

Development Committee

Tuesday, 14th January, 2014

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairman);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Stalford);
Aldermen Ekin and Stoker;
Councillors Austin, Beattie, Convery,
Garrett, Haire, Hanna, Hussey, Kelly, Kingston,
Kyle, Magee, Mac Giolla Mhóin, Ó Donnghaile,
Reynolds, Spence, Verner and Webb.

Also attended: Aldermen Patterson and Rodgers.

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.

Apology

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Keenan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 3rd December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 6th January, subject to the omission of the minute under the heading 'Olympia Community Centre' which, at the request of Alderman Patterson, had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Special Meeting - Belfast Rapid Transit

It was noted that a special meeting of the Committee would take place at 4.30 p.m. on Thursday, 30th January, at which representatives of the Department for Regional Development would provide an update in respect of the Belfast Rapid Transit system.

It was agreed that all Members of the Council would be invited to attend the meeting.

Community Centre Committees

The Committee agreed that Councillor Hutchinson be appointed to the Hammer and Woodvale Community Centre Committees.

Belfast Investment Development Agency

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 6th January, had referred a notice of motion in respect of the above-mentioned matter, which had been proposed by Councillor Attwood and seconded by Councillor McCarthy, to the Committee for consideration.

It was noted that a report in this regard would be submitted for the Committee's consideration at its meeting in February.

Olympia Community Centre - Reconsidered Item

(Alderman Patterson attended in connection with this item.)

Pursuant to the decision of the Council of 6th January, the Committee reconsidered the undernoted minute of the meeting of 3rd December:

"The Committee considered the undernoted report:

Background Information

- 1.1 Members will recall that the SP&R committee agreed 'in principle' to progress both the Olympia and Andersonstown Leisure Centres to Stage 2 of the Capital Programme to form the first phase of the citywide leisure transformation review**
- 1.2 In order to inform the investment decision for the Olympia project, in June members agreed that external support should be commissioned to carry out an optional appraisal on community provision and support requirements for the area. The research should develop options; determine the strengths and weaknesses of the identified options; ensure options are framed within the overall strategic framework and action plan for area wide development; provide outline costs for each viable option and to highlight and explore the potential sources of capital and revenue funding; and identify the resources required to carry through and ultimately the prospects for success.**
- 1.3 The report outlining the shortlist of options was presented to committee in October. Given the complexity, committee requested the report to be deferred to allow for party briefings. The purpose of this paper is to summarise any comments and / or concerns in relation to the identified**

options for the future delivery of community centre and service support for the Olympia/Windsor/Village area of the city in the context of the broader regeneration of the Olympia/Windsor stadium.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 *The option appraisal was commissioned in order to inform any Development Committee decision on the best approach to address any gap left in community service provision as a result of the planned closure of the Olympia CC as part of the broader Stadia Development.***
- 2.2 *The consultants completed an area profile in order to inform supply and demand and communicated findings from their community engagement exercise. To summarise, this identified 6 options around 3 primary areas:***
- 2.3 *Do nothing: This is based on the current council consideration to develop the site i.e. where there would be no Council-managed community centre or services on site (with the exception of the play areas accommodated within the stadium redevelopment) and no replacement centre or services elsewhere in the local area.***
- 2.4 *Extend Existing Service Provision: Options 2 & 3 relate to the relocation and extension of existing service programmes both within other BCC community centres, bookable space in the new Leisure facility and other community sector facilities in the area. These options relate to any conclusion that there is adequate current provision for community bookable space in the area.***
- 2.5 *The remaining options relate to any alternative conclusion which proposes there is a demonstrable need for additional community space in the area. The report considers 2 potential methods: support for existing community organisation's plan to extend community space (Option 4) or alternatively council consideration of new community build (2 possible locations – Options 5 & 6)***
- 2.6 *Following monetary assessment, risk assessment and optimism bias adjustments, the consultant's recommendation is to support Option 4: namely supplementing the proposed further use of Council and community sector buildings in the area with the provision of additional community space via the refurbishment of St Simon's Hall. Their assessment suggests this proposal will***

meet local need and demand and will do so at a much lower cost level (both capital and recurrent) than the new build options at Tate's Avenue and the Village area respectively

2.7 *The primary issues raised at the Party Briefings are summarised as:*

2.8 **Current Service Users**

- 1.** *Elected members sought clarity on the ongoing needs of the current users of the Olympia Community Centre. They noted that the majority of the block bookings were from regional groups or individual providers and that these users could be accommodated elsewhere within the community and leisure centre estate in the city.*
- 2.** *They sought assurance that the proposals set out at option 3 would meet the needs of the remaining user groups who would need / wish to continue to access local services at the new planned development.*
- 3.** *All parties discussed how the Development Committee might inform the programming of the community facilities within the new building to ensure that the community space identified within the plans facilitate local community provision. They further considered how to ensure that related booking systems, etc would not be detrimental to community access.*

2.9 **Additional bookable Community space**

- 4.** *Parties noted the preferred option to address the perceived need for additional bookable community space in the Village area, however, some parties did so within the context of the variety of current community service providers all of whom are financially supported through the service grant programme.*
- 5.** *In considering the balance of service need and provision in the area, elected members sought clarity on how the sum £1.3m was identified for replacement community facilities currently included in the strategic outline case for the Stadium development. They recognised is a provisional planning figure based on the cost for similar council community facilities, uplifted for inflation.*
- 6.** *Members noted that Option 4 presents an alternative solution which does not require capital build but would require capital investment of approximately £520,000.*
- 7.** *While Members were generally supportive in principle of this approach they stated that any future capital*

investment in St Simon's Hall should be tentative and subject to a full economic appraisal.

