

Document Pack



**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

13th March, 2014

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman / Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Tuesday, 18th March, 2014 at 4.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. **Routine Matters**
 - (a) Minutes
 - (b) Declarations of Interest
 - (c) Apologies
2. **Presentation - Giro D'Italia** (Pages 3 - 10)
3. **Presentation - Visit Belfast** (Pages 11 - 32)
4. **Belfast's Economy**
 - (a) Departmental Plan (Pages 33 - 52)
 - (b) Lagan Trust (Pages 53 - 68)
 - (c) Ulster Scots Hub - Request for Nominee (Pages 69 - 70)
 - (d) Update on Lord Mayor's Forum (Pages 71 - 74)

- (e) Retail Evaluation (Pages 75 - 86)
- (f) Festivals Forum (Pages 87 - 90)
- (g) European Social Fund Match Funding Requests (Pages 91 - 98)
- (h) Belfast Business Awards - Request for Sponsorship (Pages 99 - 100)
- (i) Spring Continental Market (Pages 101 - 102)
- (j) Visteon Site Feasibility Study (Pages 103 - 106)
- (k) Consultation Response - Economic Activity (Pages 107 - 126)
- (l) Consultation Response - Apprenticeships (Pages 127 - 142)

5. **Marketing Belfast**

- (a) Eurocities Engagement Approval (Pages 143 - 156)
- (b) Assembly EU Inquiry (Pages 157 - 160)
- (c) Halifax Inward Visit (Pages 161 - 162)
- (d) New York Business Mission (Pages 163 - 164)
- (e) Shenyang Inward Visit (Pages 165 - 168)
- (f) Social Sofas Public Art Proposal (Pages 169 - 174)



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Giro d'Italia 2014 Update
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director Of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager ext 3412

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on Belfast's plans for the 2014 Giro d'Italia.

2	Key Issues
2.1	In October 2012 Council agreed to host the start of the 2014 Giro d'Italia (8-11 May 2014). The total estimated cost of the event is £3.8 million with Belfast City Council (BCC) contributing £400,000 and value in kind input from the Department's City Events Unit. Members are reminded that this event is the world's second biggest international cycle race next to the Tour de France, with 200 of the world's best cyclists taking part in the race.
2.2	The following targets have been set by NITB (lead government agency for the Giro): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieve a global television audience of 775 million - Generate £10 million of positive media coverage for the event - Have 140,000 people attend the event - Generate £2.5 million economic activity
2.3	The two race days for Belfast will be on Friday 9 May and Saturday 10 May. On both days the start will be at Titanic Belfast, while the finish will be at City Hall. The routes have been confirmed by the Giro and are contained in Appendix 1. As stated in a Committee update to Members (August 2013) the final selection of all the routes was made by RCS Media Group and their Irish based agents Shadetree Sports. The third day of the event (Sunday 11 May) will see the start move to Armagh, with the race finishing in Dublin.
2.4	The key roles of the Council are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host the Giro headquarters and press centre. This will take place at the Belfast Waterfront and is part of the Council's financial £400,000 input to the event. - Host the Giro Team Presentation (this will take place in the grounds of City Hall on the 8 May, between 6.30pm and 9pm) and be broadcast live to a global audience. - Assist in the delivery of the finish area outside City Hall on Donegall Square North

	and input to the set-up for the start area at Titanic Quarter.
2.5	In addition to the race there will be a weeklong festival leading up to the 2014 Giro. This will be run in conjunction with NITB as the lead local partner. The Council will operate a 'Giro Festival Belfast – get on yer Bike!' from the 3 to 11 May. The key focus of the week, outside the actual race days, will be the creation of event hubs at Writers' Square and Cathedral Gardens. These will contain a variety of activities including cycling 'come try it' events; family entertainment; craft workshops and Italian themed food. The festival will also include Giro themed promotions from restaurants and retailers.
2.6	There will also be events created through a variety of bike networks across the city. These will be managed by the Council's Cycling Development Officer, Cycling Touring Club and Sustrans. These outreach initiatives will engage groups and schools across the city. The purpose of these projects will be to engage groups and individuals through cycling as a method to keep fit and as an alternative form of transport for commuting to school and work.
2.7	Given the nature of the event there will be notable traffic disruption across the city from the 8 - 10 May. Details are contained in Appendix 2.
2.8	Working with colleagues in BCC Corporate Communications; NITB; PSNI; Roads Service and Translink an extensive communication plan to explain how people can engage with the event has been created. In addition these structures will highlight the traffic impact of the Giro and the benefits of staging the event in the city.
2.9	The Council will also arrange information briefings on the event. Some of these have taken place and future ones are planned to be staged on Tuesday 18 March; Monday 7 April and Thursday 10 April at City Hall (6pm-7pm). These sessions will be further complemented with use of the Council's extensive networks and databases to inform people of the event and possible disruption. Internally a number of briefings for operational aspects of the Council have also been arranged. This will allow Departments within the Council to engage with their customers and amend/adjust services in any areas directly or indirectly affected by the Giro.
2.10	Members are requested to note that tickets will be issued to Councillors for the Team Presentation event on the 8 May. This will take place in the grounds of City Hall, between 6.30 and 9 pm.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The overall cost of the 2014 Giro is £3.8 million, of which the Council is contributing £400,000. The vast majority of the costs are being met by NITB/DETI as the lead agency on this project.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no relevant equality and good relations implications. However, the project has the potential to bring together people from a wide range of backgrounds and therefore promote good relations in the city.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

6	Decision Tracking
A post-event report will be brought to Council before the end of March 2015.	
Timeline: March 2015	Reporting Officer: Gerry Copeland

7	Abbreviations
NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board PSNI – Police Service of Northern Ireland DETI – Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 – Giro Race Routes Appendix 2 – Details of road closures	

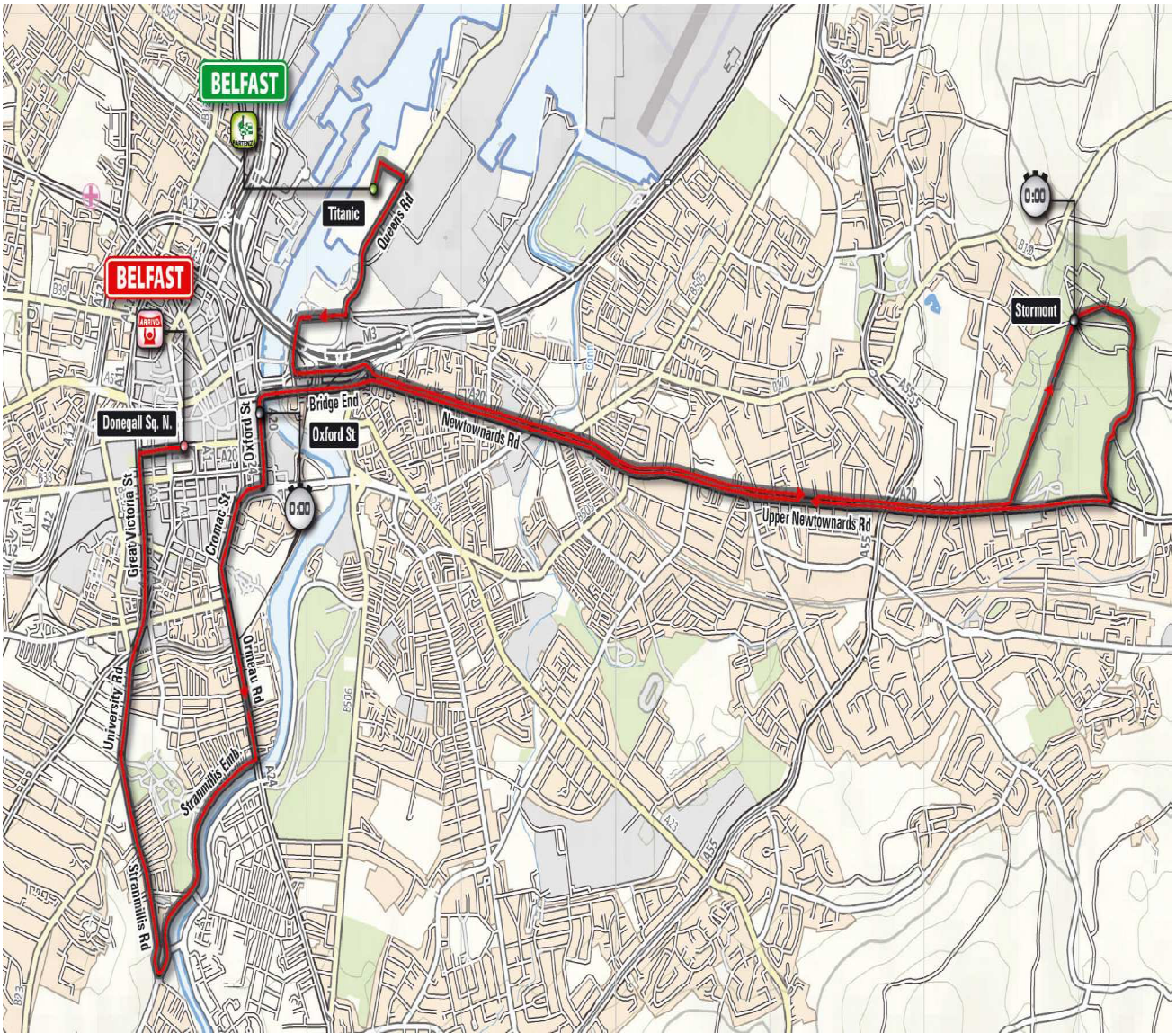
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**Appendix 1
Race Routes**

Team Time Trial Route, Friday 9 May

Roads fully closed for practice between 9.30am-12 noon.

Roads will reopen from 12noon to 3.30pm and close again from 3.30pm to 8pm for the Team Time Trial.



Road Race – Day 1, Saturday 10 May

Belfast to Belfast Route

Roads fully closed from 9.30am- 11am between Titanic Quarter and Upper Antrim Road.
 All Belfast roads reopen from 11am-3pm. Roads fully closed again from 3pm- 8pm from Whiteabbey, Shore Road, Upper Queen Street and Millfield through to City Hall.



Appendix 2 Traffic Disruption

Dates & Timings	Location	Arrangements
From 9pm, Thursday 8 May through to 8pm, Saturday 10 May	The junction of Donegall Square North/Donagall Sq West and Wellington Place to allow for the finish area to be built and outside broadcast arrangements to be put in place	Roads closed at this junction throughout this location. Public transport, taxis and other traffic will be diverted away from this area. No issues for pedestrian access
Friday 9 May, 9.30am to 12noon	Team Time Trial Route Practice Run (see Appendix 1) This route will be closed to all traffic inclusive of the above area outside City Hall	Roads Closed on Team Time Trial Route. All riders will complete the full route as a practice run. No vehicle movement or parking along this route
Friday 9 May, 12noon to 3.30pm	Team Time Trial Route re-opened	Roads re-open on Team Time Trial Route Managed traffic flows along this route with parking restrictions in place
Friday 9 May, 3.30pm to 8pm	Team Time Trial Race Route (see Appendix 1)	Roads Closed on Team Time Trial Route. Full competitive team pursuit event starts. Twenty two teams with nine riders will leave Titanic Quarter and cover the route in approximately 24 minutes. Each team member will leave in two minute intervals
Friday 9 May, Post- 8pm	Team Time Trial Route	Route full re-Opens with the exception of the junction of Donegall Square North/Donagall Sq West and Wellington Place
Saturday 10 May, 9.30am to 11am	Belfast to Belfast Race Route starting at Titanic Quarter (see Appendix 1)	Roads Closed from Titanic Quarter start area to the Upper Antrim Road. No traffic movement or car parking on this route
Saturday 10 May, 11am to 3pm	All Belfast roads re-open as the race heads to the Giants Causeway	Belfast roads re-open with the exception of Donegall Sq North Restrictions on car parking on certain roads will be kept in force.
Saturday 10 May, 3pm to 6pm	Return of riders via Shore Road, North Queen Street, Millfield into City Hall finish area (see Appendix 1)	Belfast roads closed for return route of the riders into City Hall finish area.
Saturday 10 May, 6pm to 8pm	Donegall Square North closed to traffic	All Belfast roads re-open with exception of Donegall Square North which not reopen until after 8 pm on Saturday 10 May

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Visit Belfast - Draft Business Plan
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Brian Johnston, Tourism, Culture, Heritage & Arts Manager, ext 3586

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members are aware that Visit Belfast (formally Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau) submit their Business Plan annually to Development Committee for approval. The plan covers the leisure marketing and business tourism activity undertaken by Visit Belfast, visitor servicing carried out by Belfast Welcome Centre in the city centre and at the two airports. This occurs to ensure that budgets and activity are in place by April to allow Visit Belfast to deliver activity in the new financial year.
1.2	Visit Belfast's draft plan for 2014/15 is attached as Appendix 1. The draft Visit Belfast Business Plan is a one year operational marketing and visitor servicing plan. This is set against the context of a strategic review of Tourism within the City being led by Belfast City Council in partnership with the NITB. This review has commenced and is due for completion early in May. The review will examine all aspects of tourism activity and will heavily influence future activity undertaken by a number of key delivery agents within the City including Visit Belfast.
1.3	The plan outlines key performance during 2013/14 on pages 4 – 5. Some specific examples of success to date include securing 60 cruise ships for 2014, generating £5.7m spend by leisure visitors through activity in the GB marketplace, securing conferences worth £37.7 million for the city and dealing with 534,515 enquiries via the 3 TICs. Areas under-performing include advertising equivalent from PR due to the lag time between press visits and coverage (therefore likely to reach targets by year end); and value of accommodation booking fees from conferences - delegates tend to negotiate better rates directly with hotels as there is no commission. Overall however Visit Belfast's performance has remained on target for 2013/14 period.

1.4	The plan proposes targets and KPI's for 2014/15 on page 11. Key initiatives for 2014/15 include enhanced digital activity and adding value and focus on periods of low occupancy and the off season. In summary, through implementing this Business Plan, Visit Belfast will aim to generate £64.3 million spend in the local economy.
1.5	The overall budget is £3.56 million of which £1,827,465 is requested from Council.
1.6	The 2014/15 Business Plan has been developed with input from Council officers. It is envisaged that there will be some degree of flexibility within the Visit Belfast Business plan to adopt some of the findings within the Tourism Strategy in the 2014-15 financial year.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The Tourism Strategy which is due for completion early in May will provide a long term vision, strategy and associated action plans for the future of tourism in Belfast. This strategy will look at all aspects of tourism activity including delivery mechanisms to ensure value for money and the delivery of best practise.
2.2	In the incoming 2014/15 year the principles of the new strategy will start to be embedded by partners across the City both public and private sector. Officers have discussed with Visit Belfast the need for some flexibility in terms of adopting some of these concepts in the incoming year.
2.3	Part of the tourism strategy will look in-depth at monitoring and research, looking to European best practise models to provide accurate data in a timelier manner. This is fundamental in the long term business planning of tourism in the City.
2.4	NITB remain a key partner in the development of the new Tourism Strategy. The steering group for the strategy however also includes DETI, Visit Belfast and Tourism Ireland as well as senior staff in NITB and BCC.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	BVCB is requesting £1,827,465 towards 2014/15 plan. This has been included in departmental estimates.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Committee agree support towards Visit Belfast in 2014/15 and Officers will

	monitor progress against targets on a quarterly basis.
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6	Decision Tracking
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There is no Decision Tracking attached to this report.	
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7	Key to Abbreviations
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BVCB - Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau NITB - Northern Ireland Tourist Board TI - Tourism Ireland Limited TIC - Tourism Information Centre	
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8	Documents Attached
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Appendix 1 – Draft Business Plan Appendix 2 – Visit Belfast Presentation	
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Visit Belfast

Business Plan 2014-15

Visit Belfast Targets

- 350,000 trips
- £64.3m contribution to tourism economy
- RoI 1:19
- BCC leverage 1:0.94

Visit Belfast's purpose

“To create and service visitors in order to generate economic benefit for the city region”

- Visitor numbers
- Visitor spend

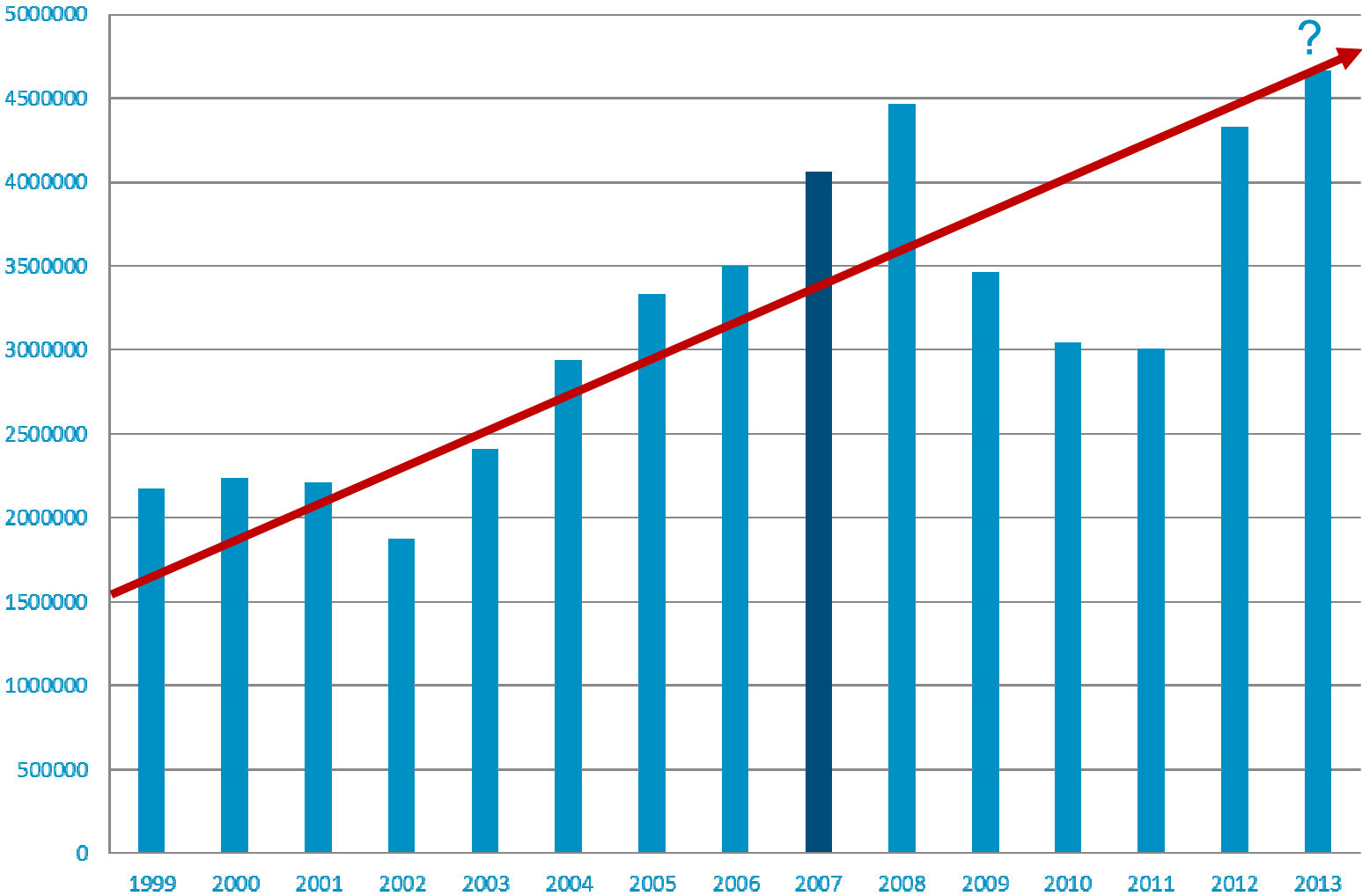
By 2020*

- 4.5m visitors & £1bn tourism spend to NI

Visit Belfast's mission

- £500m+ tourism spend
- Top 100 World Association Conference City (ICCA)
- Top 5 UK Conference City
- Top 15 European Tourism City (ECM)
- No. 2 Cruise Port in Ireland

Performance Review



Visit Belfast Performance

- £61m contribution to tourism economy
- RoI = 1:17
- Best UK Conference & Incentive City Destination
- Marketing Team of the Year (M&IT Awards)
- Conference growth  131%
- Top 6 UK cruise port in 2013
- Best use of Social Media (Digital Tourism Think Tank)
- 534,500 enquiries handled
- 70,000 bed-nights from co-op campaigns
- Membership  16% with member satisfaction good

Opportunities for Growth

- 70% increase in air capacity through Dublin
- Republic of Ireland: key leisure market (day trips / overnight)
- GB: returning to growth
- Belfast Waterfront extension
- Big Start Giro d'Italia: opportunity to engage & influence 140,000 visitors

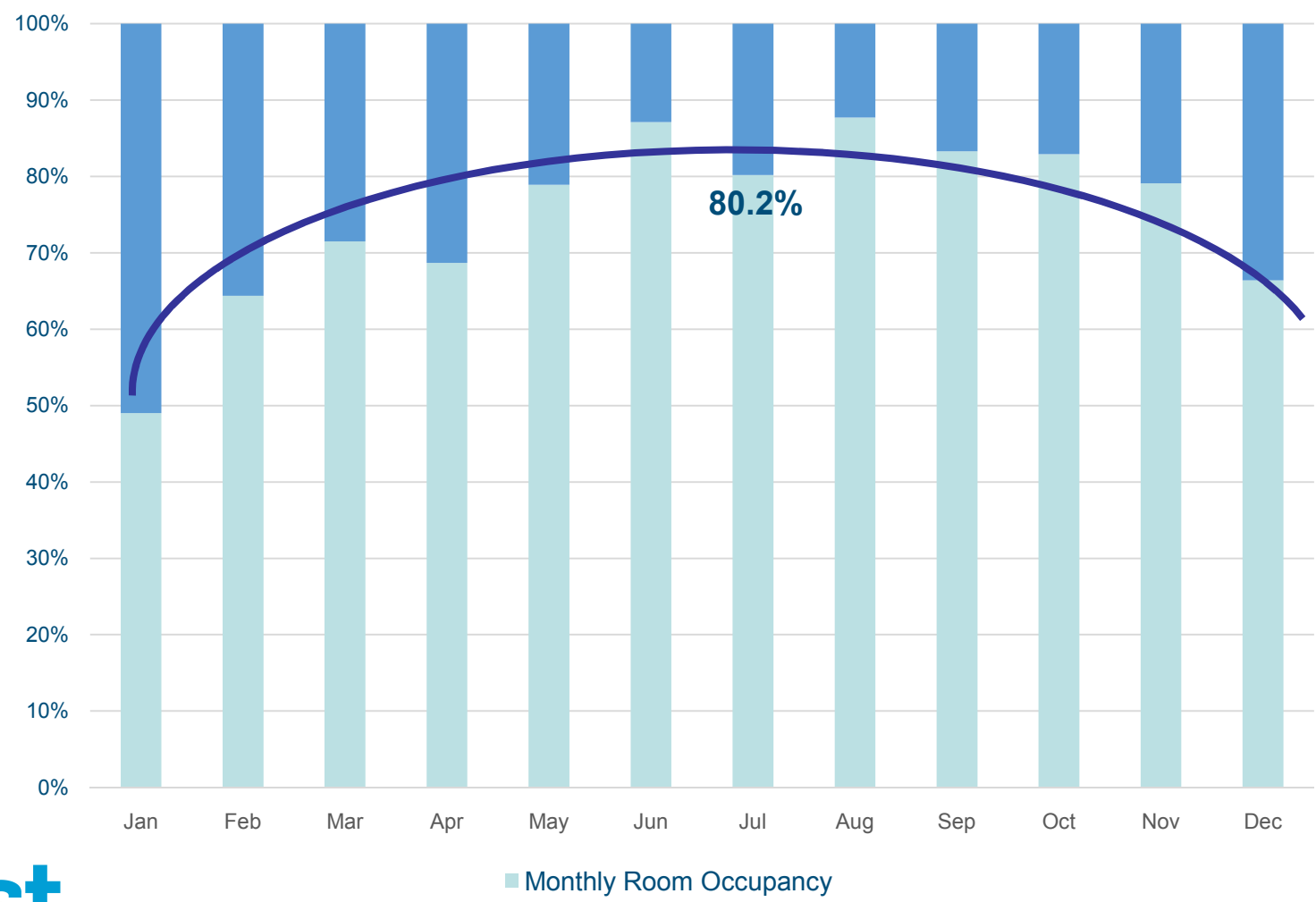
Strategic Priorities

- Visitor focussed: 9 key segments
- Targetting periods of low occupancy & footfall
- Digital: visitor engagement & content management
- Airport TICs: new digital operating model
- Industry at the heart of Visit Belfast activity
- Aligning resources to 2014 priorities

Priority Sectors / Segments

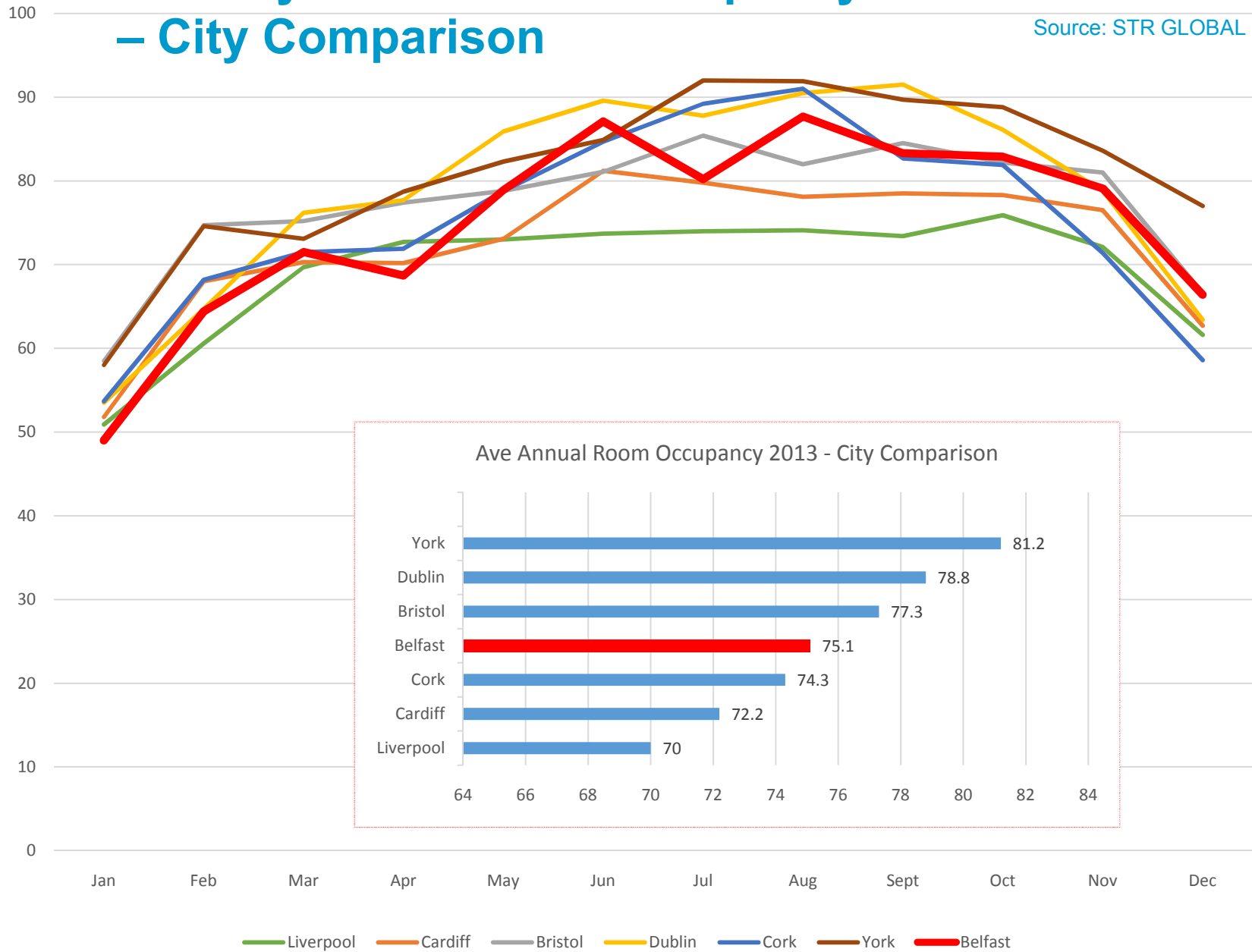
	NI	ROI	GB	Europe	USA	Canada	Rest of World
Social Energisers	✓	✓	✓				
Culturally Curious	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Family	✓	✓	✓				
Cruise			✓	✓	✓		
Tour Groups		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Association Conferences & business events			✓	✓	✓		
Corporate Conferences & business events		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Events Marketing	✓	✓					
Retail	✓	✓					

