



Subject:	Presentation: Ulster University and Queens University – The importance of students and student accommodation in Belfast
Date:	7 December 2022
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	This report provides a supplementary note to the presentation from representatives of Ulster University and Queens University on importance of students and student accommodation in Belfast.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee:  I. Note that representatives from Ulster University and Queens University will be presenting to Committee with regards to the importance of students and student accommodation in Belfast.

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	Belfast currently has a student population of c 45,000 full time students (which represents approx. 14% of the city's population), the majority of students are studying at Queens and Ulster University, with the remainder at Stranmillis, St Mary's and Belfast Met.
3.2	The relocation of the University of Ulster from the Jordanstown Campus to the new Belfast City Centre Campus represents a major regeneration investment opportunity within the Northern side of the city centre, an area that has experienced significant underinvestment in recent years. The £364m campus provides 75,000m2 of high-quality learning space for over 15,000 students per annum with a GVA impact of £160m and an overall benefit to the NI economy of £1.4billion (OCED). During the construction the project provided approx. 1,000 jobs with 100 years' worth of opportunities for training, placements and apprenticeships, 4,000 weeks in training in the local area and 500 jobs in the NI supply chain. Projected annual student expenditure of £100m will support a further 500 jobs as well as bring forward further development and regeneration opportunities such as the 6,000 PBMSA beds currently under construction or complete within the city centre.
3.3	Further to this significant regeneration opportunity the integration of the campus into the city centre provides an opportunity to overcome the issues within the immediate, including anti-social behaviour and dereliction as well as providing better access for local communities to education, training and opportunities, and overcoming the long-running severance issues between the city centre and the local communities.
3.4	Council officers have continued to work with the University along with various stakeholders to support the successful opening and integration of the new Belfast City Centre Ulster University Campus, and to maximise the longer-term inclusive regeneration impacts and opportunities of this major capital investment programme. This work is co-ordinated through the Community Campus Regeneration Forum (CCRF), which is chaired by Council and has representation from Ulster University, Cathedral Quarter BID, DfI, DfC, Translink and representatives from the local communities including Greater Shankill Partnership and Inner North Neighbourhood Renewal Area.
3.5	Along with CCRF sub groups under physical / spatial, economic and education, the UU have also established a Community Benefits Framework with Inner North and Greater Shankill in order to highlight the commitment of the University to work together with neighbouring communities and achieve mutual benefit for community, students and

University staff. The Framework was revised in 2021 to be more strategic and long-term covering education; regeneration; civic contribution and health and wellbeing themes – it remains at the core of UU and CCRF programme of work.

3.6

Other key elements of CCRF programme of work include:

Campus Impact Study – BCC/UU/UUEPC have jointly started this project and have been collating a range of baseline social, economic, physical, educational and environmental data around UU campus area that will be further used to measure the collative impact of the new University Campus. This project will also be used as a toolkit in other significant projects to identify regeneration impact and develop remedial actions. It is updated annually to track the progress of UU regeneration of the area. The Campus Impact Study also serves as performance framework for the Community Benefits Framework

Parking & transport – this has been the main issue and risk identified by local communities, the University and Council and each of the organisations have raised significant issues with DfI and the DfI Ministers Office in relation to the Fredrick St Junction, Residents Parking Issues and general sustainable and active travel connections surrounding the University and continue to work through these issues within the CCRF. UU, in conjunction with Translink and the wider CCRF, is leading on the Greater Belfast Campus Transport plan to manage the migration of staff and students to the site and to ensure that adequate sustainable transport offers are in place to manage this migration.

3.7

The opening of the Ulster University Belfast Campus, together with Queens University, St Mary's, Stranmillis and Belfast Met presents a strategic opportunity for the city and indeed the region to maximise on the wider social and economic benefits of a knowledge economy.

3.8

Representatives from Queens and Ulster Universities have advised their presentation will specifically cover the following areas:

- Alignment to the Belfast Agenda and A Bolder Vision
- Importance of students to the City's ambitions
- Overview of student accommodation in Belfast
- Context of the current housing market in relation to student accommodation
- Overview of PBSA in Belfast
- University plans for student accommodation

<b>4.0</b>	<u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u> NA
<b>5.0</b>	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	None