8. *Some parties felt that any future capital investment decisions for community centre provision should be part of a city wide needs analysis.*

2.10 *The Committee received a deputation of representatives from the recently formed Olympia Community Centre Support Group at the November meeting. Group representatives summarised their assessment of community need and asked committee to favour Option 5 (new build: Tates Avenue) which they contend is ranked second in the consultants assessment. The recommendation noted in the consultancy report however ranks Option 5 third of the 3 options which they shortlisted for appraisal (pg 38 section 11.1 Preferred Option).*

2.11 Summary

All parties agree that the programming within any replacement leisure facility must accommodate articulated community needs. Parties considered an opportunity for the South Area Working Group to influence the level of community programming and related community facing systems.

2.12 *Based on the independent needs assessment and the sought assurance re the community programming above, there was no support for any new community build option in the Tates Avenue area (Option 5).*

2.13 *The majority of parties supported the recommended Option 4 to extend bookable community space in the village area. Members should be aware this will require a potential council contribution for capital costs which have been estimated at £520,000 but would necessitate more detailed financial appraisal.*

2.14 *The majority view was therefore to support the mix of options (Option 3 & 4) on the basis this would ensure there would be no displacement of service provision for the local users from the immediate area while also allowing for a future decision to meet the demand for additional accommodation in the village area.*

5 Recommendations

5.1 **Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to agree any related recommendation for associated capital investment to the SP&R committee.”**

The Committee agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to endorse Option 4 as set out, viz., to extend the extent of bookable community space currently available in the Greater Village area, as part of an emerging capital project. It was noted that local Members would be consulted on an ongoing basis in respect of the project.”

Alderman Patterson, at whose request the minute had been taken back to the Committee, was welcomed to the meeting and she proceeded to outline her reasons for requesting that the minute be reconsidered. She suggested that the Committee might rescind its decision of 3rd December to enable the establishment of a working group which would consider the overall provision of community services within the Greater Village area, particularly for those residents living closest to the Olympia site. Such a working group, she added, would consist of Elected Members, local residents, community, church groups and representatives of the Irish Football Association.

Other Members pointed out that a further deferral in the matter would impact on the overall plans for the redevelopment of the Olympia site. It was stated that sufficient consultation had been undertaken already and it would therefore be advisable for the Committee to endorse its decision of 3rd December.

The Director indicated that, should the Committee agree to rescind its decision of 3rd December and adopt an alternative proposal, it could impact on the budget available to the Council to develop new leisure facilities as part of the Windsor Park development. He added that such a decision could impact also on the overall design of the leisure facility, delay the implementation timetable and put at risk the Council’s input into the overall stadium development

Proposal

Moved by Alderman Stoker,
Seconded by Alderman Ekin,

That the Committee agrees to endorse its decision of 3rd December, i.e. to approve Option 4, as submitted for consideration at that meeting, and agrees further to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the additional community space provision required within the Greater Village area be provided as part of an emerging capital project. Furthermore such community bookable space at the proposed development which will form part of the overall Windsor Park/Olympia project would be made available specifically for local community use on the understanding that Elected Members would be consulted on an ongoing basis in respect of that particular aspect of the project.

Amendment

Moved by Alderman Stalford,
Seconded by Councillor Hussey,

That the Committee agrees to rescind its decision of 3rd December in respect of community service provision within the Greater Village area and agrees to the establishment of a working group to consider the following issues within a specified period of time:

- the feasibility of the establishment of a replacement community centre at - or as close to - the site of the existing Olympia Community Centre;
- to assess the demand for community services within the immediate area of the Olympia site and to consider how local users would be impacted upon by any decision to reduce provision within that specific area; and
- to agree, should the Committee opt to adhere to its decision of 3rd December, that the Council would consult with the working group in respect of the enhancement of the level of community services provision which would be made available within any replacement building at the site.

On a vote by show of hands, five Members voted for the amendment and thirteen against and it was declared lost.

The proposal standing in the name of Alderman Stoker and seconded by Alderman Ekin was thereupon put to the meeting when thirteen Members voted in favour and five against and it was declared carried.

Financial Estimates and District Rate 2014/2015

(The Director of Finance and Resources attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered a report, which had been prepared by the Director of Finance and Resources, in respect of the Committee's estimates of revenue expenditure for the financial year 2014/2015. A copy of that section of the report, in so far as it applied specifically to the Development Committee, is set out hereunder:

Development Committee

A spending limit of £19,144,021 is recommended for the department in 2014/15 which represents a decrease of £181k or 0.94% on the 2013/14 budget. The budgetary intentions of the Department for the next year are:

	£
Community Services	5,502,275
City Events and Venues	3,742,795
Economic Initiatives Section	6,399,404
Directorate	3,499,547
Total Net Expenditure	19,144,021

Community Services

The amount provided for in the 2014/15 Community Services budget estimate has decreased by £25k. The estimate is based on the continuation of activity at a similar level to the previous years, with some re-focusing required in line with the newly developed BCC Community Development Strategy. It is also based on a consistent level of anticipated income from DSD through its regional Community Support Programme in advance of any agreed budget for BCC post Local Government Reform.

City Events and Venues

The service budget for 2014/15 has been reduced by £182,156 to £3.74m. The estimates for 2014/2015 cover the net cost of operating the Belfast Waterfront and the Ulster Hall, the annual events and sports events schedule and Support for Sport grants.

During 2014/2015 both the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall will continue to provide world class entertainment and conference facilities that will promote the cultural and economic regeneration of Belfast.

As part of the Council's Strategic Investment Programme an application has been submitted to fund the new extension at the Waterfront Hall. The external funding application is now in the final stages and if funding approval is received in 2013, building works will commence in 2014 and continue for a period of 18 months. In absence of a construction schedule and final design plans it is impossible to predict the impact of these works on venue operations however based on information available at September 2013 it is hoped that normal activity will be possible. The retention of the Auditorium, Studio and front of house bar and gallery areas is firmly embedded in the current design scheme, however, it has been indicated that there will be the closure of some of the smaller meeting/dressing rooms and an impact on staff office accommodation. The Revenue Estimates for 2014/2015 have been prepared on that basis. On appointment we will work proactively with the successful contractor to protect business continuity throughout the period.