Focus on periods of Low Occupancy

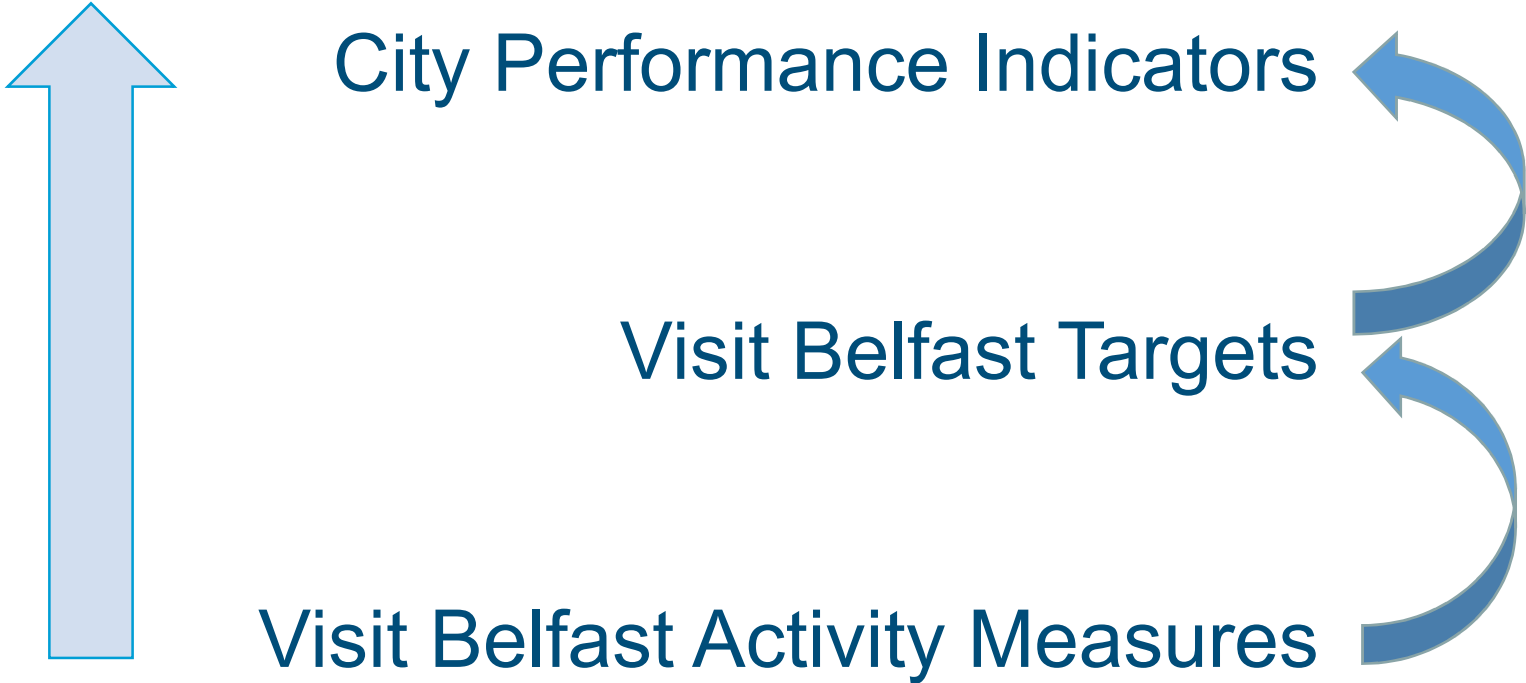


Monthly Hotel Room Occupancy – City Comparison

Source: STR GLOBAL



Performance Indicators



Targets: City Performance

Indicators

- 4% increase in visitor trips
- 8% increase in visitor spend

	2013 estimate	2014 target
No of trips	7,787,189	7,983,036
Overnight	2,423,197	2,501,036
Day	5,363,992	5,482,000
No of Bed-nights	5,331,033	5,502,279
Tourism Spend (all)	£435m	£470m
Hotel Room Demand	992,089	1,031,773
Hotel Room Occupancy	75.1%	78.1%

Visit Belfast Targets

visit-belfast.com

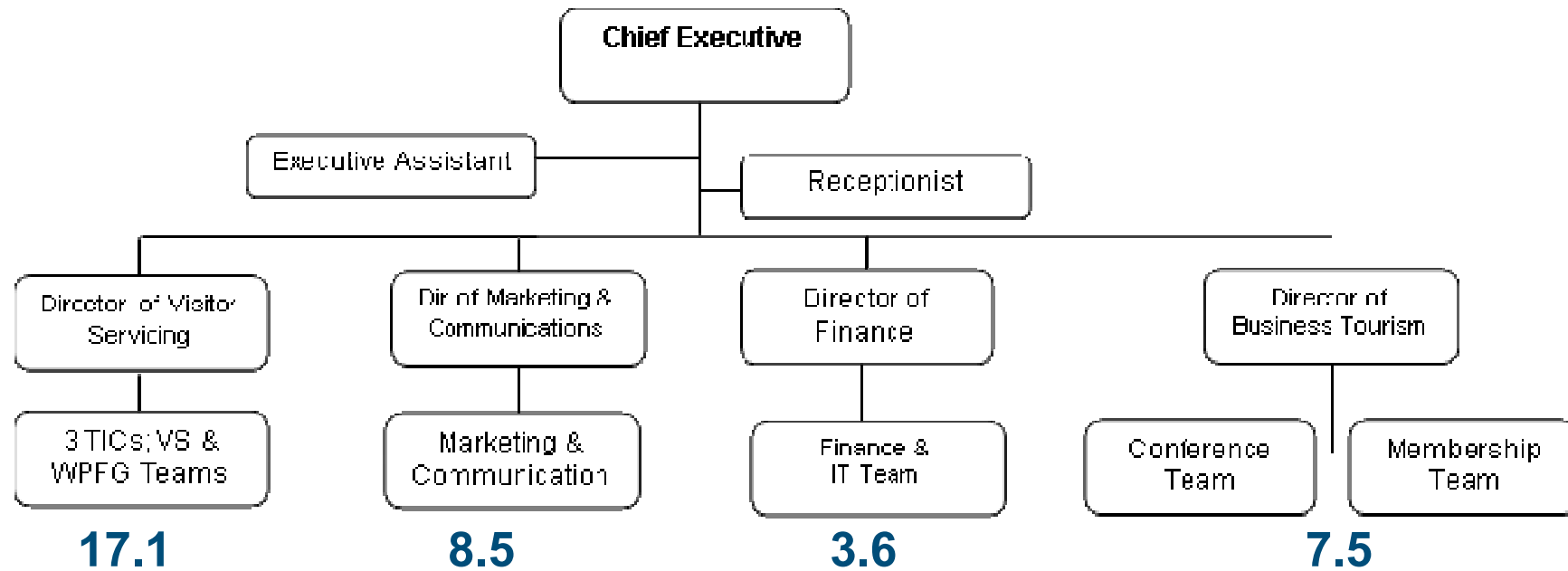
	2014/15 outputs
GB Campaign bed-nights	72,800
Conference bed-nights	77,500
ROI trips (inc. day)	67,500
Cruise Ship Visits	65
Cruise pax & crew	124,500
Enquiries handled	562,312
Visit Belfast contribution to Belfast tourism economy	£64.3m

Activity Measures

visit-belfast.com

	2014/15 target
Number of visits to websites	1.3m
Increased participation on Visit Belfast's social media channels	160,000 followers
Increase consumer email marketing database	15,000 new subscribers
Advertising equivalence from PR & Communications activity	£1.5m
Number of travel leads secured	280
Value of corporate sponsorship	£99,160
Value of partner income from leisure tourism campaigns and exhibitions	£377,665
Value of publications income from visitor guides (av. ABC rating per edition)	£72,000 (57,000)
GB Campaigns - Increase in incoming carrier bookings	5%
Island of Ireland campaigns - Return on Investment	12:1*
Combined reach / OTS	80% of adult population / 40 million
Business Tourism Bids / proposals	100 bids / £80m
Conference Lead generation	150 leads / £140m
Site visits and FAM trips	35 site inspections / 30 FAM trip buyers
Sales calls	175 sales calls
Ambassadors recruited	100
Membership fee & initiatives income	£175,000
Membership retention	90%
Member satisfaction	85%
Number of visitors for TIC network	381,312
Gross profit margin and value of other income for TIC network	£346,775
Annual satisfaction index for TIC network	80 – 85%

Visit Belfast Organisational Structure



52 to 43

Income / Expenditure

Income	Projected 2013/14 £	Budget 2014/15 £		Expenditure	Projected 2013/14 £	Budget 2014/15 £	
Reserves brought forward	143,785	36,146		Marketing & Sales	2,280,619	2,154,925	60.5%
BCC	2,014,465	1,859,465	65.8%	Visitor Servicing	1,040,229	1,025,567	28.8%
Other LAs	55,000	75,000		Overheads / Admin	371,851	383,483	10.8%
NITB	358,251	324,083		TOTAL	3,692,699	3,563,975	
Conference Subvention	65,000	65,000					
Business Ambassador Programme	11,861	44,444					
Commercial Income	1,080,483	1,195,370	32.2%	<i>Surplus</i>	36,146	35,533	
TOTAL INCOME	3,728,845	3,599,508					

Conclusions

Focus: visitor numbers – key markets/segments
visitor spend – low occupancy & footfall

- +4% visitors / +8% visitor spend
- 350,000 bed-nights
- £64.3m contribution to tourism economy
- RoI 1:19
- 33% income from commercial activity



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Draft Development Department Business Plan 2014-2015
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Claire Patterson, Business Research & Development Manager, ext 3379

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present Members with the proposed 2014/15 departmental plan for approval by Committee.
1.2	Members will be aware that departmental estimates were considered on 24 January 2014 by Strategic Policy & Resources Committee alongside key actions for 2014/15 for each department. These were subsequently agreed by Council in February.
1.3	Since then, Chief Officers have been finalising their departmental plans based on the approved estimates and actions. This report presents the final draft of the Development Department's plan at Appendix 1.
1.4	The plan, once approved by Committee, will also provide the Chief Officer with the delegated authority to deliver the key actions contained within it, subject to regular monitoring and reporting to Committee.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The contents of the plan reflects the key priorities of the organisation, including local government reform, the investment programme (including leisure transformation) and the efficiency agenda.
2.2	The departmental plan provides a mechanism to enable committee and senior managers to performance manage the key work of the department in line with the Corporate Plan and demonstrate the department's significant contribution to the achievement of the corporate strategic objectives.
2.3	The Chief Officers will provide regular updates (twice yearly) to Committee on the progress of their plans and key work as part of the performance management framework previously agreed by Members.

2.4	Members should note that, whilst performance targets have been included for all performance indicators, a number are marked as iterative as it is not possible to set meaningful targets for some indicators until the current year's performance targets have been recorded. These targets are marked in the body of the report and will be reviewed after the year end figures are available. Please note, however, that any changes to the targets will be brought to Committee for approval.
2.5	Committee is asked to note that a large number of the actions contained within the departmental plan are Local Government Reform (LGR) related. This includes preparing the Department for service convergence as a result of the extended geographic boundary as well as taking a lead role in preparing the organisation for the transfer of a number of functions from central government, namely the transfer of planning and regeneration. Whilst these actions will be undertaken by the Development Department, Members are asked to note that from June, following the commencement of the Shadow Council period, these actions will form part of the Shadow Council's corporate plan. Updates on these actions will still be taken through this Committee after the commencement of the Shadow Council.
2.6	The Department also has a major role to play in the delivery of the Investment Programme (IP) and this is clearly reflected in the Departmental Plan. This will be a challenging year for the Department and it is important to note that while significant investment is underway in the IP and LGR, this is matched by the ongoing delivery of services along with efforts to continuously improve services.
2.7	<p>The appended plan sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Key departmental actions in 2014/15. – An indication of which actions directly contribute to the Investment Programme. – An indication of which actions are necessary to deliver local government reform. – Financial information relating to the estimates for 2014/15.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>A spending limit of £19,144,021 was agreed at Committee on 14 January 2014. This is included in section 5 of the draft departmental plan.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	None. Specific projects within the plan will be subject to equality and good relations considerations as appropriate.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to note and agree the draft departmental plan attached at appendix 1.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline: October/ November	Reporting Officer: John McGrillen

7	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - The Development Department's Business Plan 2014-15.	

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Departmental Plan 2014/15
**Development
Department**



Internal document



www.belfastcity.gov.uk/development

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1. Background

The Corporate Plan embodies what the council intends to achieve from 2012-15. It is ambitious yet realistic and demonstrates how Members' are committed to improving quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in and visits Belfast. It is based upon an assessment of need in the city, the views of residents on what the council's priorities should be and a commitment to strong political and executive leadership at both a city wide and neighbourhood level.

While the Corporate Plan focuses on issues which cut across Council departments, it also reflects the importance of the quality of the vital services that we provide daily.

The corporate plan is illustrated in figure 1 below, showing our key priorities for the city over the next 3 years are:

- Leadership
- Environment
- Economy
- People & Communities
- Improving our Services
- An Organisation fit to Lead and Serve

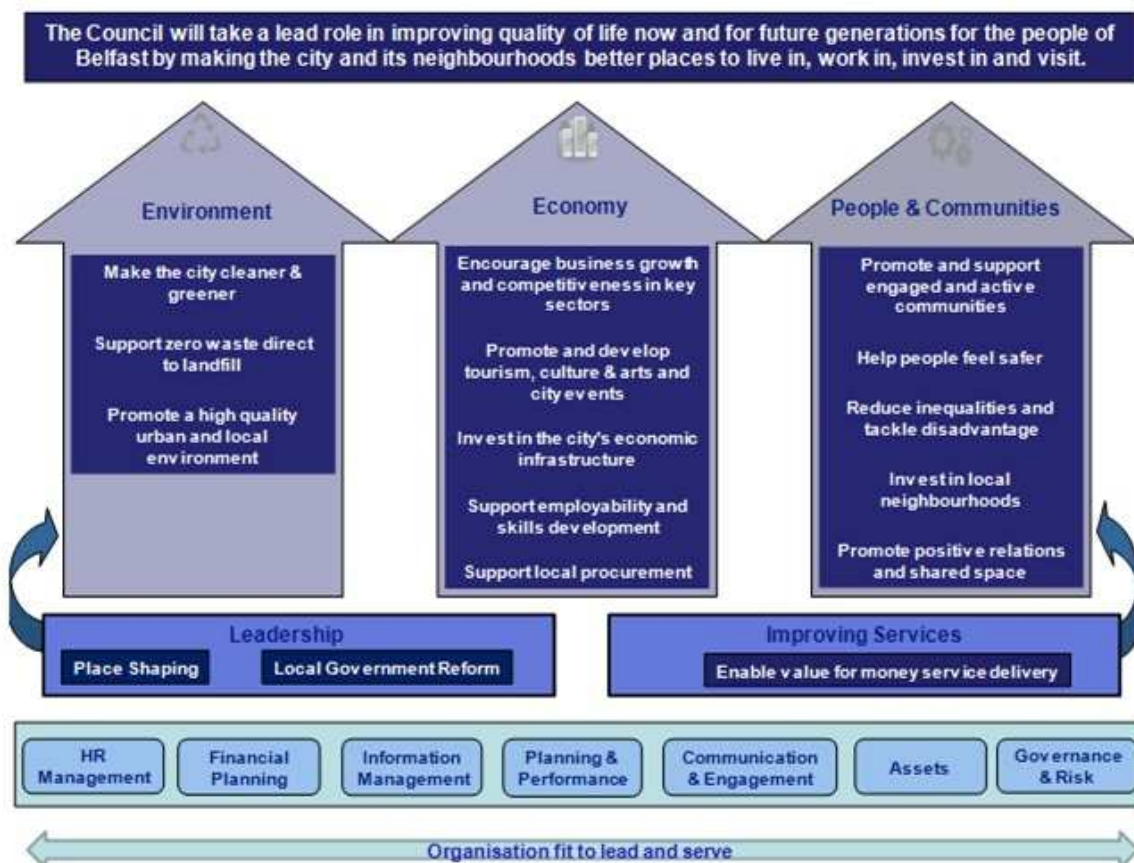


Figure 1: Corporate Value Creation Map

Development Department plan

This Departmental Plan describes how the Development Department's actions and targets for 2013/14 complement the Corporate Plan. This Plan sets the strategic

direction for the department and will ensure focused and effective management of the department by the Committees and senior managers. It provides explicit links between core departmental activity and corporate strategy.

Preparations are well underway for the reform of local government, which will take place by April 2015 and there is already a significant programme of work being undertaken by all departments to prepare the organisation for the changes ahead. The Development Departmental Plan includes preparations for this work but there may be further actions which will need to be considered. Any additional actions will be incorporated into the Departmental Plan and updates will be provided to Committee accordingly.

Under the council's Scheme of Delegation, the Director of the Development Department has been given the delegated authority to undertake the activities as outlined in section 4. Progress update reports will be submitted to the Development Committee twice yearly.

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2. Values and purpose

Our corporate values are integral to the way in which the Council works. These values underpin everything that our councillors and employees do and the way the Council will deliver our objectives.

- Focus on the needs of customers, foster a 'can-do' attitude and be problem solvers - providing first class services which are responsive to citizens needs and continuing to ensure that the council is a place where things happen
- Provide value for money and improve services - delivering high quality, value for money services at all times and continually improving our services
- Work together - working with our partners across Belfast to ensure that our combined efforts contribute to the continued success of our city
- Respect each other, be fair, promote equality and good relations – improving access to our services; valuing diversity, ensuring that everyone shares in the city's success and tackling discrimination in all its forms by treating all communities and people equally
- Act sustainably - using our resources effectively and efficiently and promoting the principle of sustainability in all our activities
- Ensure the highest standards of health and safety - maintaining the highest possible standards of health and safety at all times to ensure the Council protect our employees and all those who use our services
- Value our employees - continuing to support our employees to help them fulfil their potential

Departmental structure and resource

The Development Department is one of 6 departments which make up the officer structure of the council. The various departments are shown in Figure 3 below and Figure 4 sets out the Department's service structure.

Figure 2: Council Departments

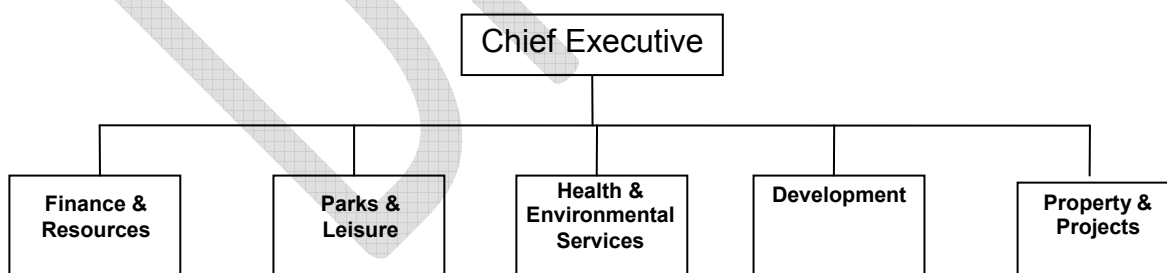


Figure 3: Development Department



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3. Key actions for 2014/15

The Department's key actions have been defined against the background of the value creation map. Each key task has a relationship with one or more of the themes described in the departmental VCM. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the main outcomes expected are included at section 5. More comprehensive details of tasks, performance indicators and targets which contribute to the outcomes sought are contained in supporting Service Plans.

* Indicates whether the action is part of the Local Government Reform (LGR) programme or the Investment Programme (IP)

	2014-15 Action	LGR or IP?*
	City Leadership	
1	Belfast Masterplan support implementation of associated projects.	IP
2	Support the implementation of the Local Investment Fund and Belfast Investment Fund .	IP
3	Support the strategic development of major regeneration schemes such as the University of Ulster North City Campus and the relocation of the BBC in the city centre.	IP
4	Develop and implement an integrated city marketing strategy, which includes an agreed city narrative, refreshed city brand and recommends the optimum structures for co-ordinated marketing of the city .	IP
5	Implement the framework for developing International Relations .	IP
6	Maximise EU funding from 2015-20 for agreed priority projects.	IP
7	Lead the NI EU Regional Forum and manage the grant scheme on behalf of OFMDFM.	IP
8	Implement the Integrated Economic Strategy and associated action plan.	LGR
	Local Government Reform (LGR) Regeneration and Community Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and oversee the implementation of a transition and resource plan for the transfer of urban regeneration and community development powers from central government to BCC Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and oversee the implementation of a transition and resource plan for the transfer spatial planning functions from central government to BCC 	LGR
9	Facilitate and lead the work originating from the engagement with the Anchor Institutions in the context of community planning.	
10	Co-ordinate responses for the Department and Council on strategic planning/ transportation policies or issues.	

	2014-15 Action	LGR or IP?*
11	Co-ordinate responses to physical regeneration plans.	
	Environment	
12	In line with the themes in the Masterplan, develop options for a ' Smart City ' strategy.	
13	Deliver the investment proposition for the Renewable and Low Carbon Technology sectors (Green Business Park).	IP
14	Implement the Belfast public bike hire scheme.	IP
15	Support, develop and implement actions identified in the review of the BCC Transport Policy .	
	Economy	
16	Manage the development and funding of increased convention centre and exhibition centre space at the Waterfront Hall .	IP
17	Lead on the delivery of an innovation centre .	IP
18	Lead on the delivery of a creative/digital hub programme.	IP
19	Super-connected Broadband - raise awareness and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stimulate demand among the business community and; • promote inclusive use in local city neighbourhoods. 	IP
20	Continue to work with DSD to develop and commission a City Centre regeneration strategy and investment plan in line with the Belfast City Masterplan and Local Government Reform.	LGR
21	Improve and develop the city markets at St. George's and Smithfield in the context of supporting tourism and small businesses.	
22	Manage the Markets Policy .	
23	Directly create jobs by working with local partners to deliver targeted employability initiatives across the city including HARTE and the Belfast Enterprise Academy.	IP
24	Work with partners to deliver a city-wide employability and skills strategy and action plan.	IP
25	Provide targeted business support interventions through a series of workshops and 1-2-1 mentoring, to improve business competitiveness and productivity and to generate business efficiencies.	IP
26	Review the city wide retail support plan .	IP
27	Support the introduction of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) .	

	2014-15 Action	LGR or IP?*
28	Support initiatives to increase awareness of Council tendering opportunities and build capacity among Belfast companies to tender for public procurement opportunities.	IP
29	Support the development of a social clause policy and support implementation through council contracts.	IP
30	Deliver a programme of events at the Waterfront and Ulster Hall .	
31	Develop culture and arts by investing approximately £2M in cultural and artistic activities such as the 'City of Festivals' and Creative Legacies.	IP
32	Deliver Council's contribution to major events – including the Giro 2014 and preparing for Tall Ships 2015 plus the annual programme of events.	IP
33	Develop the Integrated Tourism Strategy and action plan.	IP
34	Market Belfast by supporting the marketing and visitor servicing activities of the Visit Belfast (VB) .	IP
35	Develop Belfast's cultural offer and deliver actions within the Integrated Cultural strategy and action plan.	
People and Communities		
36	Deliver the Renewing the Routes Programme 2012-16.	IP
37	Deliver reactive local regeneration schemes across the city.	IP
38	Support plans to restore and revitalise the Lagan Canal Corridor .	IP
39	Delivery Phase 2 of Hannahstown Rural Development programme application.	
40	Resource support for Community Development local activity (including management of an outcomes based £1.748m grant programme).	IP
41	Invest approximately £860,000 in community-based advice services per annum via 5 city-wide advice consortia.	IP
42	Develop an integrated approach to dealing with elements of poverty , including a mechanism to bring together key players from across the city as identified at the civic forum on poverty	IP
43	Provide support for community engagement within Council e.g. training, skill development, raising confidence and access.	IP
44	Manage and increase usage of community centres and other facilities.	IP
45	Develop and introduce a new volunteering framework to support over 70,000 volunteering hours per annum in community facilities.	IP
46	Deliver a coherent inter agency and inter departmental approach to working with the Traveller community .	

	2014-15 Action	LGR or IP?*
47	Implement the framework for children and young people .	
48	Ensure Council compliance with Child Protection requirements.	
49	Provide a city-wide play service targeting need and developing new approaches for delivering play.	
50	Deliver a comprehensive citywide summer programme .	
51	Build the capacity of Youth Forum members to increase the participation of children and young people in the city and neighbourhood life.	
Improving our services		
52	<p>Local Government Reform (LGR) – Service Convergence/ Transition plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the department for the LGR boundary extension by designing and delivering a budget and transition plan for services and resources merging across the new council area on 1st April 2015. This will include the effective transfer of assets and liabilities from Lisburn City Council and Castlereagh Borough Council. • Develop and implement a revised Community Grant Programme. <p>Community Planning: Support the council's preparations for the new duty of community planning to enable the council to have commenced the community planning process by April 2015. Key strands of this work include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and planning support to create a city wide community planning framework that integrates the councils new regeneration powers and; • Contributing to the development of a shared data hub to support data sharing amongst key partners. 	LGR
Governance & Risk		
53	Ensure compliance with all corporate process requirements including, audit reports, WIRES, risk management, IIP, etc.	
Financial Planning		
54	Implement a coordinated approach to grant management through the Grant Unit.	
Planning & Performance		
55	Use, promote and support evidence based planning via the use of CityStats and other local information.	

4. Key performance indicators for 2014/15

City Leadership

Performance Indicator	Annual Target 13/14	Annual Target 14/15
Amount of money leveraged from Europe and UK	£45.0M	£14.4M

Economy

Performance Indicator	Annual Target 13/14	Annual Target 14/15
Markets footfall	1.9M	1.9M
No. jobs created	180	260
Business supported	1,580	4,780
People Skilled up	N/A	203,900
Events Economic Benefit	£10M	£7M
Events attendance	250k	390k
Waterfront and Ulster Hall attendance	370k	250k
Tourism economic benefit	£410M	£420m
Tourism bednight sales	N/A	£900k
No. Culture and arts grants	120	123
Value of Culture and arts grants	£1.68M	£1.35M

People and Communities

Performance Indicator	Annual Target 13/14	Annual Target 14/15
Number of community grants distributed	370	370
Amount of community grants distributed	£2.6M	£2.6M
Community centre attendance	550k	550k
Community centre usage	65%	65%
Volunteer hours	70k	73k

Better Services

Performance Indicator	Annual Target 13/14	Annual Target 14/15
% Complaints that met response target - All	100%	tbc
Number of complaints received - All	0	tbc
% PIs updated	85%	tbc
% PIs on target	70%	tbc

Duplex printing	40%	tbc
Colour printing	40%	tbc

Organisation fit to lead and serve

Human Resource Management

Performance Indicator

	Annual Target 13/14	Annual Target 14/15
Average number of working days per employee lost due to absence	8.89	8.89
% H&S recommendations fully implemented	80%	tbc
% staff with an up-to-date PDP	90%	tbc

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5. Financial information

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
TOTAL	£19,325,431	£19,144,021

6. Monitoring and review arrangements

The Department reports regularly on the progress of all objectives and key performance indicators, using the information gathered to feedback into service delivery and policy decisions. Monitoring and evaluation of the Plan will be carried out using the following channels:

Departmental and Committee reports

The overall Development Department plan is monitored via six-monthly progress updates to the council's Development Committee. These updates identify areas of the plan and projects that are behind schedule or off target. For each problem a brief explanation is provided together with the proposed response to deal with the issue. The Committee scrutinises these updates and proposed remedial action and highlights any additional changes that need to be made.

For larger projects and the Key Performance Indicators, progress is captured on the council's CorVu Performance Management system. Results are collected centrally and reported to the Corporate Management Team (CMT). This enables a strategic level overview of the council's performance to be seen so that overall trends and problems can be identified and addressed.

