on the Feasibility Study findings to the South Area Working Group prior to the consideration of the final Draft and any recommended actions, if appropriate, by the relevant Committee.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report and associated feasibility study and agreed that it be referred for comment to the South Belfast Area Working Group and requested that, thereafter, the matter be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in May for consideration under the Belfast Investment Programme.

Collaboration on Foreign Direct Investment

The Director reminded the Committee that the Council had been engaging with Invest NI in the matter of how both organisations could support the concept of Foreign Direct Investment. To this end, it was reported that Invest NI had overseen the development of a mobile software application – ‘App’ – for use by key stakeholders to help profile the work of local businesses on an international basis. The application sought to promote Northern Ireland as a vibrant location by providing information on the availability of investment sites, key statistics on the economy, together with a skills profile of the region and details of support available for prospective investors.

It was reported that the cost of developing the application had been estimated at £20,000 and Invest NI had confirmed that it would contribute £5,000 of that amount, with European funding of £10,000 being made secured also. Accordingly, the Council had been requested to contribute the remaining £5,000.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to invite the Invest NI Sub-Regional Sub-Group to make a presentation at a future meeting. However, it agreed not to contribute towards the development of the application as outlined and agreed that the Council should seek to develop its own corporate application and utilise its website for that purpose.

Global India Conference - Update

The Committee considered the undernoted update report in respect of the hosting by the City of the Global India Conference 2013:

“2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Global India Business Meeting takes place on June 23rd to 25th in Belfast with the opening event on Sunday 23 June in City Hall, the main conference in the Europa Hotel on 24th June, closing dinner in Titanic Belfast and an additional optional session in Queen’s University on the morning of the 25th June. The GIBM programme format normally only follows a 2 day programme but Council working alongside Queens University has put in place a knowledge seminar on the 25th to allow QUB to present their research offering to the visiting business delegates. Additionally Council has worked with Tourism Ireland and Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau to present a complimentary comprehensive leisure and tour package for delegates to avail of both pre and post conference. This programme entails visits to Belfast itself, Giant’s Causeway, Fermanagh Lakelands and Down and Mountains of Mourne amongst others.**
- 2.2 Horasis are responsible for securing the international conference speakers and to date have confirmed that Minister Anand Sharma, India Trade and Commerce Minister will participate along with a further Minister from the Uttarakand region. Horasis have confirmed that Ministers Cable and Barker from UK Government will attend also. Local speakers have been added to the programme by Horasis on the recommendations of Council and Invest Ni to ensure that there is a distinct ‘Belfast’ dimension to the programme differentiating this GIBM from other cities’ events in previous years. Whilst Horasis are responsible for international delegate attraction, Invest NI have been working hard alongside Council to attract target companies to the conference in Belfast so that they can be given a personalized programme to secure their interest in investment or trade opportunities here. Council and Invest NI also have a role in attracting local delegates and we have prepared detailed lists of target companies and organisations that are likely to gain most from this opportunity.**
- 2.3 To date there are 220 international delegates confirmed mainly from India/Asia and there are places for up to 50 local business delegates. All Members of the Development Committee will be invited. There will be a role for Lord Mayor of Belfast and Chair of Development Committee. The First and Deputy First Ministers and DETI Minister have also been invited. Council and Invest NI also have the opportunity to provide exhibition stands and information desks at the conference itself. Given the interest shown in Belfast at this time it is recommended that a new contemporary video/cd promotional tool is produced to use at the conference and at other similar events for international development over the next period.**

India Week

- 2.5 Members asked that following the success of attracting GIBM to Belfast consideration be given to the creation of a wider programme of events to highlight all aspects of Indian Culture in Belfast and to profile the significant work undertaken by city partners in international development with India already. We have been working with a wide range of city stakeholders including Belfast Met, British Cultural Council, Arts Council, Arts Ekta, QUB, Lord Rana etc which are engaged as part of an India Stakeholders group in exploring options for the delivery of an India week in June around the conference dates. Strong endorsement for such a programme was also evident as part of Council's mission to India last week when keynote individuals and organisations met were keenly interested in the wider programme and extending their stay to participate in the programme.
- 2.6 A draft programme for India week is being developed which contains headline cultural events such as Indian dance and arts companies performing in Belfast, Indian films being shown at Queens Film Theatre, Indian culinary tours and food events, a cricket match, golf tournament and an economic seminar. An opening event is proposed at City Hall on 22 June comprising of a wide variety of free workshops which will be open to the general public (including flower arranging, massage, Henna tattoos and dance). A smaller event may also take place on 29 June to formally close the cultural week which itself will include pyrotechnics and acrobatic dance.
- 2.7 Approval of a budget up to 60K is required to deliver the programme including appropriate marketing of the week to the wider public alongside the international audience. Sponsorship opportunities are also being explored.

Initial Report Back on BCC Mission to India

- 2.8 Belfast undertook an outward mission to New Delhi and Mumbai from 13-19 April 2013 to meet with key individuals and organisations within the target markets of Trade and Investment, Tourism and Education. Council participated in elements of both Invest NI's company trade mission programme (17 companies attending) and of Tourism Ireland's Trade programme (12 companies attending) and undertook our own itinerary covering business associations, keynote companies and contacts associated with GIBM and leading producers and film companies from the Indian film sector. Invest NI's overseas office played a highly valuable and central role in supporting the Council delegation under the auspices of Barry Clarke

2.9 Overall from an early assessment the mission was successful and delivered the following:

- **Belfast was recognised at a senior level within the business world of being open to business**
- **Belfast was commended for being serious about international engagement with India by being present in the market place**
- **Leading business people and associations such as the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and All India Management Association confirmed they would be leading delegations of companies to Belfast in June**
- **All welcomed the opportunity to have personalized business itineraries tailored to their companies needs to allow them to explore new investments or trade opportunities in Belfast.**
- **All were keenly interested in extending their stay in Belfast and beyond for leisure purposes, many delegates are bringing accompanying persons and their families to Belfast as this is the traditional summer holiday period for Indians.**
- **Agreed joint communications to go out from Horasis and Council/Invest NI on follow up to confirmed delegates on what Belfast offers and to confirm additional programmes of activity**
- **Key contacts met in Renewables, Cleantech and Creative Industries all eager to explore opportunities for investment here**
- **Indian Film Council and leading producers pledged to undertake a visit to Belfast and beyond for new film locations**
- **Potential sister cities identified for further exploration by Belfast at a later date.**
- **In market knowledge gained about the opportunities and pitfalls of international engagement with India**

Concentration must now be delivery of GIBM and follow up with key contacts to ensure their participation in the conference is capitalised upon.”

The Committee noted the information provided and agreed that the Council be represented at any events associated with the conference by the incoming Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor, together with the incoming Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the Strategic Policy and Resources and Development Committees.

Women in Business - Annual Conference

The Committee was advised that the Women in Business Annual Conference would take place in the Hilton Hotel in Belfast on 23rd May and would focus on the concept of promoting local business to an international market. The Director indicated that an opportunity existed for the Council to purchase a 'gold sponsorship package' at the event, the cost of which would be £2,500. He outlined the benefits which would accrue to the Council should it agree to purchase a package, which included a number of free places at the event, significant publicity and branding opportunities, exhibition space and, accordingly, he recommended that the Committee authorise the expenditure as outlined.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Chairman