Within City Events, this period would see the continuation of the annual programme of events, Big Screen and sports funding. In addition to this programme, there would be additional one-off projects during this period. These include: Giro d'Italia (9 to 12 May 2014) and the UK National Piping Championships (14 June 2014). These events, along with contractual commitments to Tall Ships in 2015, have been funded from the Council's Specified Events Reserve. In addition Council has agreed to a three year commitment to the Circuit of Ireland event. This would be at a cost of £25,000 per year from 2014 to 2016 and has been included in the existing Major Events revenue budget.

Economic Initiatives and International Development

The 2014/2015 estimates are based on a continuation of activity at a similar level to previous years with additional activity and new areas of work to meet the priorities identified within the Council's Investment Programme.

Economic Development Unit: The amount provided for in the 2014/2015 estimate is in line with the anticipated income from EU through Invest NI within this timeframe. It is based on a continuation of activity at a similar level to the previous years, with some additional activity and new areas of work to meet the priorities identified within the Council's Investment Programme

Tourism, Culture & Arts Unit: The 2014/2015 budget will help deliver year one of a new integrated strategy for tourism. This will be developed in partnership with the NI Tourist Board, Tourism Ireland and DETI. A significant portion of the annual budget supports Visit Belfast to market Belfast and provide Visitor Servicing through the Belfast Welcome Centre and wider network. The budget will also in part be assigned to the delivery of the Cultural Framework which has been developed in partnership with the Arts Council NI and the city's culture, arts and heritage sectors. This includes funding of over £1.8m to cultural and community organisations via four grants schemes that support the Framework themes of celebrating Belfast distinctive arts and heritage; inspiring communities; attracting audiences; and strengthening the sector.

Markets: The budget for the 2014/15 financial year is allocated to three general areas of activity which include St George's Market, Smithfield Market, the Continental Market and also the introduction of Open Air Markets for which a policy is now completed and will give the Council the opportunity to explore additional income streams.

European Unit: Following the Structural Review (Development Committee 16/10/12) the European Unit transferred from the

Directorate section to the new Economic Initiatives and International Development section. The European Unit will continue to deliver against their objectives: to maximise EU Funding, to interpret, disseminate and influence EU Policy; to promote Belfast in the EU and to raise awareness of EU affairs in the region.

International Development: will deliver the International Relations Framework and Action Plan once resources are secured for this new area of work. The purpose of this international marketing framework is to ensure that Belfast is internationally positioned as a strong, attractive and competitive destination of choice for those who trade, invest, visit and study in the City.

Directorate: The Directorate budget has reduced by £76k. Whilst the work of the unit has continued to evolve the broad areas of activity for the 2014/15 financial year remain broadly similar with resources currently allocated across the main Business Plan activity.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MAIN ITEMS OF ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE

	Net Expenditure 2013/14 £	Net Expenditure 2014/15 £
<u>Community Services</u>	£5,526,819	£5,502,275
Community Resource Unit	£297,069	£297,041
Community Services Management	£227,301	£219,262
Travellers	£49,202	£44,524
Area Support Unit	£1,138,909	£1,116,740
Community Grants	£1,050,483	£1,050,483
Community Facilities	£2,010,987	£1,980,603
Children & Young People	£752,868	£793,622
<u>City Events and Venues</u>	£3,924,951	£3,742,795
Belfast Waterfront/Ulster Hall	£2,421,485	£2,286,671
City Events	£1,503,466	£1,456,124
<u>Economic Initiatives and International Development</u>	£6,298,440	£6,399,404
Tourism, Culture and Arts	£4,755,403	£4,779,130
Economic Development	£1,332,073	£1,329,908
European Unit	£232,226	£393,317
Markets	-£21,262	-£102,951
<u>Directorate</u>	£3,575,221	£3,499,547
Development Directorate	£1,822,428	£1,807,819
City Development	£251,248	£250,175
Business Research and Development	£549,879	£540,604
Urban Development	£951,666	£900,949
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>£19,325,431</u>	<u>£19,144,021</u>

The Director of Development outlined the factors which had been taken into account in the preparation of the estimates and highlighted the savings which had been identified which had contributed to a decrease in the Department's estimate of 0.94% on the previous year's figure. He informed the Members that, at its meeting on 10th January, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed that the cash limit for the Development Committee be set at £19,144,021.

The Committee agreed that its estimate of expenditure for the financial year 2014/2015 be set at £19,144,021.

City Access Strategy

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on the 22nd October, it had agreed to receive a presentation from Atkins Consultants regarding the development of a Belfast Access Strategy and to ascertain Members' views in relation thereto. Accordingly, the Committee received Ms. L. Dougan, representing Atkins Consultants, who provided an overview of the initial research which had been undertaken in this regard.

Ms. Dougan advised the Committee that the Access Strategy would seek to underpin a number of Council-led initiatives, such as the Belfast Masterplan, the Investment Programme, together with the Centre City Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan. She indicated that the overall aim of the project would be to support the commercial, retail and leisure industries in Belfast. In particular, she reported that the strategy would seek to address issues relating to a wide range of matters, including public transport, current road provision, cost effectiveness and urban design within the City.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues and requested that they be considered as part of the development of the Access Strategy:

- the need to consider car parking provision within the context of public transport availability and accessibility;
- the introduction of parking schemes on land, such as church car parks, to promote shopping initiatives;
- the feasibility of the introduction of an integrated ticketing system for public transport;
- the need to address the requirements of disabled persons who used public transport;
- the safety requirements of pedestrians and cyclists, together with the provision of adequate street lighting and furniture;
- the provision of 'real time' passenger information at bus stops and stations;
- the implementation of measures which would assist with traffic flow at peak times;
- the upgrading of the linkages between the George Best Airport and the City centre;
- the adoption of a coherent strategy for the provision of cycle lanes;

- the need to address issues of 'connectivity' within future road schemes; and
- the requirement to re-evaluate the effectiveness of the Belfast on the Move project.

After discussion, during which it was agreed that the views of local communities would be essential in the development of any Access Strategy, Ms. Dougan thanked the Committee for receiving her and it was noted that a further presentation on the development of the Strategy would be provided in due course.