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7. Committee membership

Development Committee

Chairman: Councillor Deirdre Hargey

Deputy Chairman: Councillor Guy Spence

Committee Members:

The Deputy Lord Mayor Alderman Christopher Stalford

Alderman Tom Ekin

Alderman Bob Stoker

Councillor Janice Austin

Councillor Patrick Convery

Councillor Matt Garrett

Councillor Colin Keenan

Councillor Bernie Kelly

Councillor Brian Kingston

Councillor John Kyle

Councillor Caoimhín Mac Giolla Mhín

Councillor Niall Ó Donnghaile

Councillor Lee Reynolds

Councillor Andrew Webb

Councillor Ciaran Beattie

Councillor JJ Magee

Councillor Nicola Verner

Councillor Brian Kennedy

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Lagan Canal Restoration Trust
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
	<u>Lagan Canal Restoration Trust</u>
1.1	In November 2006 Members approved the establishment of the Lagan Canal Restoration Trust and in 2008 the core funding bodies appointed a manager. The Trust is a not for profit company limited by guarantee with charitable status.
1.2	Members will be aware that in 2006 an offer of £1million funding was made available to Council by Ulster Garden Villages Limited (UGV) towards the reopening of the Lagan gateway Lock 1 at Stranmillis, on the bases that match funding would be available.
1.3	UGV initially supported the Council by providing funding of £50,000 from the £1 million offer, to establish a Lagan Corridor Officer post within the Development Department.
1.4	The Trust currently represents core funding bodies and key interest groups including; Belfast City Council, Lisburn City Council, Castlereagh Borough Council, Craigavon Borough Council, Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL). Other Trust stakeholders include; Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), Department of Social Development (DSD), Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI), Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN), Ulster Waterways Group (UWG). Lagan Valley Regional Park and a number of public stakeholders.
1.5	In August 2009 the Development Committee funded the Trust until March 2011 and the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Committee were appointed as Belfast City Council representatives on the Trust Board.
1.6	The Development Committee agreed further funding of £16,800 in April 2011 for one year and in March 2012 for a two year period to March 2014 with a total funding contribution of £34,178. The current two years of funding is due to expire

	at the end of March 2014
1.7	A number of key impact reports have been undertaken by the Trust, namely; a Business Case and Funding Strategy, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Technical Assessment of the canal and locks of the Lagan Corridor from Belfast to Lough Neagh. See appendix 1 for the Lagan Canal Trust Annual Report.
1.8	Belfast City Council in conjunction with Castlereagh Borough Council submitted an Expression of Interest for funding to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) AXIS 3, Rural Development Programme (RDP), for the Lagan Strategic Rural Project. This submission was led by Castlereagh Borough Council and was based on partnership support that included the Stranmillis Gateway project as a key element.
1.9	At the Development Committee of August 2013 members agreed £9,475 to support Castlereagh Borough Council's application for financial assistance, under this Programme. The application is for the installation of bike docks and interpretation panels at Malone House, Clement Wilson Park and the Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park, further enhancing the Lagan canal project.
1.10	As an emerging partnership project, the Lagan Canal corridor project is included in Belfast City Council's Investment Programme 2012-2015. Furthermore, in the Investment Programme it is recognised that the Council cannot realise the objectives on its own, and therefore an underlying principle is the need to work in partnership and develop productive relationships with the Northern Ireland Executive and other key partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

2	Key Issues
	<u>The Lagan Canal Restoration Trust</u>
2.1	The current two years of Council funding for the Trust is due to expire at the end of March 2014
2.2	While the other funders are currently considering the funding request, it is almost certain that all will continue to core fund at the same level as last financial year 2013– 2014.
2.3	The Trust has requested that Council considers further funding for the year 2014/15 as it is as yet unclear what the requirements for funding will be beyond this period.
2.4	The Lagan Canal Restoration Trust is seeking funding of £17,640.18 from Council for the period April 2014 – March 2015.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The Lagan Canal Trust is jointly funded by Belfast, Lisburn, Castlereagh and Craigavon Councils as well as by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. It is anticipated that further funding will be made available from NI Environment Agency.
3.2	The amount paid by each Council is proportional to the length of canal within its

	area and for Belfast this represents a financial commitment of £17,640.18. for period 2014–2015. This has been included within the current 2014-2015 department budget.
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4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

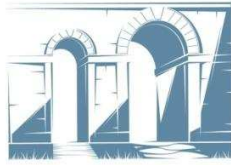
5	Recommendations
5.1	Members agree a one year extension of funding for the Lagan Canal Restoration Trust until March 2015. Following this period, a review of future funding for this organisation is undertaken in light of the economic climate, future prioritisation by Council, potential external funding, partner commitment and Local Government Reform. The cost to Council is £17,640.18.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline: March 2015	Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

7	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>UGV - Ulster Garden Villages Limited DCAL - Department of Culture Arts and Leisure IWAI - Inland Waterways Association of Ireland DSD - Department of Social Development Belfast City Centre Regeneration Directorate NIEA - Northern Ireland Environment Agency CAAN - Countryside Access and Activities Network UWG - Ulster Waterways Group SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment DARD – Department of Agriculture and Rural Development RDP – Rural Development Programme</p>

8	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Lagan Canal Trust Annual Report.

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LAGAN CANAL TRUST

**Lagan Canal Trust Annual Report
October 2012 to September 2013**

1. COMPANY INFORMATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE

- **Governing document:** Memorandum & Articles of Association
- **Company limited by guarantee no:** NI073608
- **Registered charity no:** XT13118
- **Registered office:** Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon, Co Armagh, BT66 6NJ
- **Administration office:** Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon, Co Armagh, BT66 6NJ
- **Auditors:** Dawson Nangle and Tumelty ,91-97 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 1SH
- **Solicitors:** MacCorkell Legal & Commercial, Garvey Studios, 8-10 Longstone Street, Lisburn. BT28 1TP
- **Principal activity:** To achieve the re opening of the Lagan Navigation from Belfast Harbour to Lough Neagh

DIRECTORS

Erskine Holmes OBE - Chair
Brian Cassells OBE – Vice Chair
Alderman G Savage
Mayor of Craigavon Cllr M Baxter
Cllr J Palmer
Cllr A Beattie
Alderman S Duncan
Cllr P Catney
Jim Henning

Mr J Beattie (fixed term for one year from September 2012)

Observers from Belfast City Council

The Lord Mayor of Belfast Cllr M O’Mullieor
Cllr Guy Spence

Public Directors

Wesley Henderson
Dominic Lavery
Dr Caragh Reid
Joe Nelson
Wilson Steen
Prof. Alan Woodside
James Turner
Mike Clarke

Portfolio

Community and User Groups
Engineering and Cost Management
Tourism and Business
Natural Heritage
Farming and Landholding
Built Heritage

STAFF

Brenda Turnbull, Chief Officer
Peter Scott Project Delivery Assistant
Chris Harper, GIS Support Officer, secondment from Craigavon Borough Council (left 15th October 2013)
Linda Crymble, Administration & Research Assistant (from 30th September 2013)

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Company Law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which will give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Trust and of the surplus or deficit of the Trust for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare financial statements on an ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Trust will continue in operation.

Charity trustees are the people who serve on the governing body of a charity. They may be known as trustees, directors, board members, governors or committee members. The principles and main duties are the same in all cases. Trustees have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of a charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company, well-run, and meeting the needs for which it has been set up.

THE PARTNERSHIP

The Lagan Canal Trust is a partnership organisation which was established to further the campaign to re-open the Lagan Navigation from Belfast Harbour to Lough Neagh. The Trust is governed by its Articles of Association and Memorandum of Association.

The strength of the Trust partnership lies in the commitment of all those involved in securing the re opening of the Navigation based on the core objectives. The partners successfully continue to strategically work together, recognising the benefits of a co-ordinated approach in setting out the Re-opening Framework to achieve the Trusts objectives, articulate social impact and lever support and secure funding for the re-opening.

The Trust Board is comprised of representatives of the key partners listed as well as 6 public directors representing core interests. The board meets quarterly. The Executive Committee supports and advises the Trust staff and is responsible to the Board, it meets bi-monthly.

The Executive Committee is comprised of officers from the principal partner agencies and other invitees - as permanent members of the Committee, or for specific advisory functions or programmes.

A record of attendance at the Trusts Board and Executive Committee meetings is attached in **Appendix 1**.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN KIND

LCT has many other partners that make Contributions in Kind, CIK, to the re opening project. Some of the ways the Trust is supported are outline below;

Belfast City Council

Belfast City Council Tourism Officer and Project Sponsor work closely with the Chief Officer and staff to ensure that programmes are developed in line with the overall aim to re open the Lagan Navigation in particular the new Belfast Sea Lock, the Lagan Gateway Project at Stranmillis and the wider Lagan Corridor.

Castlereagh Borough Council

Castlereagh Borough Councils appointed officer works in close liaison with the Chief Officer to ensure that programs are developed in line with the overall aim to re open the Navigation. Ongoing projects to enhance the Navigation include support for developing projects such the installation of canoe steps on the Lagan and extension of facilities at Lock No 3 to include citing of the 'Industry' Barge.

Lisburn City Council

Lisburn City Council Regeneration Manager works with the Chief Officer and staff in many operational areas; from provision of subsidised facilities for meetings and other events, to significant match funding of the Lagan Rural partnership RDP grant for the clearance and survey works at the Union Locks. The Councils significant input and support contributes to achieving the aim of re opening of the Lagan Navigation.

Craigavon Borough Council

The Councils Head of Conservation and Heritage and other department provides support through HR, procurement and budget maintenance which enables the trust to function operationally.

DCAL and Rivers Agency

The Inland Waterways Division works in close liaison with the Chief Officer and staff to ensure that programmes are developed in line with agreed strategic and operational priorities in both organisations. Through DCAL and Rivers Agency essential maintenance of the towpath takes place including recent upgrades to the surface, whilst Rivers Agency provide a vital function in clearing the river of fallen trees and strategic advice on the Navigation. DCAL has provided additional funding for Outdoor Recreation NI to audit existing recreational facilities in the trusts Operational Area and the updating and re print of the Lagan Navigation Walking Guide. DCAL has utilised the services of the Trusts GIS Support Officer which has helped to defray costs and provide for additional specialist training.

NIEA

NIEA, through representation on the Executive Committee both the Built and Natural Heritage sections provide advice on the legislative constraints and guidance on conservation of the important heritage asset that is the Lagan Navigation. The Core Funding Businesses Plan, to be submitted to all core funders in October 2013 makes the case for renewal of core funding which was stopped in March 2011.

Lagan Valley Regional Park

The Park Manager works closely with the Chief Officer to integrate the objectives and delivery of operational priorities in line with the overall aim to re open the Lagan Navigation. LVRP provides ongoing environmental protection and enhancement of the Navigation tow path from Stranmillis to Union Locks and continued promotion of the Lagan Navigation through interpretation and events.

Inland Waterways Association of Ireland Lagan Branch (IWAI)

A vital strategic relationship at Board level has recently been enhanced through the volunteering opportunity which was crated in the clearance works at the Union Locks, Lisburn. Attendance at Regional and National events by the Chief Officer has developed a closer strategic partnership. IWAI Lagan Branch continues its ongoing promotion and support for the re opening of the Navigation including sponsorship of events, boat rallies and publicity in its national press.

Ulster Waterways Group

Ongoing lobbying for the development of an Inland Waterway Strategy for Northern Ireland and support for the re opening including funding and support for the £9.5M Stranmillis Gateway in Belfast makes this group very relevant to the Trust. It recently provided support funding for the Trust to be represented at the World Canal Conference in France in September 2013.

Outdoor Recreation NI

Promotes recreation along the Lagan Navigation and support for the re opening. The advice from ORNI and representation on the Executive Committee adds to the collective management expertise in the field of recreation and public access.

Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation

Close ties are being developed which will see the emergence of a project to draft an EU pilot project application for funding. This will research the opportunities for water storage and addressing flooding in the Lagan Valley, the course of the Lagan Navigation.

Community Demonstration Projects

The Trust has devised a way to related strategy to sustainable actions. We have developed two demonstration projects which show how combining community and the Trusts objectives can bring real value to each. Our three chosen areas for demonstration are;

- **Aghagallon Community Organisation -**

The community, Trust and Craigavon Borough Council have submitted a joint funding bid to the Rural Development Programme to examine the feasibility of clearance of vegetation and potential upgrading of the tow path in this area with a connection to village services for visitors. Resident's objectives are to increase visitor numbers to boost economic activity in the village and for greater access to the Navigation

The Trust objectives are to re open the Navigation along its 27 mile route and to influence economic vibrancy and to increase access by local communities.

- **South Belfast Partnership -**

Early stages of engagement but first thoughts include how we can combine our objectives to give greater access to the River and influence development of facilities to support this.

Volunteer Now

Is supportive of work to develop a Volunteering Policy and held a round table workshop in March 2013 to promote volunteering amongst the Trusts partners. This contribution is on going and will contribute to the development of the Trust Volunteering Policy.

Volunteering

The Trust has a wealth of experience and specialist knowledge on its Board which contributes greatly to resources through their volunteering – effectively, the time donated to attend meetings, workshops, consultations and stakeholder groups giving advice and strategic support and guidance. This is likely to continue, with a greater requirement on Trustees to attend meetings due to their legal responsibilities as directors of a company. This has not been quantified but is nonetheless an economic benefit of the Trust.

Volunteering opportunities continue to grow as each project is delivered on the ground. The Union Locks project attracted 11,000 volunteer hours over five months from January to June 2013.

LAGAN CANAL TRUSTS MISSION

To re open the Lagan Navigation and to achieve recognition of the Trusts Operational Area, shown in Fig 1 as a regeneration zone - in ways which conserve and enhance the built and natural heritage, maximise recreational and visitor opportunities and involve and benefit the local communities thus contributing to positive social impact through training, employment, and diversification of local and regional economies.

Fig 1 Lagan Canal Trust Operational Area shown in green with the line of the Navigation shown in red



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THE TRUSTS OBJECTIVES 2013

- ✓ Ensure that all our work is informed by and fits with the Programme for Government and addresses the objectives of our Departmental, current and potential partners and stakeholders;
- ✓ Ensure that the Trust is resourced to deliver a complex programme of work;
- ✓ Develop an important historic and cultural asset which is recognised locally, regionally and nationally as having the potential to make a significant contribution to Northern Ireland's economy;
- ✓ Contribute to addressing poverty and social exclusion;

We will achieve these through;

- ✓ Conserving, managing and interpreting the natural, built, cultural and industrial heritage of the Navigation;
- ✓ Develop a digital history of the Lagan Navigation – ‘Just Add Water’
- ✓ Restoring the historic structures of existing locks whilst enabling their use through providing new lock gates and safety structures (under consent);
- ✓ Reinstating the towpath and create new paths along the whole length of the Navigation between Belfast and Lough Neagh;
- ✓ Connect and extend the National Cycle Route Number 9 through the Operational Area giving wider connectivity throughout Northern Ireland;
- ✓ Through a programme of work with specialist advisers, develop a social economy training organisation to address;
 - long term unemployment and
 - apprenticeship opportunities during the design, construction and maintenance stages of re opening
 - and on going management and maintenance over a 100 year period;
- ✓ Facilitate linkages between the Navigation, communities and public transport;
- ✓ Contribute to community health and well being opportunities through greater access to leisure, sporting and recreational pursuits
- ✓ Facilitate linkages between existing facilities and additional ones e.g. links to villages in rural areas
- ✓ Provide a range of additional facilities for visitors, walkers and cyclists and mooring points along the Navigation to enable boat usage and other water bases activities, features and attractions;
- ✓ Clearly defining the potential for positive social impact in local communities
- ✓ Re-watering the canalised sections along the Lagan through reinstating or repairing the weirs associated with each lock and lateral canal built in the 18th century to enable navigation;
- ✓ Providing a new cascade weir and new lock at Stranmillis to replace the existing pen weir structure (the former lock at this point is lost beneath development) and enable navigation from the tidal Lagan to the river;
- ✓ Providing a new section of river and canalised navigation between Sprucefield and Moira to replace the section of the Navigation overlaid by the M1 Motorway. This will include a canalised linkage to the Maze Long Kesh Site;
- ✓ A programme of silt removal and dredging to reinstate a channel for boat passage;
- ✓ Fully examining the potential the re opening of the Navigation could have on climate change in the Lagan Valley

CHIEF OFFICERS REPORT

The value that inland waterways contribute to the social, economic, environmental and physical regeneration of an area is widely recognised. There is a renewed interest and acceptance that waterways restoration and re opening delivers an exciting place to live, work and play, creating a focus for social impact, tourism, business, culture and leisure activities.

The Lagan Canal Trust partnership continues to work towards achieving the vision of a re opened waterway from Belfast Harbour to Lough Neagh. The efforts of the core partners to bring together the interests of the Navigation and key stakeholders along the Trust Operational Area are instrumental in driving forward the vision of a re opened Lagan Navigation.

ACHIEVEMENTS 2012 - 2013

Strategic

- Work on the Final Re opening Framework document has now included comments from the public/statutory and stakeholders workshops. The document will be finalised following meetings with Ministers in early 2014.
- Drafting the brief, procurement and commissioning of the Preliminary Engineering Designs and Costings Report is now completed. Further work has been necessary in terms of aligning the data captured into the Business Case for re opening and this is now completed.
- Having drafted the brief, procured and commissioned a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the team worked closely with the consultants to fully realise the impacts both positive and negative on the proposed engineering works along the 26 mile route. The final Environmental Report published in January 2013 shows that where a negative impact or opportunity to increase bio diversity was likely a programme of mitigation and enhancement works has been now complied. Statutory agencies have contributed to the development of this work.
- Re commissioning of Business Case for 27 mile preferred route is now complete. Endorsed by the Board, this work is being used as the source of information for the preparation of the presentations to Ministers on the potential to re open.
- On going development of Master Programme for the delivery of the 15 year programme of work is underway with the assistance of the Strategic Investment Board.
- Key to informing the above is the development of a Land Acquisition Strategy which is being drafted to include clarification of ownership of land by public bodies and private individuals.
- The development of Stakeholder workshops has begun and it is vitally important to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy which will inform engagement over the programme timeline. Research has begun to inform the procurement of such an engagement strategy.
- Research into the potential for development through the Conservation Action Plan for the site at Union Locks, Lisburn is now completed. This will inform an approach for funding the restoration of the locks and more sustainable and accessible use of the whole site.

Operational

- Work is now substantially completed on the commission for aerial photography of 27 mile route and unmanned aerial vehicle image capture of five nodes of potential increased activity along route. Data has been captured and a short promotion video is complete. The full 27 mile images will now be used to produce an edited and scripted fly through of the Lagan Navigation.

- Development of the Traffic Lights reporting system to the Board.
- Procurement and commissioning of new web site where all strategic documents are available.
- Developing an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to establish a digital history of the Navigation – ‘Just Add Water’
- Successful application for c£55k to Lagan Rural Partnership, match funded by Lisburn City Council for funding to clear, survey and record the condition of Union Locks, Lisburn to inform and enable an HLF restoration funding bid is now complete. Work will began in January 2013 and substantially completed in June 2013. Volunteers played a very large part in this work and we reordered some 1,300 volunteer days on site and at the public consultation event. This work enabled the development of the Conservation Action Plan for the site noted above.

PLANNED OPERATIONAL WORK

1. Consultation

In order to ensure that the re opening of the Lagan Navigation considers the interests of the diverse range of stakeholders along the Operational Area an extensive programme of engagement has continued throughout the year. Three demonstration projects have been developed.

2. Demonstration projects

Developing a Re opening Framework is all well and good but the Trust has devised a way to related strategy to sustainable operational work. We have developed three demonstration projects which show how combining community and the Trusts objectives can bring real value to each. Our three chosen areas for demonstration are;

- **Aghagallon Community Organisation -**

The community, Trust and Craigavon Borough Council have submitted of a joint funding bid to the Rural Development Programme to examine the feasibility of clearance of vegetation and potential upgrading the tow path in this area with a connection to village services for visitors. Resident’s objectives are to increase visitor numbers to boost economic activity in the village and for greater access to the Navigation.

The Trust objectives are to re open the Navigation along its 27 mile route and to influence economic vibrancy and to increase access by local communities.

- **South Belfast Partnership -**

Early stages of engagement but first thoughts include how we can combine our objectives to give greater access to the River and influence development of facilities to support this.

- **Maze Long Kesh Development Company -**

The Trust is keen to address climate change through conserving water in times of flood to release during dry months to ensure that water levels and the quality of water are maintained for navigation. Working with the Corporation and the statutory agencies could potentially contribute to alleviating flooding in the Lagan Valley and to meeting environmental objectives.

3. Development of a Social Enterprise within the Trust

There is recognition that in order to be sustainable the Trust needs to decrease its dependence on grant funding. At the same time it needs to address the opportunity to have a positive social impact in all the work its does. With 31 of the top 10 percentile of the most deprived Super Output Areas in Northern Ireland in its Operational Area the Trust has a challenge which it will address through the development of a social enterprise which will provide training, employment, apprenticeship and mentoring throughout the lifetime of the programme for delivery of the re opening.

4. Land Ownership and Advocacy

A key element of the Trust's work is to contribute to safeguarding, enhancing and promoting awareness of the scenic, natural, built and cultural heritage values of the Navigation and its Operational Area. A large section of this area of the Navigation is in private ownership, with the locks and canal bed afforded the protection of Scheduled Monument listing protecting them from potential irrevocable damage.

The Trust has developed an extensive Geographic Information System database for the Navigation Operational Area which has been used to capture, store, manage and present data linked to specific geographical locations. This innovative planning tool has been used to map the Navigation, its associated features and build a comprehensive database of landownership. In essence, GIS displays geographic information for informed decision making and within the Trust it has enabled a visual representation of different elements of the Operational Area.

3. Communications

In order to develop a sustainable navigation corridor and operational area it is essential that the Trust continues to act as a champion for the Lagan Navigation, promoting and facilitating the awareness, support and involvement of key stakeholders.

It is essential to the re opening project that the Navigation is promoted as an asset to local authorities, central government, potential funding bodies, developers and local communities. To this end the Trust has effectively undertaken an on-going program of advocacy, lobbying and representation of Navigation interests and the potential benefits of re opening. This includes distribution of its Briefing Paper, attendance at meetings and conferences and networking opportunities. In addition, the Trust feeds into the programs and management of core partners including Lagan Valley Regional Park. The Trust also works in cooperation with the Blackwater Regional Partnership to secure the re opening of the Ulster Canal.

The Trust continues the process of engagement with local communities, current and potential users within its Operational Area, service providers and the wider public. To build momentum and support for the project a database of community groups and contacts has been developed. This has enabled the Trust to make contact with key groups and gain their support. A key success to the communication of the vision of a re opened Navigation will be the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy being drafted and the Communication and Marketing Strategy to be undertaken.

The continued development and management of the Trust website allows effective communication of information relating to the Navigation, the Trust and its news and events. All major research is published on the web site.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON THE PERIOD 2014 - 2017

Economic uncertainty could be a reason for not investing in major capital infrastructure project such as the re opening of the Lagan Navigation, however it is not a justifiable reason for lack of planning for investment in the following;

- The development of a major new visitor product
- Investment in training and, apprenticeships across the age spectrum in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) agenda
- The potential for sustainable wealth creation through;
 - ✓ New jobs
 - ✓ Social enterprise opportunities
 - ✓ Intergenerational mentoring and coaching

- ✓ Creation of additional health and well being opportunities and businesses
- ✓ Growing existing business in the waterway related supply chain such as accommodation & boat repair and building

The next three years will present the Trusts greatest challenge. Ensuring that it is resourced to meet those challenges will require focussed work by the Trustees, myself and the team to get commitment from existing and new core funders and from Government.

The re opening of the Navigation will bring about both positive and negative environmental impacts and these will be managed through a programme of consultation and mitigation. The potential exists to generate an increase in bio diversity and through careful consideration of water resources have a positive impact on the attenuation of flooding in the Lagan Valley.

The Trust will continue to strive for the re opening of the Navigation with support from its partners, stakeholders and the wider community along its 67 sq mile Operational Area show below in Fig 1 above.

FUNDING PARTNERS

I would like to acknowledge and thank our core funding partners:

- Belfast City Council
- Castlereagh Borough Council
- Lisburn City Council
- Craigavon Borough Council
- Department of Culture Arts and Leisure

I would also like to thank all our partners and stakeholders and those who have given support to the Trust this year. I look forward to building our working relationship to progress the re opening of the Lagan Navigation.



Brenda Turnbull
Lagan Canal Trust Chief Officer
October 2013

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Request to nominate a representative to sit on the Operational Committee for the development of the new Ulster-Scots Hub
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Brian Johnston Tourism, Culture and Arts Manager, ext 3586

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Ulster-Scots Agency, Ulster-Scots Community Network and the Ministerial Advisory Group for an Ulster-Scots Academy, with the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure are developing a hub and heritage centre at the former Corn Exchange on the corner of Dunbar Link and Gordon Street.
1.2	As well as providing a single site from which these organisations can operate the hub will provide a centre for activity across the city but particularly in Cathedral Quarter and north Belfast. There will be a visitor centre which will link to the wider tourism offer in the city.
1.3	Refurbishment of the historic building is currently underway and the centre is expected to open in September 2014.

2	Key Issues
2.1	DCAL and the participant organisations are keen to develop a wider partnership approach to the development of the project.
2.2	It is hoped that representation will involve a group which could include DCAL, the Ulster-Scots bodies, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Department of Social Development and City Council. This group is envisaged to meet bi-monthly in the start-up period and then perhaps every six months thereafter.
2.3	A request has been received that Council nominate a representative to sit on the partnership group, in part to assist the integration of the tourism and heritage initiatives with other activity across to city.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	None.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members agree that the Director of Development nominates a representative to sit on the proposed group.

6	Decision Tracking
6.1	There is no decision tracking attached to this report.



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Update on the Lord Mayor's Forum, Maximising the economic corridor
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Laura Leonard, EU Manager, ext 3577

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Belfast City Council, under its Development Committee, in January 2014 agreed to support an event on 28 March on realising the potential of the Belfast Dublin economic corridor initiative. Dublin City Council has also agreed to lead and drive this initiative in conjunction with Belfast City Council.
1.2	Further to several research reports produced over the last 2 decades there is now a new opportunity to build on the strength of the geographical area between both cities utilising the concentration of demographic, economic, educational, infrastructural, social and cultural resources that exists along the eastern seaboard.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The Lord Mayor of Belfast and the Lord Mayor of Dublin have been leading on championing this initiative designed to boost efforts to attract and expand trade and investment opportunities across all sectors. The initiative will also form part of both cities internationalisation strategies promoting the Corridor as a place to locate, start or grow a business with strong characteristics of a skilled, well educated talent pool and well established networks of support for company development.
2.2	In order to activate the commitment of both Councils there is a one day Leadership Forum being organised by Dublin and Belfast City Councils. The Forum will commence in Dublin and move to Belfast later in the day, symbolically travelling along the corridor on the Enterprise train. The overall focus of the event will be on how business, tourism and government can collaborate along the corridor to strengthen links and operate as a powerhouse to maximise

	<p>potential and attract further investment. Ultimately the conclusions of the Forum are likely to lead to the manifestation of an action plan to animate the Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor, publicly committed to via the signing of a formal MOU by both Mayors at the event.</p>
2.3	<p><u>Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To revive and re-ignite the attention for and interest in the Corridor as a hub for trade and investment. – To highlight the economic potential of this geographical area and secure commitment to driving it forward. – To strengthen links between key players in business, education and government along the Corridor. – To investigate potential collaborative actions between stakeholders within the Corridor area. – To sign a Memorandum of Understanding between Dublin and Belfast Lord Mayors committing to leadership of the Corridor initiative.
2.4	<p><u>Proposed shape of Leadership Forum</u></p> <p>The event to be held on 28 March has been conceptualised to draw attention to the 2 main urban agglomeration economies along the corridor, namely Belfast and Dublin but also carefully acknowledging the other council areas and players along the entire route as well. Overall, the intention is to have a specially invited audience attend part or all of the event which is split into 3 distinct but related parts. Not all participants will be required for the entire event although a core group comprising Belfast and Dublin City Council Mayors, other Mayors along the Corridor and other key organisations will be present for the duration. Each part of the symposium will be themed to highlight some of the key characteristics which offer comparative advantages of the economic potential of the Corridor area.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Members agreed in Development Committee on 19 January 2014 to £5,000 to cover the costs of the event.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Committee note the update and that the Chair and/or Deputy Chair of Development attend the event.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline:	March 2014
	Reporting Officer: John MGrillen

Appendix one

Proposed agenda for the Lord Mayors Forum

28 March

8 – 10 am - Business breakfast in Dublin to launch initiative; focus on Smart technologies and sustainability.

Draft outline:

800am -business breakfast commences.

Moderator- David Murphy - RTE

830am - Lord Mayor of Dublin and Lord Mayor of Belfast open event

840am - Keynote speaker –Mark Ennis – Chair of INI and CEO of SSE Ireland (TBC)

Keynote speaker – Martin Curley – Vice president of INTEL (TBC)

Keynote speaker - Louise Phelan CEO – Paypal (TBC)

920 am - Open to discussion from floor

1015 am - Close and departure for selected invitees for train journey to Belfast

1030am - Boarding train to Belfast for selected invitees

1100am - Departure on scheduled train to Belfast

11am to 115pm Leadership Forum continues on train journey with focus on Tourism/Infrastructure

The focus of the train discussions will be tourism and infrastructure.

Draft train itinerary:

11am -Train departs and refreshments are served.

1115- 1120am - Lord Mayor of Belfast and Lord Mayor of Dublin opening remarks.

1120am – Facilitator sets the scene and stimulates discussion.

12:00pm– lunch served; discussions at the table.

12:40 -12:45pm - Discussion open to floor.

1:15pm - Arrive Belfast and depart train to continue event in City Hall.

13:45pm Arrival at City Hall to continue Leadership Forum with focus on Creativity/Hi tech company growth (CDI) and business opportunities.

Moderator - TBC

2pm- Lord Mayors opening remarks

210pm- Keynote speaker – John Healy, Director and Head of Technology, Citi Group

Keynote speaker– Margaret Hearty, Director of Programmes and Business Services, Intertrdae Ireland

Keynote speaker - Sheeree Acheson – Founder and CEO of Women who Code

250pm -Discussion open to floor

315pm -Close of event.