Belfast City Centre Management

The Committee considered the undernoted report, together with an associated business plan for Belfast City Centre Management for 2014/2015:

2 Key Issues

2.1 BCCM have developed an action plan which sets out the range of activities to be undertaken in the course of the year, along with the associated budget for the delivery of this programme of work.

2.2 The work of BCCM covers three areas:

- **Delivering BCCM city centre services**

BCCM delivers its own services which add value to the city centre. These include management of the city's festive lighting, Café Culture operating agreements, City Centre Beat policing, Radio link, City Safe Crimewatch scheme, dressing of vacant shop windows, city banner dressing in the core retail area, and providing an education programme to businesses on Business Improvement Districts.

- **Facilitating the delivery of funders' City Centre Initiatives**

BCCM assists Belfast City Council and other funders with initiatives such as City Centre Performance Measurement, Belfast in Bloom, Waste Management, Streets Ahead and the re:Store initiative.

- **Direct liaison with city centre businesses**

BCCM provides a channel for communication between the private sector businesses in the city centre and central and local government.

- 2.3 The work of the organisation crosses a number of council departments and services, principally within the Development and Health and Environmental Services Departments. The Director of Environmental Health chairs the Public Space Management group while the Director of Development and Head of Economic Initiatives – along with elected members – are represented on the board. Other officers across the council are also represented on other working groups.
- 2.4 The proposed budget for the year totals around £715,000. The budget assumes a financial contribution of £190,000 from Belfast City Council. The budget also assumes additional income from other public and private partners, principally Department for Social Development (DSD) - £157,000 and private sector contributions (directly and through Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (BCTC) - £108,000.
- 2.5 April 2013 to March 2014
- The BCCM Board wishes to indicate to the Committee their appreciation of Council's funding of £190,000 during the present financial year. BCCM provides quarterly performance reports to BCC which demonstrate that this has been a successful year, with the company's business plans being delivered in full, save only a few projects which are delayed due to circumstances beyond the control of BCCM.
- 2.6 Despite a very difficult economy for the private sector in the city, BCCM has been able to use its core funding from BCC and DSD to leverage £315,700.00 of private sector funding for City Centre projects during 2013/14.
- 2.7 BCCM has attracted £155,000.00 of DSD core funding the present financial year, and has an application lodged with DSD for core funding of £157,000.00 in the 2014/2015 year. Members should note that DSD provide further project funding to BCCM, including £67k in the present year for an Environmental Improvement scheme in College Square East
- 2.8 During 2013/14 BCCM has engaged with issues which were not originally tabled in their business plans, including:
- Dressing double the number of vacant retail units than planned and originally budgeted for.
 - Delivering a new 'Text Alert' system capable of sending urgent 'public messages' to over 700 business managers in the City Centre.

- Introducing a new 'Prolific Offenders' programme into Retail Crimewatch which, working with the PSNI, is targeting the 20 most prolific retail criminals in the City
 - Delivery of a Youth Engagement programme, funded by South Belfast DPCSP, which is engaging with the hundreds of youths gathering in Arthur Square on Saturdays, which has been having a detrimental impact on Saturday retail in the area.

 - Delivering increased levels of research, including surveying shoppers in satellite towns around Belfast regarding their use of Belfast City Centre.
- 2.9 BCCM Board would be pleased to consider any recommendations or requests from the Development Committee with regard to this Business Plan.
- 2.10 The BCCM Board recognises within its Business Plan, that the plan may need to be reviewed with core funders after the implementation of the Review of Public Administration.
- 2.11 The Business Plan sets specific performance targets for each of BCCM's 'Activity Groups' of:
1. Public Space Management
 2. Safer City
 3. Economic Performance
- 2.12 The Business Plan includes financial projections, and the BCCM Board is not seeking any rise in funding from Council

5. **Recommendations**

To approve the funding request for £190,000 in the coming year; and agree that officers should work with BCCM to further refine the work of the organisation to ensure compliance with wider Council policies and to support the delivery of council objectives."

After discussion, it was

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations within the report and to provide funding in the sum of £190,000 to Belfast City Centre Management for the financial year 2014/2015.

Belfast / Dublin Economic Corridor

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor is a term used to describe the geographical area between both cities recognising the economic wealth and future potential that is created from the concentrations of business, industry, educational institutions, technology and transport infrastructure and other capital developments located in this area.
- 1.2 Over the last 10-20 years a number of research reports and analytical discussion pieces have emerged on this concept. These have included reports by the University of Ulster, the Centre for Cross Border Studies, the joint CBI/IBEC Council, the Irish Planning Institute and John Yarwood, a former Director of the Urban Institute at University College Dublin. Recommendations within the various reports and emerging from the seminars and workshops held have centred on how both cities and the 2 governments could capitalise on the latent potential of the area by consciously promoting the Belfast Dublin economic corridor in policy terms and developing a range of initiatives to build up its economic strength even further.
- 1.3 The idea behind the Belfast Dublin economic corridor is essentially to build up the economic strength of the area to create a poly centric city region on a scale large enough to compete with the major urban clusters of continental Europe.
- 1.4 Between 2001 and 2002 University of Ulster held 2 conferences in association with other Irish Universities and the Harvard Graduate School of Design on major planning challenges affecting the key urban locations. The central theme focused on partnership, prosperity and place identifying the need for the delivery of sustainable development of the Belfast Dublin leg of the Eastern seaboard corridor as they defined it. They pointed out that this is the geographical area where development pressure is most apparent and where economic growth is evident thereby requiring a coordination of policy and practice to promote it as a location of choice for investors, entrepreneurs and successful companies.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1** Following recent discussions between the Lord Mayor of Belfast and the Lord Mayor of Dublin, a proposal has emerged to re-invigorate the concept of the Belfast Dublin economic corridor to bring new economic opportunities to both cities and the wider corridor region in between. Whilst new updated research and analysis would be required to investigate the potential in depth, in the first instance discussions could take place with a wider range of partners in Belfast and Dublin to ascertain interest in working together to develop the corridor proposal.
- 2.2** Initial discussions have taken place between officers of Dublin City Council and the Director of Development and the Head of Economic Initiatives on how such a project might be developed. There are already significant areas of commonality in the key economic sectors that are being promoted and in the technology and communications infrastructure required to support business development.
- 2.3** Some examples of initiatives that could be developed in concert are the super connected broadband and digital projects; rapid transit and other public transport infrastructure enhancements to connect both cities with higher speed and more efficient services; the security of an all Ireland energy supply; linked technology and enterprise parks with incubation and growth support; new trade and investment initiatives to promote business; joint campaigns to attract new inward investors and encourage expansion of existing companies already located in the corridor area.
- 2.4** Overall it would be necessary to create a sound strategic base for the corridor concept working not only with Dublin but with the other strategically important locations in between such as Newry and Dundalk. Leadership from the Councils would in turn attract support from the key organisations representing business and industry, education and communication providers. There may be the potential of attracting European Interreg funding for such an initiative
- 2.5** In order to take this forward it is proposed that both Belfast City Council and Dublin City Council take the lead in instigating a set of discussions with other potential partners on how to reinvigorate the corridor concept and make it into a meaningful project. It is also proposed that these discussions are managed through a bespoke programme of two seminars/receptions which would spotlight the growth opportunities in both Belfast and Dublin.

- 2.6 Specifically it is proposed that a business breakfast is held in Dublin around 28th March 2014 (provisional) in conjunction with the Lord Mayor of Dublin and attended by leading business people from the Dublin region. Following this opening event, the Lord Mayor of Dublin and the Lord Mayor of Belfast will travel by train to Belfast for a bespoke leadership forum with Belfast business leaders on how to strengthen the Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor. The spotlight of the discussion for a will be on profiling the key opportunities in Belfast and Dublin. Also invited to participate in the full day's programme of events will be the Mayors from the areas located along the entire corridor route. Belfast Harbour and Translink have expressed their willingness to be involved in supporting this initiative.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 The total budget required for 2 seminar events in Belfast and Dublin and associated media event is estimated around 10K with Belfast City Council being asked to contribute up to 5k.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 That agree to contributing up to 5K towards a joint event with Dublin City Council in exploring the concept of the Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Strategic Review of St. George's Market

The Committee agreed to receive, at its meeting on 5th February, a presentation from Deloitte consultants which would outline the initial findings arising from its strategic review of St. George's Market, together with a range of potential options which had been identified for further consideration by the Council.

International Relations - Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that one of the key commitments in the Council's Investment Programme 2012- 2015 is that the Council will work with city partners to promote Belfast proactively on the international stage to attract trade and investment, increase visitor and student numbers and build the networks necessary to support growth.

- 1.2 Over the last year work has been undertaken to develop a draft International Relations Framework that seeks to shape how city stakeholders can work together in a stronger and purposeful way to maximize the economic impact for Belfast as a whole.
- 1.3 This framework and a 2 year plan were agreed by Members at the August Development Committee. At this time, Members requested an update at a later stage in the year, outlining delivery of the action plan, highlighting additional areas of work that have arisen as the year progresses and resources to deliver these.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 In summary, the aims of the International Relations Framework are as follows:
- To maximise economic return for Belfast.
 - To increase the economic benefits of marketing Belfast internationally.
- 2.2 The following objectives are intended to help increase the economic benefits of developing a city-wide approach to proactively market Belfast internationally:
- Deliver increased economic return to Belfast through collaborative international promotion.
 - Develop meaningful international partnerships and civic relationships to support Belfast's growth.
 - Promote the attractiveness of the city for business, education and tourism.
 - Create the optimum mechanisms for international promotion of Belfast.
- 2.3 The framework sets out:
- targets for each of the three primary market segments – trade and investment, tourism, education and learning;
 - key actions for each of the geographical target areas - China, Europe, India, North America.
- 2.4 The agreed action plan is appended for the period 2013 – 2015. It identifies the suggested role of Council as a co-ordinating partner and presents proposed priority actions for Council at this stage. Joint Projects emanating from other stakeholders have yet to be added to this plan which will occur during the next phase of consultation.

2.5 Proposed outcomes and annual targets for BCC are outlined in the Framework, focusing on Business & Leisure Tourism, Education, Learning & Talent and Trade & Investment. This includes longer term outcomes and annual targets which will be achieved most effectively by Council working with key stakeholders in the delivery of the Framework. As the regional driver, Belfast has a key role to play in helping to deliver a number of regional targets; however, it is important to recognise the targets and longer term outcomes need to be agreed with city stakeholders as they can only be achieved in partnership.

2.6 Key actions proposed and underway under International Relations for the current year are tabled below.

2.7	<u>BCC</u>	<u>Framework Actions</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
		Ensure BCC alignment to NI Assembly's International Relations Strategy	Dec 2014
		Lead Country Stakeholder groups	Ongoing
		Create Belfast international brand	Sept 2014
		Support NI Connections Diaspora	Ongoing
		Produce quarterly newsletters	Ongoing
		Refresh the city brand and develop an agreed City Narrative and suite of narratives for: - Trade & Investment; - Tourism & Leisure; - Education, Learning, & Talent	Oct 2014
		Update International shared calendar	Ongoing
2.8	India	Review Sister cities in India	Sept 2014
		Pursue India/Belfast opportunities for 3 framework segments	Dec 2014
		Investigate a cross sectoral showcase and external mission on back of QUB investment programme in India	Dec 2014
2.9	China	Support Chinese New Year	Mar 2014
		Support Hefei inward visit	Jan 2014