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Review of support for retail sector
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Lisa Toland, Economic Development Manager, ext 3427

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Development Committee at its meeting on the 20 June 2013 approved a range of support for the retail sector in the city – focused on neighbourhood retailing – and agreed that an evaluation of existing and previous council support for the sector should be undertaken in advance of any additional funding being provided in future years.
1.2	Members will be aware that Belfast City Council supports businesses through a range of mechanisms and across a number of its services. In recent years the Economic Development Unit (EDU) has taken a lead in developing a targeted programme of support for a number of sectors, including the independent retail sector, based on business improvement, market development and enhancing footfall.
1.3	The EDU-led programme of activity for the independent retail sector is now entering its fourth year. The current programme contains a range of interventions around targeted business start-up and growth, product development support and networking and promotion activity.
1.4	In order to evaluate the impact of the work to date and to identify the proposed approach for future interventions, taking account of ways to maximise the impact of the council's intervention, an independent evaluation was commissioned in December 2013. This evaluation has just been completed and the findings are presented in this report, alongside recommendations as to a proposed way forward for council support for retail.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The current retail action plan contains a range of activities including: <u>Business development support</u> - Master classes and best practice visits: 5 master classes have been

	<p>delivered to date, involving 70 Belfast retailers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tailored mentoring support: 10 retail businesses have availed of this support - Visual merchandising support: Belfast City Council undertook a joint initiative with interior design students from the University of Ulster to support 8 local retailers to re-design their shop front. <p><u>New retail and product development support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market start up programme including pop up facility: this programme is currently supporting 20 participants to establish their own food or craft business, providing them with test trading opportunities alongside mentoring and workshops. The pop up shop facility was open from the 27th February to 9th March at Queen Street Studios on Bedford Street. - Introduction to retail programme – this programme is currently supporting 8 participants to develop the skills needed to establish a retail unit, providing them with test trading opportunities alongside mentoring and workshops. All 8 participants plan to set up in business. <p><u>City-wide retail networking and promotion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail forum and information seminars: two meetings of the retail forum took place, chaired by the Chair of Development Committee. Attendees included traders’ groups, BCCM and NIIRTA. - Area Development support for traders groups: this providing funding for activities aimed at driving footfall to an area as well as enhancing the area’s profile and supporting the sustainability of the group. This year 7 traders associations have drawn down support totalling £79,000 against a budget of £160,000. Examples of activities supported include; seasonal events, the production of marketing materials, design and print of newsletters, PR activities and consultancy support. <p>2.2 The terms of reference for the evaluation work included the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To quantify the overall benefits and impact of retail support activities for previous two financial years and assess the effectiveness of the individual element of the programme against objectives - Make recommendations as to how current activity might be improved - Consider how council support for retail businesses can be better coordinated - Consider how impending structural changes might impact on the council’s support for retail businesses - Identify possible future areas of focus for the council to support the retail sector in Belfast, including an assessment of the financial implications of this activity. <p>2.3 The first stage of the evaluation analysed the quantitative impact of retail support and the extent to which targets were achieved. The second stage of the evaluation analysed the qualitative impact achieved through consultations with representatives from local traders associations, key stakeholders such as NIIRTA, BCCM, Belfast City Council Officers as well as participants who took part in retail programme activity.</p> <p>Key findings from this research have identified;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business development interventions enabled through the retail programme and delivered by contracted delivery organisations are efficient and effective and have met or exceeded targets set
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail development programmes funded by council are high in cost relative to other business development programmes because they do not attract EU funding leverage and are therefore funded 100% by council - The funding of Traders Associations through Economic Development is the only such “umbrella body” type funding that exists - The funding process for Area Development Support (to trader groups) lacks the rigour evident in other support interventions, given the difficulties in identifying local needs, base lining and benchmarking, objective and target setting - The priority needs identified through the engagement with Traders Associations are significantly wider than the support available from the council’s retail support interventions (e.g. parking issues, graffiti, refuse collection) - While most Traders Associations are now charging a membership fee, they are still not sustainable at present – albeit that this was one of the original imperatives of early council intervention in these groups.
<p>2.4</p>	<p>The evaluation also explored a wider range of issues impacting on retail support which has identified the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ERDF and Invest Northern Ireland funding is not available for retail focused interventions. This means that the financial implications of funding this activity reside solely with Council. Engagement with invest NI and EU programmes has confirmed that this will continue to be the case for the new round of EU programmes (and that the match funding support for other business development activities will be up to 80% of eligible project costs) - Direct business development support (mentoring, business workshops) can be delivered through the wider programme of support provided by the Economic Development Unit - The neighbourhood-based nature of local area interventions such as (but not confined to) Traders Associations require a more joined-up approach which integrates support such as physical, environmental and infrastructure improvement. Channelling these through the Economic Development unit and focusing on marketing and promotional support only is somewhat at odds with broader needs identified by these groups - There is a need for internal Belfast City Council co-ordination to optimise the channelling of council resources to businesses, including retail - The BIDs, Area Based Working, Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Planning processes present opportunities for the council to provide leadership to ensure that the totality of areas’ needs (including those of retailers and traders) are addressed holistically.
<p>2.5</p>	<p>In analysing the broader policy context, the evaluation also identified the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The draft Integrated Economic Strategy (IES) does not identify retail as a “sector” requiring specific intervention. The strategy points out that contemporary policy is moving away from footfall- boosting approach

	<p>(with an emphasis on promotional interventions) towards a broader view of how best to accommodate other usage within cities and localities such as office, leisure, education, tourism etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reform of Local Government (RPA) means from 2015 it is likely Belfast City Council will have an enhanced Neighbourhood Renewal role. Traders in specific neighbourhoods should benefit if this role is delivered effectively in a way which co-ordinates, integrates and targets council resources. - The BIDs process presents an opportunity for area-based development with businesses as investors (therefore making this a more sustainable approach) agreeing a range of local activities and initiatives that can be delivered with an emphasis on the totality of that area's needs (e.g. footfall oriented promotions, business development support, environmental improvements, infrastructure improvements such as car parking etc.) - The Local Investment Fund has an area based emphasis. There is potential to build on its current delivery by more strategically linking the needs of local areas (including those of retailers) to resources and funding streams.
2.6	<p>An executive summary and full list of recommendations have been attached as Appendix 1 for Members' consideration. Some of the key recommendations emerging from the report are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct business development support for retailers (such as programmes aimed at improving competitiveness) can be funded through economic development on a discretionary basis and have some strategic validity - Area-based interventions such as (but not confined to) Traders Associations should not be resourced uniquely through Economic Development given that the neighbourhood-based nature of these require a more joined-up approach which integrates support such as physical, environmental and infrastructure improvements. This involves the delivery of wider council services (such as building control, environmental health, street cleansing, commercial waste etc) as well as other agencies (Roads Service etc.) - There is a need for a much more structured, rigorous and strategic process for traders support which starts with needs identification, SMART objectives, production of a structured implementation plan and robust monitoring and evaluation to assess efficiency and effectiveness/impact of delivery. At present, there is limited capacity within the groups to undertake this activity and analysis - The BIDs, Area Based Working, Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Planning processes present opportunities for Belfast City Council to provide leadership to ensure that the totality of areas' needs (including those of retailers and traders) are addressed holistically. Clearly this role requires development and is beyond the scope of the economic development section.
2.7	<p>Taking account of these findings, it is recommended that the following approach</p>

	<p>is adopted regarding council support in the coming financial year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is significant rationalisation of support, with business growth support channelled through the Economic Development Unit's generic business growth programmes (and therefore eligible for match funding support from EU) - Area development support for traders' groups is pared back to a level of up to £5,000 funding available without any match funding being offered by the group and up to a further £5,000 available if they can provide evidence of £ for £ match funding (i.e. a total maximum contribution of £10,000 from council). There should be a deadline for applications, with no applications for support accepted after end August 2014 - There should be no commitment to area development support beyond the current year and work should be undertaken within the council to consider how area support can be incorporated within wider area-based support across the council - There should be a budgetary commitment for start-up and product development activity, based on evaluations of the current activity as well as best practice from other locations - The retail forum should be retained as a vehicle for engagement with local groups, with consideration given as to how this can be incorporated as part of wider area working activities as well as council's engagement with the private sector - Consideration should be given to how BCCM (and other partners) can be used as a conduit for better engagement with retail businesses in the city centre as well as exploring opportunities for addressing challenges such as vacant properties for retail use.
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3	Resource Implications
	<p>In order to deliver these activities, it is recommended that a budget of £120,000 be set allocated for the financial year 2014-2015. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £80,000 for trader group support - £40,000 for targeted start-up and product development activity.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	No specific equality or good relations considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
	<p>Members are asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the executive summary of the retail evaluation report in Appendix 1 - Note the proposed approach to support identified in 2.7 above - Agree that future consideration should be given to a co-ordinated programme of activity within Council linking in with area working groups and other initiatives to ensure effective delivery of service and avoid duplication.

6	Decision Tracking	
Timeline:	March 2015	Reporting Officer: Lisa Toland

7	Key to Abbreviations
BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management IES – Integrated Economic Strategy NIIRTA – Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - Executive summary – retail evaluation report	

Appendix 1

Evaluation of Belfast City Council Retail Programme

Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations

March 2014

1. Context

Brendan Smith Consulting was commissioned to undertake an independent evaluation of Belfast City Council's retail programme and has focused on the following key aspects:

- Quantification of the overall benefits and impact of the EDU-led retail support activities for financial years 12/13 and 13/14 (activity currently under way)
- Assessment of the effectiveness of each of the programme elements vis-a-vis their original objectives
- Identification of reasons why activities may not have achieved original objectives and make recommendations as to how these might be improved
- Consideration of how council support for retail businesses can be better coordinated, including identifying programme content and proposing appropriate internal management structures
- Consideration of how impending structural changes might impact on the council's support for retail businesses
- Identification of possible future areas of focus for the council to support the retail sector in Belfast, including an assessment of the financial implications of this activity
- Identification of what the key drivers of council support for the sector should be, taking account of the broad range of statutory, regulatory and discretionary functions of the council.

2. Evaluation Methodology

The consultants have applied a mixed approach to delivering the evaluation assignment involving:

- (a) Desk based analysis of all programme documentation
- (b) Face to face consultation with a range of stakeholders, including:
 - Businesses benefiting from support
 - Key organisations such as the Ni Independent Retail Association, Belfast City Centre Management, Belfast Retail Forum
 - Focused interviews with Traders Associations across the city
 - Engagement with contracted delivery agents
- (c) On-going liaison with council officers
- (d) Production of initial summary findings
- (e) Production of comprehensive final report.

3. Key Findings

(a) Essentially the term “retail programme” is a misnomer in view of the extent to which non-retail businesses receive support, for example those involved in business-to-business operations and Trader Associations with significant numbers of non-retail members (which is reflective of the mix of businesses in the neighbourhood commercial areas)

(b) The business development interventions enabled through the retail programme and delivered by contracted delivery organisations are efficient and effective and have met or exceeded targets.

They are well managed with positive participant feedback from participant businesses testifying to their quality, particularly in terms of helping businesses to become more competitive. The programmes are:

- Master-classes, Workshops and Best Practice Visits
- Tailored Mentoring Support
- Visual Merchandising Support
- Market Start Up Programme
- Introduction to Retail Programme

(c) The Retail Plan is something of an anomaly set against the other economic development support offered by the council, given that it is the only such sector specific form of support enabled through economic development and it is not identified as a growth sector within the draft Integrated Economic Strategy (IES)

(d) The policy rationale for council providing targeted support to the retail sector development is somewhat weak. Belfast City Council is one of the few councils that directly funds retail support and such support is not provided by Invest NI on the basis that there is a relatively high displacement factor and low economic added value (for example the absence of export potential).

(e) Retail Development Programmes funded by council are high in cost relative to other business development programmes because they do not attract EU funding leverage and are therefore funded 100% by council. Other programmes are co-funded so that council is committed to contributing 25% of delivery costs.

In addition funding provided to the retail sector is seen as disproportionately high, given the sector’s lower strategic importance with funding allocations having increased over time to a level that cannot be seen as sustainable.

(f) There is no direct support provided to larger retailers (e.g. national chains) although council provides core funding for Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) to undertake a range of support functions for businesses in Belfast city centre (of which there are a significant number of retailers)

(g) Traders Association Funding

The funding of Traders Associations through economic development is the only such “umbrella body” type funding that exists.

Consultation with the associations has established that council support is valued and a range of local activities have usefully been delivered as a result of council support. There are however, several key issues for council to consider:

- Consultation with the associations identified their priority needs as being related to issues such as car parking, retail mix, street cleanliness, public realm. These issues are not those relevant to support from council’s Retail Programme and point to associations requiring wider support from council and other agencies.
- Support for Traders Associations through a “Retail Programme” dilutes the impact specifically on retail businesses due to many member businesses not trading as retailers (e.g. numerous business-to-business members – average around 60% of businesses are retail, 40% are non-retail)
- There are signs that the Associations have a reliance on council and are not sustainable at present, for example through significant levels of self-funding of activities. Consultation with associations points to trend whereby a small number of people are being relied on to deliver the bulk of work and that there is still a dependence on consultancy support to develop and deliver targeted activities
- Capacity levels are, in the main, low. This is exemplified by the low take-up rate of available funding. For example only 48% of funds made available by council to associations in 2013/2014 was drawn down and used (information correct as at 06 March 2014)
- Most activities funded through the traders associations are oriented towards footfall generation (e.g. events, marketing campaigns). These could possibly be funded under other council services (e.g. Community Festivals Grants)

These activities also have considerable negative displacement implications with shoppers drawn for short periods from one part of the city to another.

- The funding process lacks the rigour expected from typical local development process, for example there should be a basis of robust local needs identification, benchmarking, objective and target setting within a monitoring and evaluation framework. At present, many of the organisations are not in a position to provide this information and do not have a view as to the realistic impact of the interventions that are being funded

(h) Positioning of support for ‘neighbourhoods’ through the work of the Economic Development Unit, such as Traders Associations, constrains the extent to which council can actually help businesses trading in these neighbourhoods for several reasons:

- There are other ways in which council supports retailers and traders:

- Engagement with food retailers by Environmental Health and Building Control on licensing issues etc.
- Access to council's generic economic development support programmes
- Support for World Host training for retail businesses (as well as wider hospitality businesses)
- Targeted street cleansing and commercial waste services
- Support for physical improvements on designated arterial routes through the Renewing the Routes programme
- Marketing campaigns and street animation activities to encourage additional footfall in targeted retail areas.

There is though, a clear lack of co-ordination of these supports. Improved co-ordination could ensure more resources are achieved and delivered efficiently for areas in which businesses trade

(i) There are pertinent policy context issues which have to be considered when evaluating the relevance of current retail support and which should also guide future support:

- I. The draft Belfast Integrated Economic Strategy (IES) does not identify retail as a "sector" requiring specific intervention. The strategy points out that contemporary policy making is moving away from footfall boosting approach (with an emphasis on promotional interventions such as events, marketing etc.) towards a broader view of how best to accommodate other usage such as office, leisure, education, tourism etc. Whilst this is articulated in respect of the city centre there is a relevance to retail support in other neighbourhood locations which can be viewed as suburban trade centres.
- II. The reform of Local Government means that, from 2015, Belfast City Council will have an enhanced Neighbourhood Renewal role. Traders in specific neighbourhoods should benefit (as will community organisations and residents) if this role is delivered effectively in a way which co-ordinates, integrates and targets resources.
- III. The Local Investment Fund has an area-based emphasis. There is potential to build on its current delivery by more strategically linking the needs of local areas (including those of retailers) to resources and funding streams.
- IV. The Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) process presents an opportunity for area based development with businesses as investors (therefore more sustainability) whereby an agreed range of local activities and initiatives can be delivered with an emphasis on the totality of that area's needs (e.g. footfall oriented promotions, business development support, environmental

improvements, infrastructure improvements such as car parking, retail mix etc.)

4. Recommendations

In light of these findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Direct business development support for retailers (such as programmes aimed at improving competitiveness) can be funded through economic development on a discretionary basis and has some strategic validity.

The council should though, recognise that these programmes are relatively expensive and thus offer relatively low value for money because they are not eligible European for co-funding.

2. Area based interventions such as (but not confined to) Traders Associations should not be positioned within the Economic Development Unit, given that the neighbourhood based nature of these require a more joined-up approach which integrates support such as physical, environmental and infrastructure improvements which involves the delivery of wider council services (such as building control, environmental health, street cleansing, commercial waste etc) and other agencies.

Consultation with the associations identified their priority needs as being related to issues such as car parking, retail mix, street cleanliness, public realm. Needs identified beyond these were related to footfall boosting which can have negative displacement issues.

3. However Traders Associations might be supported by council, there is a need for a much more structured, rigorous and strategic process which starts with needs identification, SMART objectives, production of a structured implementation plan and robust monitoring and evaluation to assess efficiency and effectiveness/ impact of delivery.
4. The BIDs, Area Based Working, Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Planning processes present opportunities for Belfast City Council to provide leadership to ensure that the totality of areas' needs (including those of retailers and traders) are addressed holistically. Clearly this role requires development and is beyond the scope of the economic development section.

There is a need for internal council co-ordination to optimise the channelling of council resources to businesses, including retail, trading beyond the city centre. This could be considered on an area basis, adding value to current area based working.



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Festivals Forum Action Plan
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Brian Johnston, Tourism, Culture, Heritage & Arts Manager, ext 3586

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Council agreed to establish a Festivals Forum in August 2004. The Forum was set up in recognition of the contribution festivals can make to the city by promoting economic regeneration, driving tourism and enhancing community relations.
1.2	The Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit invests approximately £400,000 of grant funding into festivals each year. This has been further bolstered by £300,000 under the City of Festivals Phase 2 programme (supported under the Belfast PEACE III Plan by the European Union's European Regional Development Fund through the PEACE III Programme), which has awarded money to festivals including the Belfast Children's Festival, Féile, Festival of Fools and Orangefest to develop audiences among hard-to-reach groups and communities.
1.3	Investing in a City of Festivals is identified as a priority under the Investment Programme 2012–15 and the Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012–15. These policies recognise the strength of the city's varied and extensive festivals calendar, acknowledge the role festivals play in inspiring communities and commit to continuing to promote city of festivals as a key message for the city.
1.4	The Festivals Forum provides a mechanism for the Council to engage with festivals to support and enhance the city's festival offering. The Forum currently has over 100 members from a wide range of community, arts and heritage organisations, and all festivals applying for grant aid from Council are invited to become members. In 2012/13 the Development Committee agreed to invest £30,000 in the Forum's Action Plan. In 2013/14 they agreed to invest £22,900 which was then augmented by Peace III City of Festivals funds.
1.5	Achievements to date include marketing initiatives promoting Belfast as a city of festivals such as billboard and flagfield campaigns; bespoke training courses and

	events; a city venue audit; and a study on socio economic impact of festivals. The Forum has hosted a number of practical presentations from Arts & Business; QUB; Titanic Foundation; PICAS (Programme for InterCultural Arts Support); and various BCC departments.
1.6	The Forum steering group also recently agreed new Terms of Reference which aim to streamline and formalise the group to encourage participation and input. These new Terms of Reference will be rolled out from April 2014.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The draft Festivals Forum Action Plan 2014/15 is attached at appendix 1. It was devised in consultation with the Forum's steering group and wider membership.
2.2	The key objectives of the Action Plan include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lobbying and influencing; including increasing the awareness of the contribution festivals make to the city – Marketing; including ongoing support of successful marketing initiatives, web presence and capitalising on group buying power – Member support and development; including monthly meetings, training and networking – Governance; to ensure the Forum is fit for purpose
2.3	The total budget for the Action Plan is £22,900 which is included in the Departmental budget for 2014/15..
2.4	It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and agree the contents of the draft Festivals Forum Action Plan 2014/15.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> £22,900 towards the implementation of the Festivals Forum Action Plan has been included in the Departmental budget for 2014/15.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and agree the Festivals Forum Action Plan 2014/15 and associated budget.

6	Decision Tracking
There is no Decision Tracking attached to this report.	

7	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - Festivals Forum Action Plan 2014/15	

Festivals Forum Draft Action Plan 2014/2015 Draft 4

Theme	Objective	Action	Performance indicators	Timescale	Responsibility	Budget	Notes / link to Cultural Framework
Lobbying and influencing	Increase the awareness of festivals' contribution to the city	Share case studies and develop methodology for capturing the ongoing socio-economic impact of festivals	Number of case studies shared Media coverage	Q1-Q3	Belfast City Council	Time	'Strengthening the sector'
		Ensure a joined-up one council and one-city approach to festivals	Number of presentations Increased attendance at Forum meetings by non-festival members	Ongoing	Full Forum	Time	'Strengthening the sector' theme
	Establish outcome-focused working groups	Respond to public consultations	Number of outcomes achieved Number of consultation responses	Q1-4 As required	Steering Group Full Forum	Time Time	'Strengthening the sector' Represent all Forum members
Theme	Objective	Action	Performance indicators	Timescale	Responsibility	Budget	Notes / link to Cultural Framework
Marketing	Encourage shared resources	Billboards contract - capitalising on economies of scale - free sites to members	Number of billboard sites used; number of festivals benefiting	Q1-4	Belfast City Council	£18,000	'Attracting Audiences'
		Banner fields contract – credit and free use of poles to members	Number of banner fields used; number of festivals benefiting	Q1-4	Belfast City Council	Contract maintained	'Attracting Audiences'
		Share information on free and cost effective marketing & distribution	Number of festivals benefiting	Q1-4	Belfast City Council	Time	'Attracting Audiences'
		Input into review and enhancement of on-street communications	Contribution to review	Ongoing	Marketing working group	Time	'Attracting audiences'
	Continue to promote Belfast as a city of	Promote and maintain Belfast festivals website and Festivals Calendar	Number of visitors Number of festivals	Ongoing	Marketing working group	Time	'Attracting Audiences'

Theme	Objective	Action	Performance indicators	Timescale	Responsibility	Budget	Notes / link to Cultural Framework	
	festivals	Develop a PR and marketing action plan for Festivals Forum	1 action plan Media coverage	Q1-Q2	Belfast City Council	Time	'Attracting Audiences'	
Member support and development	Share information	Host monthly Festival Forum meetings in cultural venues	Number of meetings and attendees Members feedback	Q1-Q4	Festivals Forum chair	£1000	'Strengthening the sector'	
		Publish and maintain an up-to-date audit of venues and spaces	Number of venues used	Q1-Q4	Steering group	£0	'Strengthening the sector'	
		Intranet on forum website to hold information of use to members	Number of hits Documents uploaded	Q1-4	Belfast City Council	£0	'Strengthening the sector'	
	Promote partnership working and collaboration	Host one large-scale, celebratory event to encourage networking	Number of attendees Members feedback	Q4	Steering group	£900	'Strengthening the Sector'	
		Facilitate networking opportunities (national / intl) for members	Number of events attended	Q2-Q4	Steering group	£1,000	'Strengthening the Sector'	
	Improve communication	Maintain internet site	Number of hits	Q1-Q4	Steering group	Time	'Strengthening the Sector'	
		Communicate useful and timely information with Members via email	Number of communications sent	Q1-Q4	Belfast City Council	Time	'Strengthening the Sector'	
	Facilitate training where gaps have been identified	Deliver training / mentoring to members	Number of beneficiaries	Q2-Q4	Steering group	£2,000	'Strengthening the Sector'	
	Theme	Objective	Action	Performance indicators	Timescale	Responsibility	Budget	Notes / link to Cultural Framework
	Governance	Ensure Festivals Forum is fit for purpose	Review of membership Implement new TOR's	Revised members list Increased participation	Q1-Q4	Steering group	Time	'Strengthening the Sector'



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	European Social Fund (ESF) match funding requests
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that European Social Fund (ESF) Priority One provides financial support to promote training and other activities to assist long term unemployed people obtain sustainable employment. Funding is awarded through an open call for projects. Successful applicants are allocated funding on condition that they can provide 35% match funding from another public sector source.
1.2	The ESF projects are funded through Department of Employment and Learning (DEL). Match funding must be secured on an annual basis. These offers are based on the project being able to draw in the appropriate levels of match funding. All funding from DEL is subject to the agreed match funding being in place. Requests for match funding from five projects for the next financial year 2014-2015 have now been received by Belfast City Council. In addition, the council has led on a project and there is also a requirement to seek match funding for this project for the coming year. One of the projects (East Belfast Mission) has not yet submitted the match funding request to Belfast City Council. If this is forthcoming, it will be presented to a future meeting of the Development Committee for consideration.
1.3	At the March 2013 meeting of the Development Committee, Members agreed to provide match funding to the following ESF projects for 2013-2014: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belfast City Council with project partner Lisburn City Council – Hospitality and Retail Training and Employment (HARTE) £25,000; - East Belfast Mission - Jobs4U £12,485; - Lenadoon Community Forum - Neighbourhood Training for Employment £12,010; and - Time Associates/Belfast Metropolitan College - Learn to Earn £6,000.
1.4	At the May 2013 meeting of the Development Committee, Members agreed to provide match funding to the following ESF projects for 2013-2014:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upper Springfield Development Trust (USDT) - Jobs on the Move £30,000; - Ashton Community Trust - Progress to Employment £33,642.65; and - Ashton Community Trust - Women's Training Project £13,856.02.
1.5	Members will recall from the May 2013 meeting that the original letters of offer from DEL were issued on the basis of a three-year programme. DEL wrote to all project promoters to confirm that they could offer funding to the approved projects for an additional year (2014-2015) should the project promoters wish to take this offer up. They also confirmed that they were in a position to offer an uplift of 25% in the funding available to interested projects. In both instances, offers were based on the project being able to draw in the appropriate levels of match funding.
1.6	Members will recall that the offer of 25% uplift has led to some projects having difficulty in being able to get agreement from their match funder to provide the additional funding to allow them to draw down the extra money from DEL.
1.7	Many Belfast-based ESF projects are match-funded by the Department of Social Development (DSD). The office confirmed that, while it is in a position to commit the match-funding at the previous levels of expenditure in the original letters of offer, it is not in a position to provide the match-funding for the increased amount (i.e. to meet the 25% uplift offer from DEL). This remains the case for 2014-2015.
1.8	These offers are based on the project being able to draw in the appropriate levels of match funding. Without funding, the six programmes will be unable to operate.
1.9	Members will also be aware that officers have been engaging with DEL to identify a way in which the match funding provided by the council and other public sector bodies can be used to contribute to targeted delivery, as opposed to on a case-by-case basis as is currently the way of working. Some progress is being made in this regard and it is anticipated that this will help the council measure more directly the impact of our interventions of the key employment and skills challenges in the city.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The six projects that are seeking support from Belfast City Council for the next financial year 2014-2015 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ashton Community Trust: Women's Training Project - Ashton Community Trust: Progress to Employment - Lenadoon Community Forum – Neighbourhood Training for Employment - Time Associates/Belfast Metropolitan College – Learn to Earn - Upper Springfield Development Trust – Jobs on the Move - Belfast City Council - HARTE
2.2	Details on the areas of focus of each project are outlined below. A summary of outputs achieved as well as targets for the coming financial year and the match funding required from the council is included in Appendix 1 .
2.3	<p><u>Ashton Community Trust – Women's Training Project</u></p> <p>The Women's Training Project focuses on improving the employability of those women experiencing significant employment gaps, lone parents, those returning</p>

	<p>to the labour market and women with little or no qualifications. The project aims to offer women training which will increase basic and intermediate skills and a mentor to support clients through one-to-one support and advice and guidance. There is also a team member employed to support those not in employment, education and training (NEET). This was introduced as part of the match funding provided through council.</p>
2.4	<p>In the first three quarters of 2013-2014, 124 participants received accredited training and 38 went into employment of which 15 were NEETs clients. Outputs for the period 2014-2015 are envisaged to remain the same figures and the programme will continue to work with NEET clients.</p>
2.5	<p>The amount of funding offered by DEL to Women's Training Project in the 2014-2015 financial year (including the uplift) is £101,461. At present, DSD have committed to providing match funding of £38,868.98. This leaves a shortfall of £13,856.02 to allow the full amount to be drawn down.</p>
2.6	<p><u>Ashton Community Trust – Progress to Employment project</u> The Progress to Employment programme provides participants with access to accredited training and resources that will improve their skills and improve their chances of a more sustainable future in employment. It focuses on training to match participants' skills with employer's requirements. A mentor further supports clients through one-to-one support and advice and guidance.</p>
2.7	<p>In the first three quarters of the financial year 2013-2014, 314 participants availed of training and support, 121 undertook accredited training and 96 entered into employment (40 were NEET clients), surpassing targets set. Outputs for the period 2014-2015 are projected to remain the same as 2013-2014. The programme will continue to target the NEET category.</p>
2.8	<p>It is envisaged that the targets will be maintained for the final year of the project. A match funding request of £33,642.65 has been received by Belfast City Council to contribute to the project, which has an overall value of £373,850 for the coming financial year.</p>
2.9	<p><u>Lenadoon Community Forum - Neighbourhood Training for Employment</u> The progress report received from Lenadoon Community Forum indicates that the project is on course to achieve its targets in terms of engaging with individuals and placing them into employment, training or further education. Participants have undertaken courses in Numeracy and Literacy Levels 2 (GCSE grade C equivalent), Text/Word Processing Suite Levels 1-3, Business Administration, Sage Payroll Level 2, Computerised Payroll Levels 1 and 2. To date this year, 265 people have been recruited, 163 have gained recognised qualifications, 28 have gone into further education and 22 into employment. Outputs for the coming year are expected to remain in line with the results delivered in the current year.</p>
2.10	<p>In April 2014 after four years decanted to various sites, the Lenadoon Community Forum will move into a new building and the Training For Employment Project will be operate in a brand new IT suite and training room. This is a good opportunity to engage new participants and bring together services such as childcare and counselling under one roof. As well as serving Lenadoon residents, participants who have availed of services in the past reside in the Suffolk and Dunmurry communities. The new building is adjacent to the interface and this will ensure greater access to services for residents from all</p>

	sections of the community.
2.11	In order to roll out the training support in this coming financial year, the project promoters have asked the council to provide match funding of £12,010 towards a project with an overall value of £124,000.
2.12	<u>Time Associates/Belfast Metropolitan College – Learn to Earn</u> Time Associates' 2013-2014 progress report to date indicates that the Learn to Earn project engaged with 43 participants (annual target 32). Of these, 14 found employment or went into self-employment and the participants amassed a total of 162 qualifications as part of their engagement in the programme. These include CCEA Exploring Enterprise; ILM Team Leader Award, CIEH Food Hygiene and Health Safety certificate. The project is on course to achieving all project outputs and in the quarter four forecasts, a further 50 qualifications will bring the total to 212. This year also seen the project expand its employer engagement activities with strong links being established with the Ten Square group and Odyssey Arena.
2.13	In the coming financial year, project promoters anticipate that they will recruit at least 32 participants who will collectively achieve in excess of 150 qualifications. 14 of the participants will find employment and 10 will go into further education. In order to achieve these results, they are seeking match funding of £6,000 from Belfast City Council.
2.14	<u>Upper Springfield Development Trust – Jobs on the Move</u> The progress report received from USDT indicates that the project is on course to exceed its targets in terms of engaging with individuals and placing them into employment. Project promoters have worked with 265 individuals, helping 48 into employment and an additional 105 have undertaken accredited training up to December 2013.
2.15	Within this financial year, a number of participants have undertaken work placement and training with the council as part of pre-recruitment programmes. Eight posts have been ring-fenced for individuals from that group (recruited following a competitive interview process). Client completed 'Roots to Wings' programme with Hendersons, Strive to Work pre-employment programme with First Source and Stream and undertook work placements with Marks & Spencer, negotiation of work placements as part of the employability working group with Belfast HSC Trust.
2.16	In the coming year, it is planned that the project will provide one-to-one mentoring and support to 300 participants, helping at least 10% of those find employment within the project. Match funding from council of £30,000 is being sought for this project, as a contribution to a project with an overall value of £246,462.
2.17	<u>Belfast City Council/Lisburn City Council – HARTE</u> Between April and December 2013, 41 participants completed the HARTE programme. 41 people gained employment (figures include some people from year two of the programme who have just received employment), 32 people gained Level Two qualifications in industry recognised fields such as customer care, health and safety, food hygiene, World Host and team leadership. Participants have gone on to "next steps" training including "service of food at a table" and "preparing and serving wines".