		Hold a Chinese Travel Industry Seminar as BCC's international dimension of Chinese New Year 2014	Dec 2014
		Agree collaborative approach with local educational institutions, schools and Chinese counterparts under the Confucius model	June 2014
		Continue relationship with UU Confucius Institute and source additional opportunities for collaboration	Ongoing
		Receive and welcome new Chinese students to Belfast	Nov 2014
		Potential bid to secure China investment conference in support of Invest NI	Nov 2014
		Prepare Belfast in Shenyang showcase and explore collaborative outward mission with partners	Dec 2014
2.10	USA	Establish working relationship with US Consulate	Ongoing
		Continue co-operative music industry programme with Nashville Sister City	Dec 2014
		Refocus Belfast's showcase at South by South West to highlight wider digital industry sector and link with Tourism Ireland promotion	June 2014
		Investigate creation of incubation facility for Belfast companies in Silicon Valley in conjunction with University of Ulster	Oct 2014
		Explore Sister City agreement with Berkeley, California	Oct 2014
		Develop cooperative programme on connected health with Boston	Dec 2014
		Develop cooperative programme around financial services industries with New York	Sept 2014
		Explore potential inward mission from city of Seattle	Sept 2014
2.11	Europe	Identify funding opportunities and partners for	Oct 2014

2014-2020 funds

**Develop Belfast – Dublin economic corridor April 2014
concept and launch initiative**

**Reinvigorate Cities of the Isles relationship Oct 2014
connecting with core cities in UK & Ireland**

- 2.12 Members are asked to note that there is a considerable volume of work attached to international relations activity. Given the limited staff resources as noted below, priority has been given to advancing only the most productive and relevant initiatives. This means the focus of efforts over the next year will be on developing a meaningful relationship with Shenyang in China and developing trade and investment initiatives, and to a lesser extent continuing the relationship with Hefei. Similarly there will be a focus on the US Market particularly strengthening Belfast's companies' presence in Silicon Valley and on developing cooperative sectoral programmes with New York, Boston and Nashville.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 Members have agreed a budget of £80,000, in the current financial year, for international relations, as well as a £150,000 budget specifically for the Global India Business Meeting. A further budget of £150,000 has been requested within the 2014/15 budget estimates.
- 3.2 Currently International Relations work is being undertaken by staff within the European Unit. This has resulted in a significant increase in workload in the unit which is expected to continue to rise given that the new EU funding calls 2014-2020 have now begun to open.
- 3.3 Consideration has been given by Senior Management with respect to the need to provide additional staff resources to deliver the International work and allow the EU team to ramp up its EU activity to pursue funding opportunities for BCC.
- 3.4 However, given the pending election of the new Council and appointment of a new Chief Executive it is expected that the governance and structure of Council will change. It is therefore proposed at this stage to focus on priority work and continue to operate within the current structure to deliver International Relations with the offer of an honorarium to the EU Unit staff. This is currently being considered at Senior Management and HR level as an interim solution. It is anticipated that a staff resource for future delivery of International Relations in the context of the new Council structures will be determined.

4 Recommendations

4.1 To note the action plan for 2014/15; and to note that consideration is being given to offer honorariums to EU Unit staff to deliver an increased programme of activity with regards to international relations

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Economic Impact Study

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 20th November, 2012, it had agreed to commission a study into the economic impact of the Council's expenditure and to identify means by which it could maximise the local economic, social and environmental benefits provided by such spending. Accordingly, the Committee considered the contents of a report, together with the economic impact study, which had been prepared by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies in this regard.

The Director outlined the principal aspects of the report and indicated that the study had analysed employee, supplier and grant expenditure and had also incorporated a survey to determine how the local economy had benefitted through the Council's expenditure. He added that analysis of the information had identified how expenditure was distributed within the boundary and this would assist the Council to target its expenditure in a more strategic manner in light of the Review of Local Government. He indicated that the key findings of the report had established that, for every £1.00 pound of Council expenditure:

- 76 pence was spent or re-spent within the current Council boundary;
- 80 pence was spent or re-spent within the Council's post Local Government Reform boundary
- £1.02 was spent or re-spent within the Greater Belfast area; and
- £1.35 was spent or re-spent within the regional economy.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and noted further that the full contents of the Economic Impact Study were available on the Council's Mod.gov system.

Renewing the Routes

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The ongoing Renewing the Routes Programme has delivered local regeneration projects at targeted locations across the arterial routes of Belfast since 2004. The Programme has facilitated the investment of approximately £6.5 million across these key routes and neighbourhoods.**

- 1.2 The Committee agreed a four year rolling programme for the continuation of local regeneration across the target areas of the city in February 2012.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide updates in respect of:
- Progress of works under our current agreed programme in Ormeau and Newtownards Roads
 - Progress on the development of the Department of Social Development (DSD) funded local regeneration programme on Newtownards Road and on Lower Ormeau incorporating Cromac Street
 - Update on 2013/2014 programme on Oldpark Road and Andersonstown Road
 - Update on additional working using underspend monies to maximise Council's investment in Sandy Row, Castlereagh Street, Antrim Road and Grosvenor Road

2.1 Newtownards Road Update

The commercial improvement programme is the main emphasis of work on the Newtownards Road (from Bridge End to Witham Street). The Newtownards Road scheme is being delivered in two phases, the Council funded programme (£150,000) is now complete with around 37 units receiving cosmetic improvement; and the DSD funded programme (£155,000) which will target around 35 further businesses by March 2014.

2.2 Renewing the Routes Ormeau Road Update

Work is now complete on Ormeau Road (from Ormeau Embankment to Ravenhill Road Roundabout). Cosmetic upgrades to 31 commercial properties are now complete. The work to the commercial properties was supplemented by the completion of environmental improvement schemes on some of the road's prominent buildings including Ballynafeigh Orange Hall and Ballynafeigh Community Development Association.

2.3 Ongoing collaboration with DSD: Update on Cromac Street/Lower Ormeau Road and Newtownards Road

In May 2013, Committee supported a joint programme of regeneration activity in partnership with DSD's Belfast Regeneration Office (BRO), on the basis of a funding offer, to

extend our current work by implementing a commercial improvement scheme from Cromac Street to Stranmillis Embankment incorporating Lower Ormeau and add value to our current work on the Newtownards Road from Bridge End to the junction at Albertbridge Road with the support for £310,000.

- 2.4 The DSD funded programme on the Newtownards Road (£155,000) is targeting approximately 35 businesses who are currently signing up to the programme. On site work is currently underway on a number of units and it is anticipated works will be completed by March 2014. As part of the wider local regeneration activity on the road, a number of vacant sites have been identified and council is working with local stakeholders and statutory partners in developing projects to address the issues presented by the underutilised areas.
- 2.5 Similarly on Cromac Street/Lower Ormeau Road programme (from Cromac Street to Stranmillis Embankment), approximately 27 businesses are targeted as part of the commercial improvement programme. Negotiations with shop owners are currently underway with traders responding positively to the proposed commercial improvement programme. Works are due to commence early January with an anticipated completion date of March 2014. A number of small scale environmental improvement projects are being scoped to complement the proposed works to the shops.
- 2.6 2014/15 Programme Andersonstown and Oldpark Roads
- Since approval in August 2013, the team have continued to develop projects agreed in the Regeneration Action Plans for Andersonstown (Stewartstown Road) from Hillhead Crescent to Suffolk Road and on Oldpark Road from Oldpark Ave to Cliftondene Crescent.
- 2.7 Design schemes for the commercial improvement programmes on both roads are in an advanced stage and it is anticipated contact will be made with owners and tenants in January 2014.
- 2.8 Environmental improvements to vacant sites are the main emphasis of work on Stewartstown Road. Discussions to identify opportunities for joined working are ongoing with Department of Regional Development's (DRD) appointed consultants (Amey) on the implications of the enabling measures to facilitate the introduction of Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) on these sites.

2.9 2011/12 Programme Underspend

Integrated Regeneration Plans for Sandy Row, Castlereagh Street, Antrim Road and Grosvenor Road were approved by Committee in August 2011. The completion of these initiatives in the agreed Regeneration Plans was achieved within the agreed allocations with an underspend identified to allow further consideration of additional projects across all four areas which was agreed by Committee in May 2013. Work on the commercial improvement programme is currently underway on Antrim Road. Design schemes are at the final stages on Castlereagh Street, Sandy Row and Grosvenor Road with work proposed to commence in January 2014.

5 Recommendations

- To note the work in relation to the current programme on Ormeau Road (Ormeau Embankment to Ravenhill Road roundabout) and Newtownards road (Bridge End to Witham Street);
- To note the progress with the DSD funded local regeneration programme on Lower Ormeau Road incorporating Cromac Street and on Newtownards Road
- To note the progress on the 2013/2014 Renewing the Routes programme, Andersonstown Road (Hillhead Crescent to Suffolk Road) and Oldpark Road (from Oldpark Ave to Clifondene Crescent)
- To note the progress on the 2011/12 underspend projects for Sandy Row, Castlereagh Street, Antrim Road and Grosvenor Road”

Year	Area	Road	Location
2012/13	South	Ormeau Rd £150,000	Ormeau Embankment to roundabout at Ravenhill Rd
	East	Newtownards Rd £150,000	Bridge End to Witham Street
2013/14	North	Oldpark Rd £150,000	Oldpark Ave to Clifondene Crescent
	West	Andersonstown Rd £150,000	Hillhead Crescent to Suffolk Rd
2014/15	South	Lisburn Rd £150,000	Bradbury Place to Tates Avenue
	East	Castlereagh Rd £150,000	Beersbridge Rd to Grand Parade
2015/16	North	York Rd £150,000	Fife Street to York Street
	West	Shankill Rd £150,000	Peters Hill to Agnes Street

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Creative Industries - Update

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, Digital and Technology sectors in Belfast, since 2004, through the work of the Economic Development Unit including the Council’s Super Connected Cities project and Belfast Tech - the first Council led trade mission to the west coast of America.

1.2 To continue to support this high growth sector and build on the momentum created through the Belfast Tech Mission, we are now in the process of developing a series of new initiatives for 2014.

1.3 The recent Belfast Tech mission saw over 50 SMEs apply for 20 places to participate and resulted in new sales, clients and partnerships secured among local companies and venture capital organisations and businesses in San Francisco and Silicon Valley. Following the success of this mission, discussions have taken place with the participating companies, the University of Ulster, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Invest Northern Ireland and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in relation to opportunities for further development and support.

2 Key Issues

2.1 It is now recommended to Members that Belfast City Council take the lead in scoping out and implementing a number of projects which are outlined as below.

2.2 Health Hack 2014

Health Hack NI is a Weekend event that brings together clinicians, developers, designers, business people and other interested parties to work on problems or ideas that improve health. The 2014 event is due to take place on the 22 and 23 February at the Northern Ireland Science Park and will engage with clinicians (including consultants, GPs, Nursing Staff and NHS managers), technologists and entrepreneurs to produce high quality software that improves health. Clinicians will be encouraged to bring problems and ideas and technologists,

their skills. In advance of the weekend, these ideas and problems will be captured, discussed and prioritised using online collaborative tools (e.g., a Wiki). Developers may form teams in advance to address a selected problem or they may be matched with an appropriate clinician on the day. All software will be produced using freely available technologies and will be released to the clinical community on a flexible Open Source license.

- 2.3 The project will support 20 local SMEs from the developer community and will help increase engagement between NHS, industry and universities; expose the NHS to applications of modern and emerging technologies and expose industry/students to the real challenges of the NHS. It will also provide good PR for the Council and the Super-connected Belfast project; create reusable technology components for Healthcare and provide opportunities for local SMEs to access new funding through the Small Business Research Initiative with a focus on Health and well being. The total cost of the project is £6050 and is being delivered in partnership with Queen's University and Kainos Software. The finance requested from Council is £4450.

2.4 **Belfast Technology Conference 2014**

The inaugural Belfast Technology Conference event is due to take place on the 2–4 April 2014 at the Europa Hotel/NYSE Offices and aims to be the premier high tech event of 2014. The event is being organised by Aisling Events Ltd.