2.18	<p>In August 2013 to coincide with the World Police and Fire Games, 14 trainees from the HARTE programme took up the challenge of running HARTE@theMET pop up restaurant at the Belfast Met Titanic Quarter Campus. Programme participants were involved in all aspects of this intervention which included marketing, menu preparation and planning. Trainees cooked and served over 900 'covers'. They put to use the hospitality skills that they received training in including good customer service, catering and beverage services.</p>
2.19	<p>As a result of this valuable work experience, six people have gained full-time employment. A new relationship was formed with the Odyssey Arena who organised a recruitment drive for past and present HARTE participants. Seven participants gained part-time casual employment.</p>
2.20	<p>From April 2011 to December 2013, HARTE has performed strongly against targets as per letter of offer with DEL and the agreement with Belfast City Council It shows that HARTE has surpassed its target in six areas. There are strong mentoring, employer engagement and job search elements in the HARTE programme. Contact is maintained not only with participants on the current year of a programme, but also with past HARTE participants. They are contacted and invited to attend interviews with employers when opportunities arise. This ensures that participants receive help and support they need to progress in the labour market. This service comes at no additional cost to the project.</p>
2.21	<p>In the coming year, four HARTE programmes are planned, involving 60 long term unemployed people. Participants will be provided with accredited training and will be given dedicated pre-employment support and mentoring to help them find a job within the relevant field. The project will require match funding of £25,000 from Belfast City Council for the coming year, with £15,000 coming from Lisburn City Council. The overall project cost is £142,000.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The total match funding requirements for the projects in the coming financial year are £120,508.67.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality and good relations implications. These will be tested by DEL as part of the funding application process.

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are asked to consider match-funding requests for the six projects as identified above in order to meet the targets as set out in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women's Training Project: £13,856.02 - Progress to Employment: £33,642.65 - Neighbourhood Training for Employment: £12,010 - Learn2earn: £6,000 - Jobs on the Move: £30,000 - HARTE: £25,000

6	Decision Tracking
6.1	Update reports will be presented to committee on an annual basis.

7	Key to Abbreviations
6.1	DSD – Department of Social Development DEL – Department of Employment and Learning EBM – East Belfast Mission HARTE – Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment LEMIS – Local Employment Intermediary Service NEET – Not in Education, Training or Employment USDT – Upper Springfield Development Trust

Appendix 1 - ESF match funding requests - overview of performance (2013) and match funding requested for 2014-2015						
Project name	Project description	Targets for 2013-2014	Actual performance 2013-2014 (April-end Dec)	Highlights/key activities undertaken	Match funding request for 2014-2015	Targets for 2014-15
Women's Training Project	Project to improve basic and intermediate skills for women, with a dedicated mentor to support clients through one-to-one support and advice and guidance. There is also a team member employed to support those not in employment, education and training (NEET)	90 participants to receive accredited training; 37 clients to go into employment, 40 clients to receive benefit advice; 20 clients to receive essential skills training; 30 clients referred to other support programmes and 30 clients to go into further and higher education	124 participants received accredited training, 38 went into employment (of whom 15 were NEETS clients)	Introduction of new team member to focus on NEETS group is now beginning to generate positive results	£13,856.02 requested from Belfast City Council. Total project costs £156,094. DEL/ESF contribution is £101,461; contribution from DSD is £38,868.98	90 participants to receive accredited training; 37 clients to go into employment, 40 clients to receive benefit advice; 20 clients to receive essential skills training; 30 clients referred to other support programmes and 30 clients to go into further and higher education
Progress to Employment	Provides participants with access to accredited training, focusing on providing training to match participants' skills with employers' requirements. A mentor further supports clients through one-to-one support and advice and guidance.	Promote accredited training courses and job search activity to 220 people, 70 clients into employment, 100 clients to receive benefit advice, 40 clients referred to other programmes	314 participants availed of training and support, 121 undertook accredited training and 96 found employment (including 40 NEET clients). 384 clients received soft skills training, 127 clients referred to other programmes. Employer engagement with 62 employers	9 pre employment training courses undertaken - very positive employment outcomes.	£33,642.65 requested from BCC. Total project costs £373,850. DEL/ESF £243,022, match funding from DSD £94,360.	Promote accredited training courses and job search activity to 220 people, 70 clients into employment, 100 clients to receive benefit advice, 40 clients referred to other programmes
Neighbourhood Training for Employment	This project aims to help local people gain accredited qualifications with a view to increasing their employment opportunities. Courses to be undertaken include Essential skills combined with ICT, Sage payroll/accounts levels 1 and 2, ECDL essentials and extra Manual book-keeping levels 1 and 2 Bridge to essential skills in ICT.	350 caseloads; 200 participants gaining recognised qualifications, 200 people accessing careers advice, 30 participants accessing 'Steps to Excellence Programme', 35 participants into further education, 25 to achieve employment.	265 caseloads; 163 participants gaining recognised qualifications, 160 people accessing careers advice, 15 participants accessing 'Steps to Excellence Programme', 28 participants into further education, 22 to achieve employment.	27 participants becoming employed. 1 participant becoming self employed and opening her own premises by the end of the financial year. The Forum held an employment information day in conjunction with Job Assist Centre in Horn Drive Community Centre.	£12,010 match funding request from Belfast City Council. Total project costs are £124,004. Other match DEL/ESF £80,603 and BRO £31,390.	350 caseloads; 200 participants gaining recognised qualifications, 200 people accessing careers advice, 30 participants accessing 'Steps to Excellence Programme', 35 participants into further education, 25 to achieve employment.

Project name	Project description	Targets for 2013-2014	Actual performance 2013-2014 (April-end Dec)	Highlights/key activities undertaken	Match funding request for 2014-2015	Targets for 2014-15
Learn to Earn	Employability and enterprise support programme for long-term unemployed focusing on skills development in service industries - includes some work placement opportunities	32 participants registered; 150 qualifications to be achieved; 14 into employment, 10 participants into further education.	43 participants recruited; 162 qualifications achieved; 14 participants into employment, 8 into further education.	Focus on self-employment in current year - participants worked with local owner managers to develop business plan and gain direct work experience of running a hospitality business.	£6,000 requested from Belfast City Council. Total project costs are £85,518. Funding contributions: DEL/ESF £55,587; Time Associates: £11,966; BMC £11,966	32 unemployed/ economically inactive participants recruited; 150 qualifications to be achieved; 14 participants into employment/ self-employment; 10 participants to further education
Jobs on the Move	Pre-employment support offered alongside LEMIS provision, targeting those further from the labour market. Work mainly focused on skills development (including accredited training)	300 caseloads; 30 to achieve employment; 20 outreach clinics to be undertaken; 60 undertaking accredited training	265 caseloads; 48 achieved employment; 28 outreach clinics undertaken; 105 undertook accredited training.	Ran 9 pre-employment training courses in partnership with employers.	£30,000 match funding requested from BCC. Total project costs are £264,160. DEL/ESF £171,704; other DEL match £17,000; Job Assist Centre £45,456	300 caseloads; 30 to achieve employment; 20 outreach clinics to be undertaken; 60 undertaking accredited training.
HARTE	Pre-employment support programme focusing on the hospitality sector. Includes significant focus on skills-building, including specialist skills	60 participants registered; 24 jobs created; 53 participants to gain vocationally-relevant skills, including 37 to NVQ2 level +	41 participants registered; 41 jobs created (including participants from previous programmes); 41 achieved vocationally-relevant skills, including 32 at NVQ2 level +	Organisation and participation in a pop-up restaurant during World Fire and Police Games at Belfast Metropolitan College.	£25,000 requested from BCC. Total project costs £142,000. DEL/ESF £92,000; Lisburn City Council £15,000; in-kind costs £10,000	60 participants recruited; 24 jobs created; 53 to gain vocationally-relevant skills, including 37 to NVQ2 level +



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Belfast Business Awards – request for sponsorship
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has previously been a key partner in funding and delivering the Belfast Business Awards.
1.2	The Awards have been running since 2004 – initially as a project led by Belfast City Centre Management Company (BCCM) in conjunction with Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (BCTC). From 2010 to 2012, Belfast City Council was been the lead delivery agent for the awards, supported by BCCM as organising partner. BCCM was paid a fixed sum for its role in this work, in addition to the core funding that it receives from Council each year.
1.3	In April 2013, the Development Committee considered a number of options presented to them regarding the future of the awards and took a decision not to support the awards in that year. Given the lack of council support, the Belfast Business Awards did not take place in 2013.
1.4	Belfast City Council has now received a request for sponsorship of the awards in 2014 from Belfast City Centre Management. BCCM have confirmed that their board took the decision to proceed with the 2014 event and considered that an approach should be presented to the council to ask for sponsorship of the event.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The 2012 Belfast Business Awards – the last Belfast Business Awards that took place – received over 120 entries from businesses throughout the council area, for the 11 award categories available, with some categories more heavily subscribed than others. The awards process concluded with a Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony held in City Hall on 8 November 2012 attended by 330 individuals, all of whom paid for participation at the event.
2.2	In previous years, the costs associated with the event have been met from

	<p>funding by the council, supplemented by income from a range of principal and category sponsors as well as revenue generated from ticket sales from those attending the Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony. In 2011 and 2012, the cost for Council of delivering the awards was £20,000 with an additional £9,000 budget for BCCM's management fee. In 2012 a principal sponsor for the awards could not be secured however sponsorship was obtained for each of the eleven award categories.</p>
2.3	<p>When Belfast City Council took on the role of lead partner, the organisation of the event involved a significant volume of work for Council team including the marketing and promotion of the awards, the creation and management of the online entry process and overseeing the event management process.</p>
2.4	<p>In 2014, Belfast City Centre Management are proposing that they will be the lead delivery partner for the event and have approached the council to act as a principal sponsor. In return for a sponsorship contribution of £10,000, the council will receive the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 tables at the gala ceremony for council guests - Council logo included on all marketing material including presentation at the launch and gala ceremony - Speaking slot at launch and gala ceremony - Position on the judging panel - Seat on the Belfast Business Awards Strategy Committee. <p>No date has yet been set for the 2014 event.</p>
2.5	<p>The event is successful in generating a significant volume of positive news coverage and many award winners use the Belfast Business Awards recognition as part of their own promotional material.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	If the sponsorship request is approved, a financial contribution of £10,000 is being sought from Belfast City Council towards the event.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality of good relations considerations.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to consider the request from Belfast City Centre Management to be a principal sponsor of the Belfast Business Awards at a cost of £10,000.

6	Decision Tracking
If the funding request is approved, a feedback report on the event will be provided for the committee.	
Timeline: December 2014	
Reporting Officer: Lisa Toland	

7	Key to Abbreviations
BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management	
BCTC – Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce	



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Spring Continental Market
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Ian Carmichael, Markets Development Officer, ext 3522

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<u>Purpose of this report</u> The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to extend the Spring Continental Market by one day in May 2014 only.
1.2	<u>Background</u> The Continental Market has been coming to the grounds of City Hall for 9 years. The Spring Bank holiday market is normally held on the last bank holiday weekend in May. It runs from the Friday through to the end of Monday. This year, due to the local elections using the City Hall, the market has had to change its dates and will be arriving a week earlier. The Continental Market is operated by Market Place Europe Ltd.

2	Key Issues
2.1	This year, due to the local elections, the grounds of City Hall are out of bounds for any events taking place between the 22 and 24 May. Due to this we have informed Market Place Europe Ltd that the Spring Bank holiday Continental market will have to change its dates. As such, the Continental Market will now be arriving a week earlier, from Friday 16 May to Monday 19 May. The revised arrangement means that traders will miss out on the Bank Holiday Monday trade, which is usually their busiest day. Therefore, Market Place Europe Ltd have asked if they could open and start trading from Thursday 15 May instead of Friday 16 th to try and compensate for losing the Bank Holiday Monday this year.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	No cost to Council, additional costs for security, waste collection and cleaning will be paid for by the contractor.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	As with other events in the city, the Continental Market has the potential to bring people from a wide range of backgrounds together and therefore promote good relations.

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Development Committee are requested to approve the one extra day trading.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline: March 2014 Reporting Officer: John McGrillen	



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Feasibility Study for Ford Visteon Site
Date:	18 March 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Keith Sutherland, Urban Development Manager, ext 3478

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Following a meetings with various groups, Councillor Attwood has requested that the Council commission a Feasibility Study for the former Ford Visteon Site on Black's Road. The purpose of the feasibility study is to consider the optimal use of the site to support future city development.
1.2	In support of the request, the member highlighted that the Minister of Enterprise Trade and Investment on 20 January 2014, stated: <i>"The situation with land that is zoned for economic development is this, and Invest NI is very clear on the issue, and this is what we will be saying to the Minister of the Environment, the planning department or whoever comes to us for advice: we are generally opposed to the loss of land that is being used, or was last used, for industry to non-industrial users. That is our policy".</i>

2	Key Issues
2.1	In 2007, outline planning permission was granted for a proposed mixed use scheme on part of the site (Z/2006/2339/O). Approval of reserved matters was granted in September 2009 for 210 residential units and a business park development consisting of 3,345sqm of class B uses (Z/2008/0803/RM). Both applications have now expired.
2.2	The current planning application was submitted to the DOE on 11 December 2013 for development of the site. The proposal involves demolition of existing buildings and proposed comprehensive mixed-use development comprising 244 social and private/affordable residential units (with access from Black's Road) with associated public open space /linear park. The proposal also involves a non-residential element comprising of a community centre and class B1b/B1c/B2 uses (call centre, research

	and development, and light industrial uses) with associated parking and access from Finaghy Road North. Details of the planning history of the site have been included at Appendix 1.
2.3	The site is zoned as existing business/industry in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015. However, the PAC report following the draft BMAP Public Local Inquiry recommended that site is left un-zoned as white lands.
2.4	In light of the site's planning history and the uncertainty around its future zoning, it is suggested that a broader feasibility study would allow consideration of what could be the optimal use of the site with a broader range of alternative explored in the context of the wider industrial / commercial land supply across the city.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	No specific allocation for this type of study was included within the 2014-15 Department budgets. Provision could be made from currently unallocated BMAP budgets should the Committee resolve to support the feasibility proposal.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific considerations.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are requested to consider the potential to commission a feasibility study of the potential for alternative uses for the Visteon Site.

6	Decision Tracking
6.1	Pending committee approval a report will be brought back to members.

7	Key to Abbreviations
DOE - Department of the Environment PAC - Planning Appeals Commission	

8	Documents attached
Appendix 1: Planning History of former Ford Visteon Site	

Appendix 1: Planning History of former Ford Visteon site

Reference	Date Submitted	Applicant	Location	Proposal	Decision	Date of Decision
Z/2013/1434/F	11-Dec-13	Fold Housing Association	Former Visteon Factory Blacks Road Belfast BT10	Demolition of existing buildings and proposed comprehensive mixed-use development comprising 244no social and private/affordable residential units (with access from Black's Road) with associated public open space/linear park. Non-residential element to in	Pending	
Z/2008/0803/RM		Alburn Ltd	Land adjoining M1 Motorway between Blacks Road and Finaghy Road North, Belfast	Proposed mixed use residential (210 No. residential units) and class B business park development (3,345 sq m) (additional plans).	Approval	17-Sep-09
Z/2006/2339/O	09-Oct-06	Alburn Ltd	Land adjoining M1 Motorway, between Blacks Road and Finaghy Road North, Ballymoney, Belfast, BT11 9EH	Proposed mixed use residential and business park development.	Approval	20-Aug-07

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Consultation Response on draft economic inactivity framework
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment (DETI), in partnership with the Department for Social Development (DSD), Invest NI and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) recently launched a consultation on a strategic framework to tackle economic inactivity. This is a commitment within the current Programme for Government. The consultation period closes on 17 April 2014.
1.2	The framework – entitled “Enabling Success” – seeks to support people to make transitions to employment. It aims to address a long-term structural problem within our economy by creating a more diverse, skilled and active working age population. Its overarching and strategic goal is to contribute towards a stable and competitive employment rate of over 70% by 2023, through a reduction in the proportion of the working age population classified as ‘economically inactive’.
1.3	The consultation document asserts that economic inactivity in Northern Ireland: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has been persistently high among the working age population (16 - 64 year olds), for the past 30 years, ranging between 26% and 32%, irrespective of changes in the economic cycle (i.e. even when the unemployment rate fell to around 4% in 2007) - Equates to more than 315,000 people (27.4%) the highest regional rate in the UK.
1.4	A number of specific target groups have been identified. These are long-term sick and disabled people and those with family commitments. It includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women and lone parents – often, they have been found to have relatively higher skills level than other groups who are not working - People who are long term sick, have disabilities or health conditions - Older workers – who will be helped back into work by tackling discrimination barriers, increasing opportunities and addressing issues of

	self-confidence and skills levels.
2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The framework has four key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing in the levels of economic inactivity due to work-limiting health conditions or disabilities by helping individuals in this group move into employment - Reducing the levels of economic inactivity due to family commitments, by helping lone parents currently in receipt of out-of-work benefits move into employment - Reducing in the in-flows to the economically inactive groups through initiatives designed to promote flexible working, extend working lives, and maintain employment for individuals who develop health conditions or take on caring responsibilities - Contributing to a reduction of the unemployment rate to pre-recession levels through programmes designed to alleviate barriers to employment.
2.2	<p>It recognises that there are many individuals who, for a range of complex personal and health reasons, will never be able to fully engage with the labour market. However there are also many individuals who, with the right level of support, will be able to participate in some way in meaningful work.</p>
2.3	<p>Proposed initiatives can be summarised under four key themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Increasing engagement and support</u> – by promoting the value of work and increasing access to pre-employment and in-work support through innovative new pilot projects 2. <u>Increasing job opportunities</u> – for the unemployed and economically inactive through new support and incentives for employers to hire inactive individuals. 3. <u>Addressing wider barriers</u> – by alleviating or removing wider societal issues that limit engagement with the labour market, through a series of new measures to help older workers and individuals with mental health issues to overcome disadvantages in the workplace. 4. <u>Breaking the cycle of inactivity</u> – by reducing in-flows into the economically inactive groups by building on existing strategies and initiatives across government to improve education and employment outcomes for young people and improved advice and support for those at risk of disengaging with the labour market.
2.4	<p>An early initial action plan to be taken forward by the strategic framework will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New research to map the current service landscape to better connect and improve outcomes for the target groups - Undertaking a series of innovative pilot projects designed to test new approaches to re-engage and support inactive individuals - Putting in place a new regime to test a limited number of small-scale initiatives for their potential to improve outcomes for the economically inactive. Policy areas for these pilots to address will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Factors contributing to inactivity in urban and rural settings o Skills deficits and barriers that limit engagement with the labour

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> market ○ Mobility issues faced by inactive groups ○ Promoting entry level opportunities for the low skilled to enter the labour market <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing opportunities for the low skilled to improve their skills levels and progress into sustained employment - Forming a new taskforce to co-ordinate and drive outcomes across government departments and beyond to increase wider public awareness of the major issues surrounding inactivity. The taskforce will provide strategic leadership throughout the life cycle of the strategy.
2.5	<p>The draft Belfast City Council response to the framework is attached as Appendix 1. It responds to the questions set out in the consultation document. Key elements of the response include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council support for this integrated approach to tackling a multi-faceted problem that is perhaps the largest drag on the city's competitiveness and economic growth - Support for creating shared budgets, citywide targets and local delivery mechanisms to address the localised nature of the challenge across Belfast - Need for a more co-ordinated approach to commissioning and delivery of programme - Support for the provision of baseline information and tracking of progress at a local level in order to identify the impact of interventions and to interrogate disparities in success rates in order to better understand what works in this field - Support for proposed pilot scheme with a caution that addressing this issue will require medium and longer-term, targeted interventions, as opposed to short, sharp project where outputs measurements are used as a record of success - Proposal for a city-wide approach to addressing this issue, as part of a wider employability and skills plan for Belfast, in keeping with the commitment set out in the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy - Need to consider targeted support for small businesses to encourage and stimulate their involvement in activities such as this, including a simplification of services and programmes - Need to widen the partnership approach to take account of the role of the education sector in "breaking the cycle" and preventing in-flows into inactivity.
2.6	<p>Members should note that there is an information session on this consultation in Belfast Met's E3 campus on Springfield Road on 26 March at 12pm.</p>

3	Resource Implications
	No specific staff resources at this time.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	There are no specific equality or good relations implications.

5	Recommendations
	It is recommended that members consider and approve the draft Belfast City

	Council response to the consultation, attached at Appendix 1, and agree to submit this to the consultation team in advance of the 17 April deadline.
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6	Decision Tracking
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An update on planned approaches will be brought back to the committee once these are agreed.

Timeline: September 2014

Reporting Officer: Lisa Toland

7	Key to Abbreviations
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DEL - Department for Employment and Learning

DETI - Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment

8	Documents Attached
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Appendix 1: draft Belfast City Council response to the consultation on “Enabling Success: driving social change through economic participation – a strategic framework to tackle economic inactivity.

Appendix 1

Enabling Success Consultation – draft Belfast City Council response Presented to Development Committee – 18 March 2014

1. To what extent would you agree that these are the most relevant target groups for the strategy to focus on?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The Council agrees with the two target groups selected: the long-term sick and disabled and those with family commitments. The research suggests that these are groups that, with support, can make an active contribution to the labour market and that this development can both improve their economic prospects – and those of their families – and contribute to an overall improvement in the economic performance of the city and region.

Despite the fact that the Government's Economic Strategy identifies Belfast as the key driver for economic growth in the region and the NI Executive references the importance of Belfast to regional prosperity, the following challenges remain within the city:

- Belfast has relatively highly skilled residents but also has a high proportion of people with no formal qualifications. The Centre for Cities comparative analysis¹ of Belfast with 63 other UK cities placed the city at the bottom of the group
- Belfast's 'no skilled population' sits at almost 30% of those of working age. In some parts of the city, the level increases to almost 90% of the working age population. This is a widely recognised issue, for which finding a solution is key to maximising economic prosperity. Obtaining a level two qualification is out of reach for many Belfast residents
- The Integrated Economic Strategy for the city (currently at draft stage) recognises the progress made between 2001 and 2011 in skills attainment, where the proportion of Belfast's population with no qualifications decreased from 41% to 30.4%. The challenges of developing skills at levels 1,2 and 3 for Belfast residents is illustrated in the table below:

Qualification	Share in 2001 (%)		Share in 2011(%)	
	Belfast	NI	Belfast	NI
No qualifications	41.8	41.6	30.4	29.1
Level 1 qualifications	14.8	17.2	10.8	11.5
Level 2 qualifications	13.3	16.4	12.6	14.9
Level 3 qualifications	10.9	9	13.1	12.3
Level 4 qualifications and above	19.2	15.8	26	23.6
Other qualifications			7.1	8.5
<i>Source: Census 2011</i>				

¹ Presentation on Belfast: Future City Conference (May 2013)

- Inactivity in the labour market is currently the biggest drag on the Belfast's competitiveness, according to recent research commissioned by the Council². Benchmarked against 10 other cities, Belfast had the lowest levels of economic activity (41.6%) and considerably below that of Dublin (22.9%). This research shows there are 16 wards in Belfast with less than 50% of residents in employment
- An additional 15,000 people with no formal qualifications will come under Belfast city's jurisdiction in 2015.

The research contained in the framework identifies the differing skills baselines within the target groups. This points to the need for differentiated and targeted support services to facilitate their entry or re-entry into the labour market. In addition to pre-employment support, consideration needs to be given to the structural barriers preventing these people from finding work or presenting a disincentive for them to do so. The integrated nature of this framework is welcome, given the need to provide tailored packages of support dependent on individual needs.

We support the need for a range of jobs to provide an entry point for inactive individuals and the assertion that job opportunities require higher skills. A report commissioned by Belfast City Council in 2009 identified the scale of the skills challenge across the city and its potential to impact adversely on the city's economic growth. Some areas of the city had large volumes of residents with "low or no skills" levels and 6 out of 7 jobs in the future requires qualification levels in excess of this. A skills mismatch and the geographical concentration of those with low skills levels risks widening the social divide in the city. Finding a solution to these issues is key to maximising economic prosperity.

2 (i) Of the factors highlighted, which do you think are the most important to focus upon to reduce levels of inactivity?

Belfast City Council agrees with the factors identified that affect the employability in the target inactive groups relating to individuals, employers, local and regional levels as well as personal and household circumstances.

We consider that it is critical to put in place preventative measures that reduce the volume of individuals adding to the economic inactivity numbers – "breaking the cycle" as the framework has called it. However, for those already in this group – and the additional entrants into the group – it is critical that targeted support is made available at an early stage, given the research that suggests that, the longer a person remains out of work, the harder it is for them to re-enter the labour market. Equally, we consider that it is critical to ensure that this is not simply a supply-side mechanism but that efforts are made to build employer support and to develop, with them, a range of flexible approaches that help the individual back into work, while providing a productive asset for the employer.

² Research into the Competitiveness of Belfast, Oxford Economics (2011)

2 (ii) Are there any additional factors that should be considered?

The integration of the benefit system and the support mechanisms to help people back into employment is critical. This will have a particular impact on those with family commitments, given the cost-prohibitive nature of childcare provision.

From an employer perspective, it is essential to be clear about what is offered and what is expected of the employer. Their attitude to flexibility – without additional burdens of red tape – will be a critical determinant of success for this framework.

Wider issues such as accessibility and connectivity also need to be considered. In Belfast, many individuals are concerned at having to travel outside of their immediate vicinity to find employment and the lack of mobility (only 1 in 2 have access to a car) coupled with public transport limitations means that they find it difficult to do so. Yet economic projections suggest that the future economic development of the city (and wider region) will be focused on a number of areas around the city centre. Innovative approaches to addressing this challenge need to be explored, involving both cultural and operational issues.

3. Do you agree that the strategic goal is both challenging and realistic?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

We commend DEL and DETI in setting an ambitious goal in contributing towards a stable and competitive employment rate of over 70% by 2023, through a reduction in the proportion of the working age population classified as ‘economically inactive’.

Belfast City Council has, for some time, been championing the development of a citywide employability and skills strategy and this was identified as a priority within the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy. An essential component of any strategy is a target to which all delivery agents are contributing. Given the specific challenges in Belfast – and the fact that the inactivity rate in the city has always been slightly higher than the regional average – we consider that this target will be particularly challenging within the city.

4(i) Do you agree that the objectives adequately capture the core issues that would need to be addressed to achieve the goal of the strategy?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Belfast City Council agrees with the objectives identified in the strategy. The low levels of skills and the concentration by population in certain areas of the city mean that, unless specific and targeted interventions are put in place, future employment opportunities will remain out of the reach of many Belfast residents. Macro-level changes such as the welfare reform agenda are likely to lead to an increase in those with low or no skills levels seeking employment in a declining market.

Identifying specific target groups and putting in place mechanisms to help them back into the labour market will improve the chances of success. Consideration will need to be given to how the support for these groups is delivered. At present, the system is fragmented and there is no alignment between demand and supply; rather the regional service approach is applied. If this approach is to be successful it will need to be highly focused – including a focus on key local geographies where the challenges are greatest, with the option for differentiated approaches to meet employee and employer needs.

4. (ii) What additional strategic objectives could help to achieve a rate of >70% by 2023?

We believe that a local response to local issues is required and we recommend a city strategy partnership model which operates successfully in other parts of the UK. Clearly defined targets and outcomes are required to address long standing employability and skills issues within Belfast. This partnership approach could also contribute to:

- Improvement in the quality of life, health and education for people in areas of greatest need
- More cohesion of services to boost and develop confidence within communities
- Improved life chances for children and young people.

Evaluation of the city strategies approach identified a number of key lessons that may be relevant to any Belfast-specific approach. These include:

- The importance of giving initiatives time to make a difference, given the scale of the challenges to be addressed
- The need for national policy to work in the same direction as local policy and vice versa – to reinforce each other’s aims
- Recognition that different geographical scales are important for different types of interventions
- Discretionary funding can play an important role in helping partnerships to provide services to address local needs
- The importance of looking at the role of demand as well as supply in tackling worklessness.

We consider that these reflections are relevant in this proposed work.

5. (i) Do you agree that this is the best approach in terms of strategic management and co-ordination of the final strategy?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please outline the rationale for your response in the box below

The Council agrees that a partnership approach is required, bringing together community, voluntary, educators and advisors, businesses and government organisations to work together to address employment barriers and inactivity. We consider that a more focused approach detailing specific targets and allocation of budgets would improve the overall programme’s effectiveness.

The issue of establishing baselines and targets was one of the key learning points from the city strategy experience and we believe the strategy could benefit from this approach. While interventions have targets, these are often around programme participation (inputs/outputs) as opposed to outcomes and longer-term impact. Outcomes can vary from initiative to initiative (the consultation proposes a call for projects) and this makes it difficult to gain a cumulative perspective on the impact of employability initiatives across a range of partners and programmes. To this end, it may be appropriate to consider establishing clear baseline information for any target intervention and to create appropriate KPIs, targets and outcomes measurements for the group (and any collaborative activity) that can be reviewed on a regular basis to note the progress made. This would mean a move away from the programme-based approach towards a target for the specific groups and location, give due consideration to health and deprivation levels. Consideration should be given to the geographical level at which this might be measured (possibly at the new district council level or below).

In Belfast, there is a Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) involving the council, the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. This partnership focuses on addressing health inequalities and the particular impact they have on a range of issues including access to learning and employment. This is a useful model to consider as a reference point and the lifelong learning sub-group of this partnership is currently looking at a number of targeted initiatives, including a “Belfast Works” initiative, based on the Glasgow Works model that is referenced in the consultation document.

5. (ii) Which key sectors and stakeholders should be represented on the taskforce to ensure that the strategic objectives are successfully achieved?

We believe that businesses, education providers, community and voluntary sector, health professionals and government organisations have a role to play to ensure that the strategic objectives are successfully achieved. The research paper that accompanies the strategy recognises the role that Councils will play from April 2015 under the reform of local government, where we will have statutory responsibility for urban regeneration and community development to enable social, economic and physical need in their areas most likely within the context of community plans. Belfast City Council is keen to work directly with other statutory partners to address this issue.

To make the best use of resources, the Council believes that economic prosperity and growth can be achieved by developing a locally based employability and skills strategy to address long standing employability and skills issues within Belfast. This commitment is outlined in the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy. We would be keen to work with DEL on the development of a city-wide strategy which would promote greater coherence between supply and demand with the aim of improving city competitiveness and supporting access to employment.

Given the wide range of organisations involved in this activity, it may be necessary to give consideration to a strategic group, which is supported by operational/working groups on some of the key issues. The strategic group should involve a small core of representatives but the working groups will allow deeper consideration of some of the key issues, including the operational implications of proposed initiatives.

6. (i) Do you agree that the research projects outlined are the key areas for further consideration?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

We welcome the research programmes identified and would welcome further clarification as to when these pieces might be concluded in order to create the baselines that are critical for the progress of this work.

We would also recommend that, given the highly localised nature of the challenges and the specific approaches required for each of the target groups, information should be provided at local level – ideally at the level of each of the new direct councils and, if possible at ward level. Data capture at regional level only masks the significant disparities across areas and locations. We know, for example, that within the city of Belfast, there are significant disparities across the city in terms of benefit take-up and skills levels. As an illustration of this, the following statistics are of interest:

- Residents of the Water Works ward are twelve times as likely to be in receipt of Job Seekers' Allowance than those living in Stranmillis
- The percentage of economically inactive residents in the Crumlin ward is almost three times as high as in Ravenhill
- 49.2% of the economically inactive residents in the Whiterock ward are in receipt of benefits compared to 1.7% of those in Stranmillis
- 87.7% of residents of the Crumlin ward have no or low skills levels, compared to 12.1% in Stranmillis.

We would also recommend that demand-side research is undertaken and regularly refreshed to ensure alignment between skills development/pre-employment support interventions and areas of employment opportunity. Joint research commissioned by the Council and Invest NI³ shows:

- An increase in the proportion of employment taken up by sectors such as administration and support, professional, scientific and technical and information and communication
- An increase in the employment between 2002 and 2012 in the finance and insurance sector
- The average growth rate in the manufacturing sector from 2008 – 2012 was 3.1%
- The presence of arts facilities in conjunction with TV programming and broadcasting, suggests the emergence of the creative industries sector in Belfast. Computer programming, the creative industries and the wider renewables or green industries present significant clustering opportunities for Belfast in the future
- The accommodation and food sector has a sizable opportunity to increase its productivity with an average growth of 2.0%. This sector has a vital role within the economy of Belfast, accounting for 5.8% of total employment with over 12,000 employees.

Across all the priority areas, we consider that it is critical that there should be a focus on ensuring that funded activities meet the needs of both employers and programme participants. While the focus of the programme is on supply-side measures to

³ Belfast Integrated Economic Strategy Stage 1: Economics and Policy Synopsis (April 2013)

address the challenges of economic inactivity and low skills levels, we consider that there is a need to work closely with businesses – particularly SMEs – to understand their employability and skills requirements and to provide solutions that meet their needs in a way that helps them improve their business productivity.

6. (ii) What other areas of research may be beneficial to consider and why?

The Council believes that the research proposed is valuable, but we are keen to see on the ground actions and initiatives developed and tangible benefits achieved.

As identified, there needs to be both demand and supply side research in order to ensure a greater alignment between the two. The demand-side work may include both statistical and attitudinal work, taking account of employers’ views as to ways to support people back into employment. On the statistical side, the projections set out in the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy should be regularly reviewed in order to ensure that they remain valid.

7. (i) Do you agree that the key themes will provide a suitable framework to address the main issues associated with economic inactivity?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Belfast City Council welcomes the broad proposals set out in the framework and we are keen to see the action plan delivered upon to build momentum and to achieve results for both target groups.

8. (i) Which existing government service(s) work well in your opinion and why?

There are a number of services across government that are having some impact on economic regeneration in communities. Key characteristics of these initiatives include:

- Interventions that involve a wrap- around service provision – in this case combining careers advice, healthcare, benefits/budgeting advice, skills matched to real jobs and the provision of quality training opportunities. Strong mentoring support will create a sense of stability and help those further from the labour market more likely to make the transition to work. This approach would ensure that people are not ‘shoe-horned’ into jobs that they are unsuitable for – particularly those people with mental health issues as it would risk dropout and disengagement. By necessity, this involves partnership planning and collaborative working
- Consideration should be given to appropriate measurements to track progress and record success, as well as identifying issues of challenge and offering opportunities to re-focus support to meet the need. We would welcome the development of a monitoring system and the use of a shared database across

the local training provider network, which would allow them to track the progress of an individual as they engaged with various programmes available. A “revolving door” scenario whereby the hardest-to-help people move between being in and out of work and through various training programmes needs to be monitored and gaps in the system addressed. Consideration needs to be given to relevant targets and to the structuring of contracts with providers to ensure that those in need of support get access to the services that they require, as opposed to dealing only with those for whom it is easier to find a job. In this case, we consider that output targets should not be the only measurement used

- While pilot programmes are welcome and are often a necessary part of developing new policies, delivering short-term and small scale pilot programmes (for example 6-12 months) may not assist the long-term unemployed and those who never had a paid job to sustain employment. The lack of routine and stability may cause them to drift further away from re-engaging in work. A longer duration may be suitable for these pilots (minimum 18 months).

8. (ii) What are the main barriers to accessing existing government services and why?

The research in the consultation document suggests that one of the key deterrents to accessing government services for both employers and potential participants is the lack of awareness of what is available or the lack of understanding of what they can and cannot access. Employability support is a complex operational environment and this can lead to both duplication and instances of individuals “falling between the cracks”.

Choosing from a large menu of programmes can be difficult and confusing for people who have not been part of the labour market to navigate and make informed decisions on options that suit their needs best. A lack of clear information can create unnecessary barriers for the hardest-to-reach particularly at transition points in their lives and increases the risk of disengagement. The advice system must be able to identify and track people at risk of early disengagement, and provide wrap-around support to help those at greatest risk to secure sustainable employment or gain meaningful qualifications.

There is an onus on statutory and community partners who inform, advise and guide participants, to provide them with impartial up-to-date information. Success rates of training or employment providers in helping people into employment or to gain relevant qualifications must be made publicly available. This will build trust and confidence among users.

Potential clients need to be able to access the information from a variety of sources including the internet. It is recognised that internet usage is significantly lower amongst target groups who are already at risk of socio-economic exclusion⁴. In the EU, a quarter of the population have never used the internet. Future predictions indicate that 90% of new jobs created will require some level of digital literacy. There is a risk of further distancing people not only from sourcing training information on the internet but from qualifications and jobs if the ‘digital divide’ is not addressed.

⁴ Europe investing in human capital: let's get every European digital, José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission

Training should be built into the programme and a vehicle for this could be the Go On NI initiative which seeks to introduce people to the internet for the first time.

The cost of returning to work or training can place a financial burden on people who are already operating on a tight budget. Financial contributions towards transport, childcare, clothing and food can help make the transition to work or training easier for the client groups.

8. (iii) How can existing government services be linked more effectively to make them more user friendly and accessible to the customer?

The Council recommends that potential users are involved in reviewing information provision so that it best meets customers' expectations and needs. Information must be provided in plain English and in a number of formats. Existing systems such as the NI Direct website can be better utilised to provide information to advisors on jobs and training programmes available but information must be accurate and updated regularly. Local partnerships should be encouraged in order to raise awareness of the programmes on offer so that participants can be signposted to the most appropriate service. In addition, we would welcome a simplification of the support system to make it easier for people to find what they need.

9 (i) Do you agree that competitive pilot testing is likely to be the most innovative and cost effective way to identify the best models of future intervention?

		✓		
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Belfast City Council recognises and accepts the rationale behind the proposed competitive pilot testing approach. However we would make the following comments and recommend that these are considered when developing this approach:

- An open call process can mean that only those best capable of making quality submissions are resourced, and that there is no alignment between demand and supply. In order to address this issue, DEL may consider opportunities for collaborative commissioning of services to meet agreed outcomes. This could both improve opportunities for success and ensure improved targeting of provision. In Belfast, the council would be keen to be a partner in this approach. Alternatively, we would suggest that DEL uses the baseline from the research that it intends to undertake in order to identify a number of pilot areas where the problems are most acute, taking account of factors such as variations within the urban and rural contexts. This will ensure that activities – while innovative in approach – are meeting an identified need
- Effectiveness and efficiency outlined in the consultation can only be achieved by pooling resources together from funds such as the European Social Fund and the Social Investment Fund, examining gaps in the labour market including the skills mismatch to jobs and building an programme. The strategy can be better delivered by integrating it into programmes that are already happening. While many of these projects do invaluable work, it is

difficult to measure their impact. We consider that a more focused approach detailing specific targets can improve the overall programme’s effectiveness

- If pilots progress, there needs to be a monitoring and evaluation framework in place that is operational throughout the life of the intervention. There also needs to be an opportunity to constantly review and refresh the offer, based on participant and employer feedback
- Pilot initiatives may cause confusion among employers and participants and risk adding to the already significant volume of employability and skills development initiatives. Consideration will need to be given to a communication and engagement strategy that meets the needs of both clients and businesses
- All of the examples of best practice identified involve not only employment and skills support but also a wider range of support mechanisms as well as initiatives to address structural barriers. Pilots will need to involve a range of partnerships and, given the often inflexible nature of government funding, consideration will need to be given to how resources can be set aside to meet expectations.

9 (ii) What specific proposals should be considered for pilot project testing and why?

There are a number of best practice examples identified and potentially all of these have some degree of relevance. In the Belfast context, we would welcome engagement in approaches to look at how to provide targeted, outcome-focused support services in target communities, improving the quality of life for participants and creating sustainable local economies.

10. (i) To what extent do you agree that a controlled use of employer subsidies is potentially the most effective way to increase employment opportunities for the target groups?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please outline the rationale for your response below:

We agree that incentives are a useful mechanism to secure employer buy-in to employment initiatives – particularly those focused on inactive groups. However, we would caution that the introduction of a range of differing incentives may cause confusion among employers and would support greater engagement with them to understand the nature of incentive that may be appropriate. Having said that, it may be that small businesses may require more support than large companies – it is a bigger undertaking for them as they have less support resources in the first place so taking on a formerly inactive participant will require a disproportionately greater commitment on their part.

In addition to the employer subsidy, we support the allocation of a training allowance for the individual as a means of ensuring that they build up their skills levels during their employment – both for their own benefit and that of their employer.

10. (ii) How should an employer subsidy be weighted in terms of the different target inactive groups and existing subsidy schemes?

As noted above, we feel that consideration needs to be given as to how the employer subsidy would sit with the existing range of support mechanisms for employers in this field, in order to avoid any further confusion.

However, we believe that employers will need support and training for their staff in coaching, supervisory and mentoring skills to be able to help and motivate potential clients. Equally, consideration should be given to the training allowance for employees in order to build up their skill-set.

10. (iii) How should an employer subsidy be structured to ensure that it promotes sustained employment for the target inactive groups?

As above, we suggest that some consideration be given to an enhanced subsidy for SMEs. Given the priority sector approach adopted by the YES scheme, it may also be appropriate to investigate whether this would work for this client group.

10. (iv) Do you agree that a guaranteed employment and skills progression route for the target inactive groups should be integral to an employer subsidy incentive scheme?

As above – we consider that the two mechanisms should operate in tandem.

10. (v) What other stipulations for employers accessing such a subsidy should be considered?

The Council agrees with the recommendations on financial incentives that have been suggested by DEL. Employers will also need support and training for their staff in coaching, supervisory and mentoring skills to be able to help and motivate potential clients.

10. (vi) What other alternative incentives could be considered in lieu of an employer subsidy?

The Council agrees with the recommendations on financial incentives that have been suggested by DEL.

11 (i) Do you agree that these are most relevant inactive groups to focus upon in terms of tackling labour market disadvantage?

The Council agrees with the research paper that accompanied the consultation which indicates that the groups identified are the most relevant inactive groups to focus upon in terms of tackling labour market disadvantage – in the case where people are able to work.

11 (ii) Which type of public awareness campaign would be most effective to promote the positive impact of employing older workers?

The Council believes that a television and radio media campaign would suit best to raise awareness among clients and employers - particularly among smaller and medium sized enterprises that form the backbone of the economy.

The public awareness campaign should be designed to piggy back on existing campaigns in association with older people's representative groups and would make the best use of limited resources. Free PR opportunities (press releases and social media) should also be used to make the best use of budgets. Evaluation of media campaign in terms of engagement and success is essential.

Direct contact with employers will be required. A method of contacting employers will need to be carefully planned before the public awareness campaign is developed and the roll out of programmes begin, in order to avoid a large number of duplicated enquires. Belfast City Council would be content to support this campaign in the city through outlets such as our "City Matters" magazine – available to all households.

11 (iii) Which key delivery partners should be considered to ensure that the impact of the public awareness campaign is maximised?

The Council considers that a partnership approach between DEL, DETI, DSD, Invest NI and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety should work together with older people's representative groups and advisors is required to develop, shape and lead the campaign. As part of a public awareness campaign, engagement is needed with employers in the public sector as well as the private sector to build support. As above, Belfast City Council would also be willing to support the campaign within the city.

11. (iv) What new measures should be considered to raise awareness levels of mental health issues in the workplace?

Belfast, as a city with high levels of deprivation also experiences higher than average levels of mental ill health Belfast. The Council's previous response to the Bamford Review emphasises its support for the principles of prevention and participation. New measures to tackle mental health stigma in the workplace will assist in fostering greater awareness; however, in developing measures it is important to take account of the evidence that work can both contribute to the development of mental ill-health as well as promoting increased positive mental wellbeing.

Any new measures must be multifaceted and be about awareness raising and behaviour change. As the consultation notes this needs to be both within the workplace and wider society. However, the key challenges are likely to be organisational specific and the financial costs associated with any new measures, particularly in smaller companies.

The range of potential measures can vary; for example, local authorities provide a range of services which can impact on people’s mental health – leisure, parks or community services etc. They operate a range of community-based services and facilities which would be well placed to be involved in the promotion of mental health and wellbeing within communities. They also enforce health and safety at work legislation in a range of workplaces and therefore have the potential to influence good working practices and subsequently the mental health of other workers.

The Council has a number of facilities, such as community and leisure centres, and operates a range of programmes and initiatives which taken holistically contribute to improved health promotion and well-being. It is therefore important that other services and positive contributions to health promotion and well-being which exist outside the traditional Health and Social Services field are taken into account

11. (v) Which key delivery partners should be considered to ensure that the impact of these new measures is maximised?

Key delivery partners identified in 11(iii) as well as partners in the public and private sector.

12. (i) Do you agree that better integration of health and work services is the key preventative measure for reducing in-flows into the target inactive groups?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Integrating health and work services is an important preventative measure; however, based on the premise that early intervention is an integral aspect of preventative models; the role of the education sector forms a critical element to help tackle issues such as young people’s aspiration, motivation and attainment. We note the very limited reference to the Department for Education within the consultation and suggest that this is a significant oversight.

12. (ii) How do you see these two sectors integrating in the most effective way both in terms of supporting individuals and employers?

DEL will be required to have a strong leadership role to play in integrating all sectors and ensuring that front-line government staff has the necessary resources, training and budget to ensure that the programme is a success. The Belfast Strategic Partnership model referenced earlier in this response presents one potential model for consideration, given that all relevant partners are represented on the partnership.

12. (iii) Do you agree with an expert panel approach to explore the feasibility and affordability of expanding and integrating access to health services in Northern Ireland?

	✓			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Exploring the affordability and feasibility of future models and options will be critical in ensuring implementation and effectiveness. However it is critical that it is not only expanding and integrating access to health services but that traditional health sector shifts its focus towards supporting employment and employability outcomes and that there is greater awareness among healthcare professionals and employment support organisations of the broad range of support services available.

12. (iv) Who should be represented on the expert panel?

In addition to the representatives identified within the consultation, we would suggest that there is a need to ensure representation from Department of Education on the expert panel. The greatest inflow into the pool of the economically inactive are those young people with no aspiration, no qualifications and limited role models within their community. The role of schools in preventing the inflow into activity is critical.

12. (v) What other key preventative measures should be considered to reduce in-flows into the target inactive groups?

The Council has identified a number of key preventative measures outlined in the answer to question 8 and the need to better integrate health and work services.

13. (i) In addition to the approach outlined in the consultation document, what other ways are there to effectively reduce economic inactivity in Northern Ireland in a sustainable and affordable way?

The Council has identified ways to effectively reduce economic activity in a sustainable and affordable way in the answers to questions 8 – the need for a wrap around service that combines careers advice, healthcare, benefits/budgeting advice, skills matched to real jobs and the provision of quality training opportunities.

Skills must be matched to real job and training opportunities with a budget, targets, outputs and real outcomes established and monitored.

Consideration should be given to sub-regional working to take account of the localised challenges around these target groups. We are supportive of the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy's proposal for an employability and skills strategy for Belfast and would be keen to work with DEL and other partners to set this in place. The issue of addressing inactivity would be a central theme of the strategy.

13. (ii) What should be the top three priorities for the NI Executive to effectively reduce economic inactivity?

Two of the priorities identified in the Programme for Government are Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future and Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Well-Being. To effectively reduce economic activity action is required to address the following issues:

- The skills mismatch and the geographical concentration of those with low skills levels risks widening the social divide in the Belfast. Council research show that certain areas of the Belfast has large volumes of residents with “low or no skills” levels and 6 out of 7 jobs in the future requires qualification levels in excess of this. The Council has recommended a city strategy partnership approach that can respond effectively to local issues and the NI Executive. The Council has researched and identified the scale of the skills challenge across the city and its potential to impact adversely on the city’s economic growth
- The welfare reform programme is likely to have a significant impact on the employability arena and the levels of poverty in society, with a focus on “making work pay” as opposed to staying on benefits. Council research has identified the low levels of skills and the concentration by population in certain areas of the city. Targeted interventions and support mechanisms need to be put in place immediately with a defined budget, targets and outcomes identified
- The Council agrees that a partnership approach is required, bringing together community, voluntary, educators and advisors, businesses and government organisations to work together to address employment barriers and inactivity. We consider that a more focused approach detailing specific targets and allocation of budgets would improve the overall programme’s effectiveness.

13. (iii) In terms of prioritisation of government spending, do you feel that tackling economic inactivity should be a key spending area?

The Programme for Government’s ambitions around “growing a sustainable economy” will not be achieved without a targeted focus on the significant inactivity challenge in the region.

Belfast City Council has identified this as a priority within its draft Integrated Economic Strategy for the city and, in conjunction with Invest NI, we are considering practical measures to meet the challenge.

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Consultation Response on Review of Apprenticeships
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) recently launched a consultation exercise on its proposals for the review of the current Apprenticeships system. The deadline for submission of comments on the document is 7 April 2014.
1.2	The proposals contained in the consultation document reflect a significant and radical change to the current arrangements for provision, reflecting a considerable re-focusing towards new areas of economic growth as well as an elevation in skills levels, with the new apprenticeships focusing on level 3 and above (i.e. equivalent of A levels).
1.3	Members will be aware that the draft Integrated Economic Strategy for Belfast identifies a need for a greater number of people to be skilled to level 3 and above, in order to meet the projected skills demand associated with the city's economic growth projections. At present, only 39% of Belfast residents are educated to level 3 and above with 41% of residents having no qualifications or educated only to level 1 (no GCSEs). The latter figure is equivalent to 94,000 people. Conversely, projections suggests that, in the future, only 1 in 7 jobs in Belfast will require no or low qualifications with all other employment requiring higher skills levels. This points to an impending skills shortage in the short to medium-term, if targeted interventions are not put in place.
1.4	At present, 68% of apprenticeships are at level 2 (equivalent of GCSEs grades A*-C), with 10% at level 2/3 and only 22% at level 3. There are currently no apprenticeships offered beyond level 3. The most popular sectors are health and social care, catering and hospitality, retail, management, engineering, customer service, business and administration, construction, childcare and team leading.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>Taking account of economic challenges, employer requirements and the needs of young people, the consultation document contains a range of proposals for the new apprenticeships framework. Some of the key reflections from the research work to date include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current focus on level 2 qualifications does not support the skills projections for 2020 and beyond, with demand for lower skills expected to halve and demand for higher skills expected to increase significantly - The current system does not offer efficient matching of apprenticeships to the needs of the economy due to under-supply of apprentices at the right level for economically important sectors - The role of the employers in defining and developing apprenticeships needs to be enhanced: currently, the system is more of a supply-led model, i.e. the providers dictate the level and type of provision - There is limited uptake by SMEs, principally because of structural barriers and lack of awareness of how the system works - There is an absence of a clear road map between professional and technical and academic pathways. This means that the apprenticeships framework has a perceived lower status than academic support, including university education - Employers find it hard to navigate their way through the qualifications landscape and therefore it is difficult for them to make a decision as to what apprenticeship framework is available to them or is relevant to their development needs - The current process of progressing from education to apprenticeships is more complex than the transition from school to university. This can act as a hindrance to potential entrants into the apprenticeship system - There is a lack of clarity around entrance and eligibility criteria: if a young person holds certain qualifications, it can mean that they are unable to pursue certain apprenticeships. Equally, the requirements for some education attainment can prevent young people accessing apprenticeships and therefore impact on their long-term employment prospects - There is a view that the current apprenticeship structures are not very portable: there is a focus on skills-specific issues as opposed to providing wider skills such as customer skills and team working - The absence of any provision beyond Level 3 means that there are limited progression pathways for those choosing apprenticeships.
2.2	<p>Taking account of these observations, and in anticipation of the outcomes of the consultation exercise, DEL has been engaging in a number of pilot initiatives around apprenticeships. These include a number of higher level apprenticeship pilots in key industry sectors such as ICT and professional services. They have also run a number of public/private apprenticeship schemes, with over 70 apprentices now working in a range of ICT roles within the public sector. The employer costs for these schemes are met by the public sector employer.</p>
2.3	<p>The vision behind the consultation document is an apprenticeship model which will deliver highly skilled apprentices in areas of economic importance for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The document contains 32 proposals under four key themes, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The components of an apprenticeship - Increasing participation - Partnership – the role of the key players

2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring quality. <p>The consultation document contains 32 questions, based on each of the proposals and DEL has asked that responses are framed around these questions. A full copy of the consultation document is available on DEL's website, under the "consultation zone" section.</p> <p>The draft council response is attached as Appendix 1, with draft responses set out against each of the questions. In summary, the key council contributions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for the new system to demonstrate greater alignment between supply and demand: training people for jobs that do not exist and are unlikely to exist at the end of the apprenticeship can involve a waste of time on the part of the apprentice and a waste of government resources - If the system is to be changed in the ways that are proposed, consideration needs to be given to how pathways into apprenticeship schemes can be created, so that those with low or no skills are able to access apprenticeships - Employers should be encouraged to look at innovative approaches to apprenticeships, e.g. the Bombardier apprenticeship scheme, through which entrance criteria are waived. However the apprentice is still expected to meet minimum skills levels by the end of the apprenticeship and support is offered by the employer to ensure that this happens - Apprenticeship training should also equip participants with wider skills such as customer care and team working - Consideration needs to be given to how employers can be made aware of apprenticeships as well as other skills and employability support measures: it is difficult for companies – particularly SMEs – to navigate the landscape and understand how the support can help them in their business - The commitment of the council to engage in apprenticeship and other programmes, including those in new areas of work and at higher levels, as set out in the consultation.
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3	Resource Implications
	There are no specific staff resources at this time.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	There are no specific equality or good relations implications.

5	Recommendations
	It is recommended that members consider and approve the attached draft response to the review of apprenticeships and agree to submit this to DEL as part of the consultation process.

6	Decision Tracking
	An update on the outcome of the consultation exercise will be fed back to the committee once approved.
Timeline:	August 2014
	Reporting Officer: Lisa Toland.

7	Key to Abbreviations
DEL – Department for Employment and Learning	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1: Draft Belfast City Council response to DEL consultation on the review of apprenticeships.	

Appendix 1

Draft Belfast City Council response – for consideration by the Development Committee – 18 March 2014

Response to Department for Employment and Learning's (DEL) consultation on Review of Apprenticeships

Belfast City Council (the Council) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the above consultation.

Question 1: Do you agree that apprenticeships should be defined as a system of learning, irrespective of branding?

The Council agrees with the principle that apprenticeships should be defined as a system of learning. However, a review of branding is required to ensure the term 'apprenticeship' goes beyond more traditional disciplines, for example, electricians or mechanics, and instead encompass those sectors identified as needed to rebalance the economy. This includes IT, multimedia, renewable energies, science, tourism and hospitality. The original meaning behind the term referred to ongoing learning and we consider that this is a principle that should be retained.

Question 2: Should apprenticeships be for a new employee or, in the case of an existing employee, a new job role?

We recommend a means of providing skills and knowledge to a new employee or an existing employee to help them progress in their organisation or to a new role. We appreciate the views reflected in the consultation that focusing the apprenticeship helps differentiate this from other training available. An apprenticeship is an intensive training support that goes on for much longer than other training provision and the employer needs to be aware of how he/she will be required to support the trainee for the duration. There are other training programmes that may be more appropriate for other training or skills development support within an organisation.

Question 3: Do you agree that the apprenticeship system should commence at Level 3 and above?

At present, the council has direct experience of level 2 apprentices only.

The aspiration of developing apprenticeships at level 3 and above is commendable and will support the wider drive to improve the skills levels of the Northern Ireland population. We note the parallel review of youth training and proposals to develop a range of training support that can offer a "pathway" into the new proposed apprenticeships. We consider that care needs to be taken to ensure a smooth transition from one intervention to another.

Despite the fact that the Government's Economic Strategy identifies Belfast as the key driver for economic growth in the region and the NI Executive references the importance of Belfast to regional prosperity, the following challenges remain within the city:

- Belfast has relatively highly skilled residents but also has a high proportion of people with no formal qualifications. The Centre for Cities comparative analysis¹ of Belfast with 63 other UK cities placed the city at the bottom of the group; and

¹ Presentation on Belfast: Future City Conference (May 2013)

- Belfast's 'no skilled population' sits at almost 30% of those of working age. In some parts of the city, the level increases to almost 90% of the working age population. This is a widely recognised issue, for which finding a solution is key to maximising economic prosperity. Obtaining a level two qualification is out of reach for many Belfast residents.
- The Integrated Economic Strategy for the city (currently at draft stage) recognises the progress made between 2001 and 2011 in skills attainment, where the proportion of Belfast's population with no qualifications decreased from 41% to 30.4%. The challenges of developing skills at levels 1, 2 and 3 for Belfast residents is illustrated in the table below:

Qualification	Share in 2001 (%)		Share in 2011(%)	
	Belfast	NI	Belfast	NI
No qualifications	41.8	41.6	30.4	29.1
Level 1 qualifications	14.8	17.2	10.8	11.5
Level 2 qualifications	13.3	16.4	12.6	14.9
Level 3 qualifications	10.9	9	13.1	12.3
Level 4 qualifications and above	19.2	15.8	26	23.6
Other qualifications			7.1	8.5
<i>Source: Census 2011</i>				

Question 4: Do you agree that the minimum duration for apprenticeships should be two years?