- 2.5 The aim of the conference is to inform technology professionals and businesses of the emerging technologies and approaches that will allow them to innovate and compete effectively at a global level. It will also educate and inspire kids/parents/teachers about the potential of a career in Technology, thereby building the NI digital skill base and reinforcing Belfast's global lead in this area.
- 2.6 Overall, it will showcase the best NI talent and achievements and will illustrate how Belfast is the perfect location to create and grow digital businesses. The conference will bring together tech and business leaders as well as politicians from Belfast, USA and Europe including Julie Hanna, IdeaLab/Socialtext, San Francisco; Mike Bracken, Executive Director of Digital, UK Government, and Sheree Atcheson, Founder Women Who Code, Belfast.

- 2.7 “BelTech 2014” will run over 3 days in key Belfast locations and will feature a series of half day Masterclasses and conference keynotes and panels for local tech/digital businesses covering topics such as Big Data and Analytics, Agile Project Delivery, Emerging Technologies and Starting a Tech Business.
- 2.8 Outside of the core conference, an exhibition will be held on days 2 and 3 allowing attendees to get a more detailed understanding of the people, products and innovations covered in the conference and a chance for Belfast based tech entrepreneurs to showcase their products and services. BelTech will also provide an opportunity for secondary school children, their parents and teachers to participate in a mix of engaging technology demos and conversational sessions as above.
- 2.9 The aims of the conference for local SMEs and for Belfast City Council are as follows:
- Gain an awareness of emerging technologies and practices that will improve their effectiveness and career development.
 - Interact with highly successful tech/business leaders and role models
 - Build their personal network and enhance career prospects
 - Contribute to building a vibrant Technology community and culture in Belfast and NI.
 - Building on success of Belfast Goes to Silicon Valley in Oct 2013
 - Enhanced profile for Council as a supporter of Digital skills and opportunities
 - Contribute to building a vibrant Tech culture in Belfast
 - Contribute to the delivery of the NI Innovation Strategy
 - Exemplar event that can be referenced during FDI investment discussions
- 2.10 The total cost of the project is £66,000 and other project partners include Invest Northern Ireland, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, University of Ulster and private sector companies. The finance requested from Council is sponsorship of £15,000 towards the cost of the event.
- 2.11 South by Southwest (SXSW) 2014

For the past four years, the Council has been part of a delegation that has attended South by Southwest in Austin,

Texas with a specific focus on promoting the City's music industry and promoting Belfast as a key investment location.

- 2.12 **SXSW** has seen a significant growth in the digital/tech and film elements of the conference and as such is now seen as key business development initiative for companies in the priority sectors of Film, Television, Digital Media, Music and Design. It involves a conference and exhibition as well as a series of pre-arranged meetings, seminars, networking events and creative showcases. The 2014 event will be held from 7-16 March.
- 2.13 **South by Southwest (SXSW)** is the premier global event focusing on the creative industries through conference keynotes, City/Regional networking events and conference and exhibition. By day, the 10,000+ conference registrants do business in the SXSW Trade Show in the Austin Convention Centre and partake of a full agenda of informative, provocative panel discussions featuring hundreds of speakers of international stature. SXSW remains the key US showcasing, deal striking, networking and media forum for the international media industry and attendance at the event remains a key priority for all of those interested in the business of media and creativity.
- 2.14 For the 2014 event, Invest Northern Ireland have agreed to support 50% of the costs for local businesses to attend with 20 of these predicted to be from Belfast. In addition, through the new music support programme run by Generator NI, 4 bands/artists will be supported to participate. To build on the success of the Belfast Tech Mission and Belfast Music Week, it is recommended that Belfast City Council support a networking/demo showcase event and contribution to the exhibition in partnership with UK Trade and Investment.
- 2.15 The networking event will take place in Latitude 30, the UK Trade and Investment official venue for the duration of SXSW. The 'Creative Belfast' event will provide the opportunity for participants to showcase their digital content, film and music products to an invited audience of international businesses and provide a 'City' specific platform to showcase selected artists performing at the event.
- 2.16 The 'Creative Belfast' event will be the main showcase and networking event for the delegation as part of the conference and local businesses will use the venue and the event as their main meeting and showcase space. The event will also be used as an opportunity to promote Belfast as a whole,

specifically under the themes of tourism, creative industries and foreign direct investment, with additional support from Tourism Ireland.

The event will target key individuals who can help support the growth of participating businesses by developing new partnerships, providing access to capital or creating new networks and distribution channels.

The total cost per delegate for travel, accommodation and conference registration is up to a maximum of £2000. The total amount of finance requested from Council is £20,000, with £3k secured from Tourism Ireland.

3.1 Financial Implications

Members are asked to approve up to £39,450 towards a number of key support initiatives for the creative industries in the coming year, namely Health Hack 2014, Belfast Technology Conference 2014 and SXSW 2014.

4. Recommendation

- To approve the proposed activities and associated budgets and to approve the attendance of Chair and Deputy Chair of Committee (or nominees) along with two officers”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

World Trade Centre - Licence

The Director reminded the Committee that the Council held a licence to operate a branch of the World Trade Centre in Belfast. He explained that the licence gave the Council the right to use the World Trade Centre brand and enabled it to develop and deliver a series of activities under its auspices. He provided an outline of the range of initiatives which had been delivered in this regard.

The Director pointed out that, whilst the holding of a licence to operate a World Trade Centre did not require the establishment of an operational centre, the proposed extension to the Waterfront Hall to incorporate new conference facilities, together with exhibition space, could present the Council with an opportunity to utilise the World Trade Centre licence and brand. He therefore recommended that the Committee agreed to retain ownership of the licence until that option had been explored fully and authorise the payment of \$10,000 (approximately £6,200) to renew the annual licence fee.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

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Development Committee
Tuesday, 14th January, 2014

Community Festivals Fund

The Committee noted the contents of a report in respect of the Council's Community Festivals Fund for 2014/2015 and agreed, subject to final confirmation of the actual figure by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, to accept an offer of match funding in the sum of approximately £72,000 to assist the Council to administer the scheme in 2014/2015.

Chairman