From our direct experience of involvement in the delivery of apprenticeships, we offer the following comments:

- Training should be flexible and modular based. Consideration should be given to the duration of the apprenticeship and should not necessarily depend on 'time served' but delivered at a pace to suit all apprentices. We note that a minimum duration of two years is specified but the maximum is not specified. Higher performers may feel de-motivated if they have to complete a four-year apprenticeship when they have the ability to complete it faster. However, a balance is required in this instance in costs to the employer of their investment, resources and time
- The quality of placement and work experience coupled with strong mentoring is important for retention levels because of the financial investment incurred
- Consideration might be given to more flexibility in delivery and support provided – possibly linked to remuneration and subject to agreement with the employer.

Question 5: Should apprenticeships involve a breadth of training beyond the job role?

As an employer, Belfast City Council agrees that the breadth of training is important. For younger apprentices, bridging the gap between school and employment is important, especially in their first months in the workforce. It is essential that apprentices develop a 'soft skills' set which include the following competencies:

- Customer care skills

- An ability to work in within their own team and in cross-functional teams when required
- Personal characteristics (confidence, temperament and work ethic)
- Social and cognitive skills (communications and problem solving).

Our training programme for apprenticeships contains a range of practical support mechanisms to ensure that participants have access to training on a range of competencies.

Question 6: Should apprenticeships facilitate progression into professional or technical training or onto a higher academic pathway? How can the outcome of apprenticeships support this?

We agree that apprenticeships should facilitate progression into professional or technical training or onto a higher academic pathway. This approach is essential in raising expectations and skills levels of the workforce and benefits the economy. Strong mentoring is essential in bridging the pathway from education to employment. On completion of an apprenticeship, trainees and employees should be able to progress to a higher level, facilitated by the qualifications gained through the apprenticeship. The level of apprenticeship may need appropriate accreditation by professional body, for example the Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD), the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

Question 7: Should Government only recognise an apprenticeship when it contains each of the components set out in proposals 2-6?

The proposals contained in this report involve a radical reform of the current apprenticeships system. If they are implemented, consideration needs to be given, in particular, to how apprenticeships can link to and support other training provision. This is particularly important given the significant percentage of the population that has low or no skills – both those already in employment and those new and potential entrants into the labour market.

Question 8: Do you agree that there should be a single award/qualification to denote the outcome of an apprenticeship for each occupation at each level?

The Council agrees with this proposal. As the research notes, one of the most significant deterrents to increased uptake of apprenticeships is a lack of awareness of the offer. The single award or qualification needs to be easy to understand for employers, apprentices, careers advisors, trainers, teachers and parents. We recommend that awards should be transferrable among employers and transferable to other European countries. Qualifications should be portable allowing apprentices to continue with training should the employer go out of business or no longer be able to support a trainee. On completion on any level of apprenticeship, good practice would suggest some form of recognition, for example certification.

Question 9: Should apprenticeships be available for all ages? If apprenticeships are open to all ages, how can Government best ensure that young people are not crowded out of apprenticeship provision?

Belfast City Council agrees with this proposal and we recommend that consideration be given to age- specific legislation (including equality screening) to examine any age restrictions to the development of the programme. We suggest that appropriate percentage

quotas should be set, based on employment market statistics. These should be reviewed yearly.

The Council's Investment Plan 2011-2015 recognises:

- The impact that the economic downturn is having on local people, communities and businesses. Employment levels in the region have fallen and there has been a rise in unemployment among young people
- The need to capitalise on a young population and a skilled workforce
- The need for specific, targeted interventions to ensure that people in all parts of Belfast have the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to apply for and secure jobs particularly our young people (16-24) who have been badly impacted by the economic downturn. In addition the Council is committed to looking at how we, as a large employer in the city, can provide job opportunities and extend employment opportunities by supporting those who are unemployed or disadvantaged in the labour market to tackle the barriers to work that they face.

Through the Council's 2012-2015 Investment Programme, we are committed to a range of employability-related initiatives, both as a large employer in the city and as a funder of external projects to address key sectors including:

- Working with local partners to deliver targeted employability initiatives across the city, providing pre-employment support for 1,200 people and helping around 400 into employment (through European Social Fund projects)
- Committing over 400 work placement, internship and apprenticeship opportunities within the Council with a focus on graduates, young long-term unemployed and people with disabilities
- Creating 200 employment opportunities at no additional cost to the ratepayer; and
- Providing a £300,000 bursary fund to help 16-24 year-olds move into further education, training and employment.

Question 10: How can Government best support progression beyond the initial apprenticeship through a variety of pathways including to further and higher education?

The Council recommends that DEL carries out a mapping exercise of recognised qualifications at all levels and how they interlink, for example, entry, apprenticeship levels, degree courses, Higher National Diplomas as well as professional body links to CIPFA or CIPD as well as the levels of apprenticeships. There should be a progression route on courses and qualifications that apprentices can follow either into higher technical levels or into the theory, supervisory or managerial levels. This information should be made available on a central 'one stop shop' website.

It should also be possible to do 'top up training' where there are specialist jobs or contracts coming to city and intensive technical training of the local workforce would mean people are able to compete for jobs

At the end of the apprenticeship after a period of years, apprentices will want to be confident that there are jobs available to apply for. The Council recommends that DEL apply quotas to the number of training places available and works with DETI to plan ahead to ensure supply

and demand is balanced. The Council's research discussed earlier in the answer to question 3 identifies the issue of skills mismatch to training and jobs available. The quality of jobs including pay and flexibility are important to ensure that Belfast's citizens are financially better off when they opt to increase their skills through training.

Question 11: How might Government best secure the portability of apprenticeships within a sector and the wider economy?

Belfast City Council recommends that qualification levels should be standardised so that employers can judge like-for-like qualifications. Information should be presented in a plain English format so employers, careers advisors, trainers, parents and people who are opting to train as an apprentice can make informed decisions based on their needs. Buy-in is also needed from professional bodies such as CIFA, CIPD to recognise the various levels as relevant to the particular career path.

A partnership approach is required between the public and private sector to encourage the transfer of skills. In the answer to question 8, we have discussed the need for qualifications to be portable. We recommend that DEL works to change mind sets to recognise apprenticeships as a worthwhile qualification and career path.

Question 12: How can Government best support learners who have not acquired the pre-requisite level of qualifications to access apprenticeships?

We consider that the review of youth training programmes should consider entry levels and, if possible assess whether minimum entry criteria can be waived, on condition that certain qualifications are achieved within an agreed timeframe. We are aware of positive examples of how employers have introduced this approach – the example of the Bombardier Apprenticeship Scheme focused in the west Belfast and greater Shankill areas. Without a commitment to waive the entry criteria, the significant volume of participants that have found employment as a result of this scheme would not have been able to do so. We recognise that such schemes can place additional burdens on employers and would encourage DEL to think about how they can support employers that take this approach.

Question 13: How might the apprenticeship programme best support opportunities for international exchanges and placements?

The Council recommends the following options:

- A module or modules can be completed on a placement or in formal training
- Candidates have the opportunity to go on a placement in variety of organisations if desired
- There is period allowed for exchanges or placements, for example, on a three-year apprenticeship
- Consider offering language training as a preparation for an international placement
- Build relationships and partnerships on an international or European level
- Map international qualifications to equivalent qualifications in Northern Ireland to ensure that employers are aware of how they compare.

Please provide any additional comments on the underpinning elements outlined under proposals 8 - 13. Are there other underpinning elements that Government should consider?

The Council makes the following recommendations:

- Consistency of approach should be applied
- Streamlining of training programmes based on the skill and job demands of the economy
- Flexibility around eligibility criteria is required
- Re-branding and promotion of apprenticeships as a valuable and recognised qualification is essential
- Both DEL and DETI need to work with employers to create opportunities and to develop career paths for apprenticeships
- Manpower planning is required at a local and regional level based on categories of apprenticeships and supply and demand
- A range of key competencies need to be developed to ensure a holistic approach to education
- Quality control of training needs to be in place
- A review of career guidance is required to examine if it is fit for purpose
- Direct engagement with potential apprentices is required to examine barriers to learning.

Question 14: Would a central service to market, promote and support apprenticeships, which engages with employers and participants encourage greater levels of participation?

The Council agrees with a central service proposal. A 'one stop shop' approach will ensure that effective linkages are formed with potential apprentices, careers advisors, training organisations, educational establishments, parents and employers.

The Council recommends that current information provided is reviewed to ensure that it is up-to-date and that DEL careers advisors have up-to-date information on all the courses or job training opportunities.

Given the significant changes involved in this consultation, we would recommend a comprehensive communication and engagement process to explain the changes and to focus on how the apprenticeships can work alongside other employment and skills development support.

Question 15: Would a central service that provides advice and guidance for employers and potential apprentices on the range of support and training available increase participation?

The Council agrees with this proposal and makes the following recommendations:

- To ensure the service is a quality customer focused service, it is imperative that potential apprentices and employers are consulted and have a say in shaping the delivery
- The advice and guidance service should link with other training opportunities, training provision and jobs

- The service should be highly publicised – see above reference to need for a well-resourced communication and engagement plan around the new programme.

We would also suggest that, while DEL may appoint a range of providers to deliver the apprenticeships service, both employers and apprentices should have access to information on all relevant training programmes, in order to make an informed decision. The current system whereby providers only offer advice and information on the schemes for which they are responsible does not always meet employer needs and can mean a misfit with employer requirements.

Question 16: Would an online service to advertise apprenticeship vacancies across all sectors encourage greater participation?

The Council agrees with this proposal but information should always be provided in a variety of formats. A face-to-face service is very important, especially to level one participants and people who are long-term unemployed and where access to the internet is limited. It is recommended that existing online services are used to direct online traffic, for example NI Direct. Information must be updated regularly.

Question 17 (a): Would a UCAS style portal best inform potential apprentices of the full range of opportunities available?

The Council agrees with this proposal but we recognise that this is a large project. We recommend that the portal contains areas to meet the needs of various audiences including parents, employers, students and advisors. It must be simple to use and accessible on computers, mobile phones and tablets. We recommend that DEL explore collaboration to UCAS to ensure seamless linkages to each learning level – from entry to degree. An area on the site should include a rating system as this would assist with course choices and drive up quality standards.

Question 17 (b): How might such a portal be designed and function in order to generate greater levels of participation?

It will be important to publicise the portal using a mixed media campaign. This can include using social media or developing a mobile app for smart phones to reach applicants. The portal must show value for money. A one stop portal stop would provide consistency in the provision of information, provided it is up to dated regularly. It is important that online information is not the only option considered for disseminating information and face-to-face provision is important, especially for those who are socially excluded.

Question 18: Do you agree that apprenticeships should be offered across a wider range of occupations across the Northern Ireland economy? Please provide your views on how can Government might best facilitate this expansion?

Belfast City Council supports this approach and suggests that, as the research in the document points out, there is an opportunity to ensure greater alignment between priority growth sectors and apprenticeship provision. The document references the opportunities around professional services: we would concur that there are significant opportunities across a range of levels and, given the projected growth within the sector, there are opportunities for progression for entry-level participants.

Focusing on the key growth sectors outlined in the regional economic strategy, we would suggest that DEL should engage with employers to better understand the future skills needs and to explore the potential for flexible and innovative approaches. This would address the potential skills gaps that have been identified in the draft Belfast Integrated Economic Strategy.

Question 19: Do you agree that apprenticeships should be expanded to professional and technical occupations in the public sector?

The Council agrees with this proposal. We are committed to looking at how we, as a large employer in the city, can provide job opportunities for those seeking to enter the labour market – particularly those who are unemployed or disadvantaged in accessing employment. At present, we are only offering apprenticeship opportunities at level 2 for gardeners and electricians. However, with local government reform, the types of services that the council will undertake will change significantly and we will need to be in a position to resource the new services and delivery models.

Question 20: Would employers, in particular micro and small to medium size employers, require specific incentives and support to facilitate participation in the apprenticeship programme? If so, what support measures are required?

We agree that financial incentives should be made available to employers so that they get a return on their investment in training. Invest NI has considerable experience of a range of employer incentives through the Boosting Business programme and the Jobs Fund and reflections on how these enhanced take-up levels of their initiatives should be considered.

However, we believe that employers will need support to train their existing staff in coaching, supervisory and mentoring skills in order to be able to help and motivate potential apprentices. Strong induction and employment rights training for employers, supervisors and employees will ensure that potential programme participants are retained, receive a high quality training experience, and improve business productivity.

The Council makes the following recommendations:

- Small businesses find it very difficult to navigate the range of support services available to them and the range of providers can complicate the picture. Councils and Invest NI – as well as other business organisations engaging with SMEs – should work closely with DEL to raise awareness of the services available to companies and to promote access to these services, regardless of the delivery agent
- Some support initiatives contain incentives, some do not. Again, it is important to be clear to SMEs in particular about what support is available to them and what is expected from them in return in terms of supporting the apprentice
- Greater co-ordination between public and private employers would provide meaningful opportunities and increase shared learning among sectors
- Segmented learning should be offered and employers should be supported to plan training. However apprenticeships will not meet the requirements of all small businesses and the advice provided to companies needs to meet their demands, as opposed to being driven by the supply-side element of the programme

Question 21: Do you agree that the Careers Service should promote the benefits of the apprenticeship pathway to young people and their parents, as appropriate, highlighting the parity of esteem with other pathways such as higher education?

The Council agrees with this proposal. As well as using online methods, making contact with employers through their outreach activities can also assist. Careers road shows can be used to promote outreach.

The Council recommends that a communications and engagement plan is developed with a particular focus on disadvantaged wards. Belfast's 'no skilled population' sits at almost 30% of those of working age. In some parts of the city, the level increases to almost 90% of the working age population. This is a widely recognised issue, for which finding a solution is key to maximising economic prosperity. Obtaining a level two qualification is out of reach for many Belfast residents and engagement is essential. The low levels of skills and the concentration by population in certain areas of the city mean that, unless specific and targeted interventions are put in place, future employment opportunities will remain out of the reach of many Belfast residents. Macro-level changes such as the welfare reform agenda are likely to lead to an increase in those with low or no skills levels seeking employment in a declining market. Equally, the fees for higher education mean that some individuals may seek alternative approaches to enter the labour market, including apprenticeships.

Question 22: Would continued careers support throughout the apprenticeship help to reduce drop-out rates and improve programme outcomes?

The Council agrees with this proposal. Our experience in the delivery of employability programmes indicates that mentoring support is essential. The Council would welcome a wrap-around service that combines careers advice, training, information on jobs and placement opportunities. Strong mentoring support will create a sense of stability and help those further from the labour market more likely to make the transition to work. This approach would ensure that people are not 'shoe-horned' into jobs for which they are unsuitable.

The Council would welcome the development of a monitoring system and the use of a shared database and this would allow progress tracking of individuals.

Question 23: How can a revised apprenticeship programme best support participation by both genders across occupations?

The Council recommends that the scope of disciplines available under the apprenticeship model should be widened to take account of differing participation levels by gender. Gender participation could be promoted via campaigns using positive role models and this would work particularly well in encouraging men and women into non-traditional areas. Revision to the scheme will have to take account of equal opportunities laws.

Question 24 (a): Do you agree that Government should establish an advisory group comprising of the key stakeholders to provide strategic guidance on apprenticeships?

The Council agrees with this proposal. There is a need to ensure that there is a balance on the advisory group between public and private sectors and from all sizes of businesses. It is essential that DEL engages with potential and existing users on programme development and delivery to inform the advisory group.

Question 24 (b): Please comment on which stakeholders should be involved in the advisory group?

The Council recommends that employers, trade unions, job training providers, business representative and sector representatives should be involved as well as people who can offer practical advice and who have served an apprenticeship. Public sector as well as private sector should be represented. In addressing the skills gaps, employers in the growth related industries should be involved (this includes IT, multimedia, renewable energies, science, tourism and hospitality). Consideration will need to be given to the terms of reference for the group, in order to ensure that there is clarity around their role and expectations of their input from the outset.

Question 24 (c): What should be the remit of the advisory group?

The advisory panel should provide guidance on both demand and supply issues. On the demand side, it could include guidance on the structure and content of sectoral apprenticeships as well as feeding intelligence on potential recruitment levels for apprentices and offering innovations in the development of apprenticeship schemes. On the supply side, consideration should be given to lessons learned in previous schemes as well as ways in which to provide better linkages between the training and on-the-job activities and consideration of how wider competency levels can be improved.

Question 25 (a): Do you agree that Government should establish a range of the sectoral partnership groups to design and agree apprenticeship provision and inform demand annually, at a sectoral level?

We consider that government should use a range of resources including research and analysis from DETI, Invest NI and DEL. This can be supplemented by engagement with employers through existing business groupings as well as sector skills councils

Question 25 (b): Please comment on which stakeholders should be involved in the sectoral groups?

The Council recommends that the public sector as well as private sector is represented. Stakeholders that should be represented should be practitioners across industries and in particular, growth related sectors, industries where there are skills shortages and sectors where there is demand for training that leads to jobs.

Question 26: Do you agree with the following as indicators of the apprenticeship programme's success: quality, achievement and progression? Are there other criteria that should be considered in the monitoring of apprenticeship provision?

The Council agrees with the proposal. However we consider that DEL will need to be clear about what each of these mean and how success will be measured, including what a successful intervention will look like and what targets are to be set for providers in terms of quality, achievement and progression.

Question 27: How might Government empower employers, industry specialists and other key stakeholders to inform content, duration and assessment of each apprenticeship?

There are a range of sectoral bodies as well as the government organisations and business networks working in this field. We are aware of the Advisory Group on the economy – it may be appropriate to consider whether there should be a specific skills sub-group reporting to this group. This would allow for greater alignment between supply and demand.

Question 28: Do you agree that apprenticeships should be subject to rigorous assurance? How should the content, duration and assessment of each apprenticeship be monitored to ensure it meets the needs of the key stakeholders?

The Council agrees with the proposal that apprenticeships should be subject to rigorous quality assurance and cover examinations and practical assessments. This will inspire confidence and trust in the system, both for apprentices and for employers. DEL will need to develop a standardised monitoring system in conjunction with employers and apprentices. In the case of small businesses where there may be few resources for qualified assessors, the system will need to be flexible to offer this support. The programme should be reviewed and audited independently.

Question 29: Do you agree that quality of teaching and learning should be supported through minimum qualification and related pedagogy requirements for each occupational area?

The Council agrees with the proposal. The requisite standards need to be set out clearly so that participants and employers are aware of these levels from the outset.

Question 30: Do you agree that those involved in the delivery of off-the-job training should undertake professional training in pedagogy?

We agree with this proposal, as a means of improving quality standards in provision.

Question 31: Do you agree that stringent conditions should be established for continuous professional development to ensure that those delivering training remain expert in their field?

The Council agrees with the proposal. This is especially important for job areas that are continually changing, particularly in the ICT field. There should be options to join professional bodies such as CIPD and opportunities for peer assessment and sharing best practice. Monitoring reports for delivery agents should include reference to investment in continuous professional development by their staff.

Question 32: Should providers of training be approved only where they meet clear quality standards? If so, what standards should be applied?

Belfast City Council agrees with the proposal. Compliance with requisite quality standards should be a pre-requisite for any providers. One method of assessing standards is to use the ETI (inspectorate) to continually review and update standards.

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Eurocities Engagement Approval 2014/2015
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Laura Leonard, European Manager, ext 3577

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>Members will be aware that Belfast City Council (BCC) has been a member of the Eurocities Network since the early 1990's. This network brings together over 140 of Europe's largest local authorities at Officer and Member level. The secretariat for the network is based in Brussels with a staff and Executive Board of elected Members from cities throughout Europe. Through relevant Council Officer engagement, BCC has participated regularly in the following thematic fora around which, Eurocities is structured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Affairs - Economic Development - Environment - Culture - Knowledge Society
1.2	<p>Meetings are held three times a year in rotated venues around Europe and each Forum has a maximum of eight working groups. An AGM is held each November and is attended by BCC's Chair and Deputy Chair of Development. Each year BCC, like all members of Eurocities are asked to pay a membership fee of €15,820. This fee has been frozen at €15,820 since 2009, and continues at this rate again for 2014.</p>
1.3	<p>Each year BCC experiences very positive gains from participation in the Eurocities network and importantly the Council contributes to policy influencing at the EU Commission and Parliament levels. This platform has consistently opened avenues of policy development, funding opportunity and legislation dissemination, allowing Belfast a strong voice both regionally and in Europe. Officers are currently heavily engaged in</p>

	<p>looking at funding opportunities for BCC through the many competitive EU funds now opening for the new programme period 2014-2020. The EU Unit has worked consistently over the last 2 years to lobby to ensure a maximum level of EU funding is directed to cities and an enhanced delivery role is secured for Local Government with respect to the EU Structural Funds spend. The EU Unit reflects this lobby at Regional Government here in Northern Ireland.</p>
1.4	<p>The Council engages in EU projects within the Eurocities network and continues this year to deliver BCC projects namely,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Illuminate – installation of further new low carbon lighting at City Hall due to access to additional funds – NICE – training for innovative techniques for reducing and measuring city ICT carbon emissions – Sport I- addressing how urban sports are a tool for social inclusion – Sport II- learning from technological innovations to facilitate physical activity – namely encouraging people to use city walking trails
1.5	<p>Critically, the Council works with Eurocities to track EU legislation and lobby heavily to influence this and ultimately create savings for the city, e.g. EU Services Directive, Inspire Open Data Directive.</p>
1.6	<p>Profiling best practice is also a key objective to our engagement in Eurocities. Members will recall a highly successful Social Affairs conference hosted by BCC in April 2013, whereby the Council profiled its work in engaging local communities. The event led to an invitation to BCC to have a political representative at a subsequent EU event in October 2013 to share the Council's approaches to tackling youth unemployment and supporting SMEs.</p>
1.7	<p>Members will be aware that BCC engages in Eurocities meetings and events at both Officer and Member levels. Indeed on 12 June 2012, Members agreed to the establishment of a Members EU Working Group with a view to upskilling Councillors on EU affairs and ensuring consistency with regard to Members engagement in Europe. This working group met for the first time in December 2012 and meets bi monthly to discuss relevant EU policy and funding.</p>
1.8	<p>An overview of the benefits of engaging in Eurocities in 2013 is outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.</p>

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>Each year BCC participates in the Eurocities annual conference. Traditionally attendance has been through the Chair and Deputy Chair of Development or their nominees, as well as the Director of Development and the EU Manager. However, since 2013, Council has been represented by a nominee from the Council Members EU Working Group, along with the Director of Development and EU Manager or nominees.</p>
2.2	<p>The 2014 annual conference will take place in Munich, Germany from 5-7 November 2014. The theme of the conference is 'Sustainable Cities', focusing on how cities are turning to innovative ways of becoming more sustainable and</p>

	energy intelligent.
2.3	The conference will be structured around keynote speakers sessions, workshops, speed networking and the annual City awards ceremony, as well as the Mayor's debate. This session is only attended by BCC Members and not Officers. The 2014 Mayor's debate focus has yet to be confirmed. Members are asked to approve the attendance of a member of the EU Members Working Group or their nominee as well as the Director of Development and the European Manager at the 2014 AGM.
2.4	Over 400 delegates are expected to attend the event and the focus of many of the sessions will be to look at new EU policies and funding opportunities coming down the line for local authorities, particularly in the context of the new EU funding round 2014-2020.
2.5	In the lead up to the AGM, Officers will continue to work in the various working groups within the thematic fora of Eurocities. The work plan and expected BCC benefits per forum for BCC engagement is outlined in Appendix 1 of this report. Two key objectives for BCC over and above business as usual within Eurocities are to, in partnership with Derry City Council, host the Social Culture Forum in March 2014 and begin to secure funding for BCC projects through the new EU funding programmes.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The annual membership of the Eurocities network for 2014 is €15,820.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality and good relations considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to note the Eurocities work engaged in by BCC in 2013 and approve the proposed BCC work plan and participation with Eurocities for 2014.
5.2	Members are asked to approve payment of the annual subscription fee of €15,820 for Membership of the Eurocities network for 2014.
5.3	Members are asked to approve the attendance of a member of the Members EU Working Group or their nominee, as well as the Director of Development and the European Manager at the Eurocities Annual Conference in Munich from 5-7 November 2014.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline: April 2014	Reporting Officer: John McGrillen

7	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 –BCC Eurocities output 2013 and proposed work plan 2014	

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2013-2014 Engagement & Benefits

Forum Name & Objectives	Working Group	BCC Officer engagement (EU and technical)	Benefits to BCC this year
<p><u>Culture Forum:</u> Innovation & culture</p> <p>New funding models for culture</p> <p>New governance models for culture</p>	<p>Access to Culture & Young People and culture</p>	<p>Tourism, Culture & Arts Unit: Christine O'Toole</p> <p>EU Unit: Frances Murray</p>	<p>Successful bid to host Spring 2014 meeting in partnership with Derry City Council: the network's first dual city programme in its 25 year history</p> <p>Input into cities best practice in promoting cultural mobility</p> <p>Presentation at Spring 2013 meeting relating to Belfast's innovative practices in terms of music app and literary app: number of cities are interested in its replication</p> <p>Although a bid to the Culture Programme led by the Belgian publishing company "deBuren" was unsuccessful, the agency is still interested in producing a Belfast Citybook via other means which ties in with the Belfast story concept.</p>
<p><u>Social Affairs Forum</u> Inclusion & employment of young people</p> <p>Tackling deep seated poverty & worklessness</p> <p>Social cohesion in an age of austerity</p>	<p>Working Group- Smart Social Inclusion (virtual)</p> <p>Taskforce on Roma inclusion – via the South Belfast Roundtable</p>	<p>Community Services: Catherine Taggart Clare Mullen</p> <p>EU Unit: Frances Murray</p>	<p>Participation of Alderman Bob Stoker in politician's panel – Katowice April 2013</p> <p>Belfast hosted the Autumn meeting – profiling the work of Council in relation to social innovation , investing in and collaborating with communities</p> <p>EUROCITIES filmed the above meeting's project site visits which will be used across the EU as examples of best practice</p> <p>Second output of Autumn meeting – EUROCITIES paid for BCC representative to attend the EU Roundtable on poverty and social inclusion: an invite only and very high level conference</p> <p>Input of Belfast practice re: Roma integration into city case studies and peer reviews. Taskforce also enables city to link with an influential network – the Open Society Foundation</p> <p>Through previous project involvement, BCC was also invited to present at Intercultural Dialogue conference in Dublin in Feb 2013</p>

Belfast City Council Eurocities Engagement 2013-2015

			Potential opportunity to participate in the European Urban Platform in February 2014 (tbc)
<u>Knowledge Society Forum</u>	Smart Cities	Deirdre Ferguson	<p>Access to policy and funding information on:</p> <p>e-inclusion</p> <p>open data</p> <p>cyber security</p> <p>smart cities</p> <p>Invitations to take part in 4 EU funded projects, 1 of which has been taken up.</p> <p>Invitations to take part in 2 locally led projects resulting from Eurocities engagement.</p> <p>3 Knowledge Society Forum reports to share learning, reduce duplication and make links.</p> <p>1 shared learning visit paid for through the NiCE project</p> <p>Contacts made to strengthen links for new round of funding with: Queens University University of Ulster Helsinki Data Facts University of Oulu Eurocities KSF members</p> <p>Information and opportunities have also been shared with city stakeholders via the Northern Ireland European Regional Forum.</p>
	Open Data	Deirdre Ferguson	
	e-inclusion	Deirdre Ferguson	
	Cyber security	Deirdre Ferguson	
	NiCE project	Davy Kelly	
<u>Environment Forum</u>	Clean Cities	SJ Smith Caroline Briggs (attendance at meetings)	<p>A joint EU project re. implementation and proliferation of a concept for green events</p> <p>Making a common framework for describing the different traditions and practices for national clean-ups and the ways cities take part in them.</p> <p>Offering the Birmingham Forum meeting a joint presentation on 'up-to-date' nudging / campaigning strategies for city cleanliness (Tampere and Copenhagen.)</p>
Addressing the challenges associated with global climate change, including anticipating the potential consequences of climate change, including heat, and developing effective adaptation measures with a focus on extreme heat and flooding, as well as continuing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions			

<p>Exchanging best practices on energy efficiency with a focus on sustainable building refurbishment</p> <p>Providing input to the review of EU air quality policy in the European Parliament and Council</p> <p>Providing input to the review of EU noise legislation</p> <p>Following up on the European Union's Seventh Environmental Action Programme, including the development of strategies on urban environment, including issues such as urban transport, air quality, and the prevention and recycling of waste, and impacts of chemical substances</p> <p>Following up on the recent changes in (green) public procurement rules. Promoting the use of sustainable energy and energy security in cities (raising awareness and energy efficiency, while decreasing greenhouse gas emissions)</p> <p>Following up the European Union's review of the waste legislation</p> <p>Addressing the challenges associated with other issues affecting the urban environment, public health and quality of life, such as noise,</p>			
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Belfast City Council Eurocities Engagement 2013-2015

<p>water, waste, green areas, biodiversity, cleanliness and more</p> <p>Exchanging best practices on smart cities with a focus on ICT and energy, including smart grids, and exploring the city needs when it comes to new norms and standards</p> <p>Exchanging best practices on efficient, beneficial and balanced cooperation with large private companies.</p> <p>Horizon 2020: follow-up the funding streams for societal challenges, specifically environmental issues, including the suggested future Intelligent Energy Europe III programme within Horizon</p>	<p>Green areas and biodiversity</p>	<p>SJ Smith (watching brief)</p>	<p>The workgroup has collected best practices/case studies from the members of the environment forum on the topic urban bees. These examples will be compiled by <i>Urbanees</i>, an EU LIFE Program, which develops a guidebook of ecological management of greenspaces – listing tools, methods and case studies from all over Europe</p> <p>Information from 13 EEF members regarding city biodiversity strategy, targets and monitoring was compiled and collected through a survey. The results from the questionnaire will be presented in 2014.</p> <p>Local best practices and experiences were presented by: Stockholm, Chemnitz, Frankfurt, Utrecht, Oslo and Nuremberg</p> <p>Guided tours to urban biodiversity hotspots:</p> <p>“Lebensraum Burg”, (Nuremberg) a biodiversity hotspot and project, with more than 1 000 species of insects, bats, birds,</p>
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Belfast City Council Eurocities Engagement 2013-2015

			<p>mosses, lichens, fungi and vascular plants.</p> <p>The National City Park (Stockholm), a protected biodiversity hotspot with historical cultural values, and oak tree habitats, coniferous forest and wetland with birds</p> <p>Sustainable consumption and production in cities and companies with special focus on food: good examples and barriers of cities' approaching this topic has been achieved with good practices from Vienna, Nantes and Copenhagen.</p> <p>The working group had a joint meeting with the Environment Forum working group WG Air Quality, Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (Nantes in September on green growth and climate).</p> <p>Exchanged experiences on strategies, instruments and tools in improving the environmental performance of the businesses (especially SMEs) in European cities in order to strengthen the status of the existing less formal Environmental management systems and networks.</p> <p>Exchanged good practices and finding the barriers for companies in reducing the use of energy and introducing the use of renewable sources of energy. Why is it more difficult for SMEs than for bigger companies? Explore good practises the cities have done to enhance the energy efficiency of the SMEs.</p>
	Greening the local economy	SJ Smith Formerly Martin Doherty and Shane Kelland	
	Waste	SJ Smith T Walker	<p>Provided city input to the EU waste legislation review in 2013/2014, which is likely to include work on the better implementation of waste management and recycling:</p> <p>Responded to the consultation on the Green Paper on plastic waste</p> <p>Responded to the consultation on the revision on Extended Producer Responsibility</p> <p>Discussions with Commission consultant on the Waste Framework revision during WG meeting.</p> <p>Best practice exchange on municipal waste management</p> <p>Started an initiative to establish a project on exchange of knowledge and performance using the experience of the Cascade model.</p>
	Air Quality, Climate	SJ Smith	The group provided input to several EU policy

Belfast City Council Eurocities Engagement 2013-2015

	Change and Energy Efficiency	C McKeown	<p>initiatives, including: the 2030 EU climate and energy framework, through a response to the Commission consultation</p> <p>The review of the EU air quality policy through</p> <p>Contributions to the Commission Expert Stakeholder Group on the air quality policy review;</p> <p>Further definition of the EUROCITIES position on concrete policy options for the review in the EUROCITIES response to the second Commission consultation on the EU air quality policy review in March 2013;</p> <p>Press work, including interviews, opinion pieces and a EUROCITIES press release to respond to the publication of the Commission proposal</p> <p>The development of the EU Climate Adaptation Strategy;</p> <p>The working group also supported the preparation of the June 2013 Eurocities Environment Forum meeting regarding air quality issues.</p>
<u>Economic Development Forum</u>	Cohesion Policy to influence the future EU policy underpinning EU structural funds 2014-2020	Laura Leonard	<p>Attended meeting and contributed to final paper to EU Commission and Parliament on 'Cities Improvement in Cohesion Policy and Design of Structural Funds'</p> <p>Use learning and urban lobby tactics at EU level to make an effective lobby at NI level succeeding in securing a place for BCC at the NI Consultative Partnership. This has resulted in a clearer and stronger role for BCC in the design and delivery of EU funding in NI. It has also already enhanced the Councils profile and reputation on EU affairs with NI government and EU institutions.</p>
	Entrepreneurship	Laura Leonard	<p>Secured a place for Councillor Bob Stoker on a political panel with Cabinet Member Mr. Tajani of DG Enterprise. Councillor Stoker presented on BCCs innovative approaches to entrepreneurship specifically for young people.</p> <p>Secured a place for Councillor Hendron at the Eurocities AGM. Political panel on BCC approaches to youth inclusions and employability programmes.</p>

Belfast City Council Eurocities Engagement 2013-2015

	Metropolitan areas	Laura Leonard Gerry Millar	<p>Due to work pressures Gerry Millar was unable to engage in this working group.</p> <p>Laura Leonard shared the end product report with BCC on best practice across Europe regarding metropolitan area working and the different models of cooperation at local government level.</p> <p>Laura Leonard contributed to this report through the Council's Comet Model since 2002.</p>
	Integrated Urban Development	Gerry Millar	<p>No engagement took place in this work due to BCC work pressures.</p>

Belfast City Council Eurocities Engagement 2013-2015

Proposed 2014-2015 Engagement and Proposed Benefits

Forum Name & Objectives	Working Group and purpose	Proposed EU and BCC technical officer engagement	Expected BCC Benefits
<p><u>Culture Forum</u></p> <p>Innovation and culture</p> <p>New funding models for culture</p> <p>New governance models for culture</p>	<p>Access to Culture and Young People and culture</p>	<p>Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit Christine O'Toole</p> <p>EU Unit Frances Murray</p>	<p>Hosting in partnership with Derry City Council the Spring Forum meeting: prestigious occasion to highlight Belfast's work in building capacity and audiences in the sector, demonstrating the qualitative and quantitative impacts of culture.</p> <p>Above will also present the opportunity to build transnational partnerships which are necessary if future funding bids are to proceed.</p> <p>Taking forward discussions with DeBuren regarding the "CityBook" project.</p> <p>Investigating opportunities for Belfast through the Creative Europe Programme.</p>
<p><u>Social Affairs Forum</u></p> <p>Inclusion and employment of young people</p> <p>Tackling deep seated poverty and worklessness</p> <p>Social cohesion in an age of austerity</p>	<p>Working Group-Smart Social Inclusion (virtual)</p> <p>Taskforce on Roma inclusion – via the South Belfast Roundtable</p>	<p>Community Services Catherine Taggart Clare Mullen</p> <p>EU Unit Frances Murray</p>	<p>Maintaining Belfast's profile as a key player in the Forum – re: sharing best practice, learning from other cities' experience</p> <p>Potential funding opportunities: Erasmus+ (and in particular potential to develop an elected members programme and the sport and youth strands of this programme)</p> <p>Integration in wider EU lobby position papers and statements with regards to Roma inclusion and integration, social cohesion and inclusion.</p>
<p><u>Knowledge Society Forum</u></p> <p>Objectives</p> <p>The Knowledge Society Forum will focus on the use of digital technologies (ICTs) to support smart, inclusive and sustainable growth, in line with the Digital Agenda for Europe. During 2014 smart citizens, content and technical issues will</p>	<p>Smart Cities</p> <p>Cities will be supported in conceptualising and creating a strategic definition of the Smart City. Work will ensure that cities and citizens are at the heart of the Smart Cities and Communities Initiative. Members will be supported in participating in key funding schemes</p>	<p>Deirdre Ferguson will have a watching brief on all working groups and feedback to Digital Services</p>	<p>To support and inform BCC's Digital Strategy in relation to work on:</p> <p>smart cities</p> <p>open data</p> <p>e-inclusion</p> <p>cyber security</p> <p>To provide links and access to partners who will lead on future EU funded projects.</p> <p>To provide opportunities for BCC to profile its</p>

Belfast City Council Eurocities Engagement 2013-2015

<p>be considered within working group themes.</p>	<p>and advisory groups of the European Commission and in Green Digital Charter initiatives.</p> <p>Open Data</p> <p>This working group will provide a platform for exchanging experiences and comparing project examples on city initiatives in the field of open data. It will support developments towards models of open government on all levels of public administration. It will also further develop the open data guidebook for cities and support collaborative funding applications.</p> <p>E-Inclusion</p> <p>The group will work to ensure accessibility of city websites and improve the digital skills of citizens to reduce gaps in ICT usage, overcome exclusion, improve economic performance, employment opportunities, quality of life, social cohesion and participation.</p> <p>Cyber Security</p> <p>This working group will focus on increasing cities awareness about</p>		<p>work and share good practice with other cities</p>
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Belfast City Council Eurocities Engagement 2013-2015

	internet security threats and the importance of increasing efficiency to fight against cyber threats. It will assist with policy formulation through sharing of expertise and skills in the area of Cyber Security.		
<u>Economic Development Forum</u>	Cohesion Policy	Laura Leonard	To continue engagement in the EU policy debate and push for an EU urban policy. This will involve engagement on the new EU urban forum launching February 2014 and the Urban Development Network. BCC will engage locally with DSD to try and influence NI government towards developing an urban policy for NI
	International Relations	Laura Leonard	To participate in this new working group and learn from the city approaches to international relations and marketing and explore benefits of jointly promoting member cities at events like MIPIM or China and India Trade fairs.
	Urban Taskforce	Laura Leonard	To contribute to the development of the EU commissions new EU urban policy and in turn lobby for a NI urban policy action plan



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Inquiry into the Barroso Taskforce
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Laura Leonard, European Unit Manager, ext 3577

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that in May 2007, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, announced a European Commission Taskforce for NI.
1.2	This inaugural Taskforce for a specific region in the EU was created in order to support the Peace Process, with particular emphasis on how to support Northern Ireland in its efforts to improve its economic competitiveness and to create sustainable employment. After the Executive took up their new mandate in May 2011, Junior Ministers assumed the Chair of the Barroso Task Force Working Group (BTWG).
1.3	At its meeting on 19 February 2014, the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) agreed the following terms of reference for an Inquiry into the Barroso Taskforce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Consider the work and structures of the Taskforce including the Barroso Taskforce Working Group since its inception in 2007 – Identify the outcomes from the Taskforce and assess against the objectives – Identify and consider lessons learned from the functioning of the Taskforce in order to inform recommendations for future engagement in EU affairs post Barroso
1.4	Belfast City Council (BCC), through the EU Unit has subsequently been asked for Council views on the work of the Barroso Taskforce to date.

2	Key Issues
2.1	BCC through the EU Unit has engaged with the Barroso Taskforce since its establishment in 2007, and its subsequent re-invigoration since 2011. Indeed, the work of the Unit is cited in the NI Assembly's 'Winning in Europe' strategy and the annual NI Executive EU priorities with respect to the Barroso Taskforce

	work.
2.2	<p>This work may be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Attendance and input at the Barroso thematic working group meetings although these have not been regularly held. – Attendance and input at the NI Assembly EU Advisory Panel chaired by the chair of the OFMDFM committee. – Taking a lead role in supporting the NI EU funding priority work by way of organising an annual conference at the Brussels Open Days programme in October each year for NI stakeholders. – Leading the establishment of the NI European Regional Forum (NIERF) in May 2012. The Forum is led by the European Unit of Belfast City Council and the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, and provides a strategic platform for collaboration on EU policy and funding. Its objectives are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – maximise EU funding opportunities – shape EU policy to the benefit of the region and – influence future funding calls to the benefit of regional stakeholders – Lead thematic working groups to mirror the 4 working themes of the Barroso Taskforce, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social Cohesion – Competitiveness and Employment – Innovation and Technology – Climate Change and Energy – Establish links with the 4 Barroso desk officers located within the NI Executive Bureau in Brussels.
2.3	<p>It is important to note that since late 2013, the Barroso themes and Brussels based desk officer posts working on these have been revised to 3 thematic working areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Economy – Social Cohesion – Environment
2.4	<p>The over arching aim of the Barroso Taskforce has been to heighten N Ireland's engagement in drawing down the competitive EU funds. It is unclear how successful this has been given the Taskforce work really intensified towards the end of the EU funding period 2007-2013.</p>
2.5	<p>It is the EU Units opinion that the Taskforce has certainly been successful in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Raising Northern Ireland's profile at the level of the EU Institutions in Brussels. – Having direct personal access to named individuals in 17 of the EU Commission departments (Directorate Generals). – Energising NI government departments and agencies to up the ante in terms of promoting EU funding opportunities, both within departments and with stakeholders. Two examples of this are the solid DETI preparation to promote and support access to the new Horizon 2020 innovation and research programme, and the establishment of the Task and Finish Health and Prosperity Board and subsequent Health Eco System in NI. – OFMDFM's decision to co chair the NI European Regional Forum and

2.6	<p>provide resources to create a post to support the growing work of the Forum and establish the soon to be launched NI EU Capacity fund to help the forum members improve their access to EU funds.</p> <p>The EU Unit believes that the NI Barroso Taskforce will bear a legacy through the continued work of the NIERF but would strongly encourage a more visible and strengthened role for the desk (now known as liaison) officers in Brussels, by way of creating and delivering a communications plan on EU funding and policy similar to the highly successful approach taken by the Irish Regions Office.</p>
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3	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
3.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

4	Recommendations
4.1	Members are asked to approve the Councils response to this inquiry.

5	Decision Tracking
<p>Timeline: 1 April 2014</p> <p>Reporting Officer: John McGrillen</p>	

6	Key to Abbreviations
<p>OFMDFM – Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister NIERF – Northern Ireland European Regional Forum DETI – Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment</p>	

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	International links – Mayor of Halifax, Nova Scotia
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, EU Manager, ext 3577

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>As part of the Council's Investment Programme, we are committed to promoting job creation through inward investment and export promotion. To this end, Council has recently approved the Belfast International Marketing and Relations Framework which commits the city to supporting activity to deliver economic impact under the 3 markets segments of trade and investment, business and leisure tourism, and education and talent. Over 20 stakeholders across Belfast have agreed to collaborate on target markets where appropriate and to coordinate activity for the wider benefit of the city overall. An annual calendar of proposed inward and outward visits has been compiled and will be updated regularly so that Council can track and support visiting delegations and deliver cross sectoral outward missions as appropriate as part of the city wide approach.</p>
1.2	<p>As part of the International Framework, North America and Canada have been identified as a destination market which can deliver extensive economic benefits for Belfast across each market segment. Previously Council and the City enjoyed a range of constructive civic and business relationships with political, educational, business and commercial institutions in Canada through the Atlantic Rim Agreement. This was a formal cooperation vehicle between the cities of Belfast, Portland Maine and Halifax. However, due to a change in focus with regard to BCC's priorities this partnership weakened over the years. Other less formalised but still structured relationships existed with keynote business leaders, politicians and educational representatives in other cities mainly on the East Coast and predominantly under the Friends of Belfast network.</p>
1.3	<p>With the new International Framework, Council has committed to re-establishing productive international links and most recently, Council commenced the building of links again with the USA and Canada as part of visits by the Lord Mayor to the USA and Canada for the launch of the Northern Irish Connections network programme. Outcomes of this programme included the recent New Brunswick cultural and trade inward mission to Belfast as well as the Opportunity Belfast Business Mission held in February this year.</p>

2	Key Issues
2.1	As part of a programme of developing relations in North America and Canada, a visit will be made to Belfast by Mayor John Savage of Halifax, Nova Scotia from 3-5 April 2014. Mayor Savage is a native of Belfast and is visiting the city to engage in a number of political and business meetings to foster cooperation with the city of Halifax.
2.2	Given the previous existence of the Atlantic Rim Agreement and the former relationship with Halifax, it is proposed that the Council marks the visit of Mayor Savage by way of hosting a small reception in the City on 4 April 2014. The City Hall is not available at this time so the Belfast Castle is a possible venue.
2.3	It is anticipated that this reception would include guests from the business and community sectors and is estimated to cost no more than £5,000.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	It is anticipated that the cost hosting a welcome reception will not exceed £5,000 from the International Relations budget.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality or good relations implications.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members agree to host a welcome reception on 4 April 2014, for Mayor Savage from the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia at a maximum cost of £5,000.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline:	March 2014
	Reporting Officer: John McGrillen



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	International links – NYC Business Mission
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, EU Manager, ext 3577

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	As part of the Council's Investment Programme, we are committed to promoting job creation through inward investment and export promotion. To this end, Council has recently approved the Belfast International Marketing and Relations Framework which commits the city to supporting activity to deliver economic impact under the 3 markets segments of trade and investment, business and leisure tourism, and education and talent. Over 20 stakeholders across Belfast have agreed to collaborate on target markets where appropriate and to coordinate activity for the wider benefit of the city overall. An annual calendar of proposed inward and outward visits has been compiled and will be updated regularly so that Council can track and support visiting delegations and deliver cross sectoral outward missions as appropriate as part of the city wide approach.
1.2	As part of the International Framework, North America has been identified as a destination market which can deliver extensive economic benefits for Belfast across each market segment. Previously Council and the City enjoyed a range of constructive civic and business relationships with political, educational, business and commercial institutions in the USA. Formal memoranda existed from the late 1990s to mid 2000s with New York, Boston, Portland in Maine and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Other less formalised but still structured relationships existed with keynote business leaders, politicians and educational representatives in other cities mainly on the East Coast and predominantly under the Friends of Belfast network.
1.3	With the new International Framework, Council has committed to re-establishing productive links with North America, and most recently, Council commenced the building of links again with New York as part of an outward visit in early September 2013, for the launch of the Northern Irish Connections network in New York. During this visit, Council undertook a series of business meetings with the American Ireland Fund, Tourism Ireland, Invest NI, Manhattan Chamber of Commerce and the US State Dept of Commerce. A further series of meetings with key partner organisations took place during the 4 city visit made by the Lord Mayor to North America and Canada in early November 2013. Outcomes of both programmes included the recent New Brunswick cultural and trade inward mission to Belfast as well as the Opportunity Belfast Business Mission held in the City from 27 February to 1 March 2014.

2	Key Issues
2.1	As part of a programme of developing relations in North America the Lord Mayor has proposed to undertake a business mission to NYC in partnership with the NI Chamber of Commerce to coincide with the New York New Belfast annual May conference. The Lord Mayor proposes using recent and existing connections with the NYC business community to facilitate face to face business meetings for up to 10 companies from Belfast. It is anticipated that the companies would travel at their own expense but that BCC would send an Economic Development officer to accompany and support the companies and report back on any results.
2.2	It is anticipated that the cost of attendance of an officer will not exceed £2500, and there are no associated costs for the Lord Mayor relating to the trip.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	It is anticipated that the cost of an Officer accompanying the Lord Mayor on US mission will not exceed £2500. There are no associated costs to Council for the Lord Mayor.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality or good relations implications.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members agree to the attendance of one Officer in the exploratory business and civic mission to New York in May 2014, to accompany the Lord Mayor and 10 Belfast businesses, at a maximum cost of £2500.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline:	March 2014
	Reporting Officer: John McGrillen



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Shenyang Inward Visit
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Laura Leonard, European Manager, ext 3577

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will also be aware that in the August Committee report the city of Shenyang was recommended as a Chinese city that Belfast should seek to strengthen and formalise its relationship with. The rationale behind this was based on the fact that key city stakeholder organisations, Queens University, University of Ulster, Bombardier and the Confucius Institute had well established relationships with this city within the educational and business spheres and also at senior political levels. All stakeholder organisations welcomed the opportunity to strengthen links and to build on these to open doors and facilitate future benefits in the areas highlighted in our International Relations strategy.
1.2	Further encouragement to make an approach to Shenyang came from a meeting with the China Britain Business Council (CBBC) when it became known that Shenyang had issued a call to develop 'friendly cooperative relationships' with other cities. We responded to the call and CBBC arranged a meeting for Cllr Reynolds (with Committee agreement) to meet with the Foreign Affairs office when he was in Shenyang during the summer. At that meeting Cllr Reynolds reiterated our desire to formalise our relationship with the city and we followed up with written communications reaffirming our interest.
1.3	In November 2013, the Mayor of Shenyang expressed interest in signing a 'friendly cooperative agreement' with Belfast during his visit to Bombardier. An agreement was signed with the Lord Mayor committing both cities to exchanges and cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, science and technology, culture, education, sports and health to promote common prosperity and development.
1.4	Since the signing of the agreement communication has continued between our two cities to promote engagement. As a result Queen's University is now

	benefiting from direct support from the Mayor's office in Shenyang and new opportunities are being created for them to collaborate with colleges and universities there. Belfast Metropolitan College is also in the final stages of negotiating a role in the Shenyang Community Campus for a two way programme to recruit students to study in NI to university level and to deliver 'A' levels to students in Shenyang. Belfast Metropolitan College would like City Council's involvement in the launch of this collaborative work and will provide further details at a later date.
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2	Key Issues												
2.1	<p>A request has now been received asking us to host a delegation of senior officials between May and July 2014 when our new Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor will be in place. The delegation wishes to build on the agreement that has been signed and to explore opportunities for inward and outward investment. The delegation will dedicate one full day to meet with relevant people on this theme and the following Shenyang officials will attend:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="400 801 1310 1261"> <tr> <td>QI Ming</td> <td>Vice Mayor Shenyang Municipal Government</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LIU Xiang</td> <td>Director Shenyang Bureau of Civil Affairs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NA Na</td> <td>Deputy Director Shenyang Finance Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TIAN Xiaojing</td> <td>Deputy District Mayor Shenhe District Municipal Government</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BU Shijie</td> <td>Deputy Director Puhe New Town Administrative Committee</td> </tr> <tr> <td>KONG Lingyu</td> <td>Interpreter Shenyang Foreign Affairs Office</td> </tr> </table>	QI Ming	Vice Mayor Shenyang Municipal Government	LIU Xiang	Director Shenyang Bureau of Civil Affairs	NA Na	Deputy Director Shenyang Finance Office	TIAN Xiaojing	Deputy District Mayor Shenhe District Municipal Government	BU Shijie	Deputy Director Puhe New Town Administrative Committee	KONG Lingyu	Interpreter Shenyang Foreign Affairs Office
QI Ming	Vice Mayor Shenyang Municipal Government												
LIU Xiang	Director Shenyang Bureau of Civil Affairs												
NA Na	Deputy Director Shenyang Finance Office												
TIAN Xiaojing	Deputy District Mayor Shenhe District Municipal Government												
BU Shijie	Deputy Director Puhe New Town Administrative Committee												
KONG Lingyu	Interpreter Shenyang Foreign Affairs Office												
2.2	To support their visit the delegation request that a formal letter of invitation is issued via the Lord Mayor's office and that we establish a relevant agenda which will focus on economic opportunities.												

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p>Staff from the European Unit who lead on international affairs relating to China and will head up this work.</p> <p>£3,000? is requested from the International Relations budget to host the inward delegation from Shenyang.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• £3,000 is approved to support the inward visit• A formal letter of invitation is issued via the Lord Mayor's office
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6	Decision Tracking
Timeline:	Reporting Officer: Laura Leonard

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Social Sofas public art proposal
Date:	18 February 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	As Members will recall, at December Development Committee, Councillor Beattie outlined plans for the production of a community mosaic artwork, “Social sofas”, within the Beechmount area. Committee agreed that officers from within the Development Department would undertake an update to be submitted to a future meeting.
1.2	“Social sofa” sculptures are large concrete benches covered in a mosaic designed and made by an artist in partnership with local community groups. The aim of the project, which started in the Netherlands and has been rolled out in Holland and China, is to create functional and attractive public seating that can become a meeting point for local residents.
1.3	Officers from the Tourism, Culture and Arts (TCA) Unit have carried out further research in to the feasibility of this project, including the option to extend the project across the city. The findings of this research are detailed below.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<u>Budget</u> It is estimated that the cost of developing, commissioning, fabricating and installing one sofa is £18,700, made up of £4,800 for commissioning and £13,900 for production.
2.2	Economies of scale mean that some savings can be made by delivering a citywide project. The total cost of five sofas would be £84,400, made up of £18,400 for commissioning and £66,000 for production.
2.3	<u>Funding</u> The Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) has indicated that the project would not be suitable for Re-imaging funding, which offers up to 100 per cent of projects costs and was the original, intended funding source. However, ACNI has

	<p>indicated that it may be suitable for their general public art funding, which is due to open imminently.</p>
2.4	<p>ACNI funding must follow a two-stage best practice delivery model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stage 1: Commissioning. The minimum grant available is £10,001, and the maximum is £25,000. - Stage 2: Production. The minimum grant available is £10,001, and the maximum is £75,000.
2.5	<p>Applications from public sector bodies such as the Council need to demonstrate a minimum of 50 per cent in-cash partnership funding. Applications made by voluntary and community organisations need to demonstrate a minimum of between 10 and 25 per cent partnership funding depending on the amount of funding applied for.</p>
2.6	<p><u>Delivery mechanism</u> The Council's Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit does not have the resources to directly deliver public art projects, and the cost of hiring a public art coordinator is included in costs.</p>
2.7	<p>Social sofas is a trademarked concept. Best practice and the terms and conditions of ACNI funding require that the artists are procured by select or open competition. In order to widen the number of artists and increase competition and the quality of responses, it is recommended that the artist's brief be widened to include all artist-led street furniture.</p>
2.8	<p><u>Stakeholders</u> A number of arts and community organisations have already expressed an interest in this project including Belfast Conflict Resolution Centre, Upper Springfield Development Trust, the Spectrum Centre and Community Arts Partnership.</p>
2.9	<p>A number of agencies across Belfast, including the PSNI, have raised concerns to public seating as it may encourage loitering and anti-social behaviour. However, if founded on robust community consultation and engagement and with careful selection of sites, it is felt that this project could engender ownership and mitigate against anti-social behaviour.</p>
2.10	<p><u>Maintenance, liability and insurance</u> There are two options for the ownership of the sculpture(s):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The sculpture is owned by the partner community group, which is responsible for maintenance, liability, insurance and permissions. In most cases, planning permission will be required for installation on ground not owned or maintained by the Council. 2. The sculpture is owned by the Council. Maintenance requirements can be specified in the project brief and applications can be assessed against this, minimising cost. This is option is most feasible if the sculpture is to be placed on Council-owned and -maintained land, for example, parks. It is unlikely the sculpture would therefore require planning permission.
2.11	<p><u>Options</u> The requirement for 50 per cent match funding and a minimum available grant of £10,001 means that the Council could not apply for funding for one sofa or for the commissioning cost of five sofas (thecost is less than £20,000 in both cases).</p>

2.12	The Council could apply for funding for the production of five sofas. The contribution required from the Council would be £51,400 (£18,400 for commissioning and £33,000 match funding for the production).
2.13	The Council could appoint a suitably qualified external organisation to develop and deliver the programme. The successful contractor would be responsible for sourcing additional funding. A commitment of a minimum of £4,220 would help lever the remaining funding from ACNI.
2.14	The Council could work with interested community groups to develop applications for funding. Projects may apply for match revenue funding from the Council via the arts and heritage project fund.
2.15	A detailed exploration of options is included at appendix 1. The preferred option is option 4: Council contracts a third-party to develop the project.
2.16	It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and agree the preferred option.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> A range of options are presented at appendix 1. The preferred option would cost £5,000 which is included in the 2014/15 draft budget estimates.
3.2	<u>Human resources</u> Depending on the option selected, the majority of the work load would be outsourced to a third party. Ongoing advice and guidance could be offered within the TCA Unit's current work plan.
3.3	<u>Assets</u> Depending on the location and ownership of the sculpture(s), the assets may be owned by the Council, which would be responsible for ongoing revenue costs.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	Equality and good relations implications in relation to this policy are still under consideration. Further updates will be sent to the Equality and Diversity Officer in due course.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and agree the preferred option.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline: June 2014	Reporting Officer: Brian Johnston

7	Key to Abbreviations
ACNI - Arts Council of Northern Ireland TCA - Tourism, Culture and Arts	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1: Options paper	

Appendix 1: Options paper

Option	What would this look like	Cost to Council	Risks	Opportunities
1. Do nothing	No public art is developed	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to enhance the city's physical infrastructure is missed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
2. Pilot in Beechmount area	One "social sofa" is developed and installed in the Beechmount area	£18,700	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning permission and/or landowners permission not secured Expectation of funding for additional projects across Belfast Ongoing maintenance, liability and insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced physical infrastructure Potential ground-breaking best practice model for other cities
3. Council applies for funding for citywide programme	Five sofas developed and installed across Belfast, managed by Belfast City Council	£51,400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliance of third-party funding Planning permission and/or landowners permission not secured Ongoing maintenance, liability and insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced physical infrastructure Potential ground-breaking best practice model for other cities Installation on Council land may mitigate risks
4. Council contracts a third-party to develop the project	Five sofas funded, developed and installed across Belfast, managed by third-party	£5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No interest among contractors Reliance on third-party contractor and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced physical infrastructure Potential ground-breaking best practice model for other cities Long-term risks carried by third-party contractor
5. The Council works with community groups to develop proposals	Community groups develop projects and apply for funding direct	£0 to £10,000 per project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of interest or capacity among community groups Need for cash match-funding may lead to increased number of application to Council's small grants programme, which is already oversubscribed Expectation of additional Council funding Community groups may be unwilling or unable to commit to upkeep of sculpture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced physical infrastructure Potential ground-breaking best practice model for other cities Community ownership a prerequisite

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