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| Subject: | Visit Belfast - Management Agreement; and Renewal of the Sharing Agreement with Translink and Visit Belfast |
| Date: | 20 October 2023 |
| Reporting Officer: | John Greer, Director of Economic Development |
| Contact Officer: | Lesley-Ann O'Donnell, Senior Manager Culture and Tourism Pièr Morrow, Tourism Development Officer |

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| Restricted Reports | | | | | | | | | |
| Is this report restricted? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> | | After Committee Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> | After Council Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sometime in the future | <input type="checkbox"/> | Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| After Committee Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | |
| After Council Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | |
| Sometime in the future | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | |
| Never | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | |

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

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report |
| 1.1 | The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee to provide a management agreement which gives Visit Belfast reassurance of Council commitment to continued |

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| | support of the organisation as a strategic partner, subject to an annual funding agreement; and to approve the renewal of the Partnership Agreement with Translink and Visit Belfast for the operation of a ticketing area at Belfast Welcome Centre. |
| 2.0 | Recommendations |
| 2.1 | <p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Approve the provision of an agreement that provides Visit Belfast with the reassurance that Belfast City Council is committed to supporting the organisation up to 15 July 2033; albeit subject to an annual funding agreement from recurrent budget provision; ii. Approve the renewal of the Partnership Agreement with Translink and Visit Belfast for the operation of a ticketing area within Belfast Welcome Centre at 8-9 Donegall Square North, up to 31 March 2026. |
| 3.0 | Main report |
| 3.1 | Visit Belfast serves as the official DMO for Belfast, successfully promoting Belfast as a vibrant tourist destination to out of state, international & business tourism markets and managing various aspects of the tourism and visitor experience. |
| 3.2 | On 21 April 2023 committee approved the continued occupation of premises at 8-9 Donegall Square North by Visit Belfast to operate the Welcome Centre in the delivery of leisure marketing, business tourism and visitor servicing activity for Belfast and to extend the term of the existing Management Agreement for a period of 1 year from 16 July 2023 and year to year thereafter until a date no later than 15 July 2028, which is in line with the lease expiry held by BCC. |
| 3.3 | The Management Agreement is subject to an annual review of Visit Belfast's annual business plan and project plan and approval of funding by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. |
| 3.4 | Visit Belfast have advised council officers of unfortunate unintended negative consequences to business and planning challenges that the 5 year stop date on the current management agreement poses. |
| 3.5 | In order to continue to work with Visit Belfast as our strategic delivery partner, which will assist in achieving the outcomes of the Belfast Agenda; the provision of a ten year agreement for the delivery of leisure marketing, business tourism and visitor servicing activity for Belfast and Belfast City Region creates greater confidence, stability and a level of security for staff retention and recruitment; generation of income from the private sector, other sources and from commercial activity; and reassurance to our wider tourism partners and industry. |

Rationale for Extension:

- 3.6 Positive Track Record: Visit Belfast has a proven track record of effectively promoting Belfast as a tourist destination and managing critical functions such as marketing, visitor information, and event coordination.
- 3.7 Consistency and Stability: A 10-year long stop date will provide stability and consistency in planning and executing long-term tourism strategies, helping to maintain and enhance Belfast's reputation as a world-class destination.
- 3.8 Long-Term Investment: Encourage sustained investment in the city's tourism infrastructure, including the development of new attractions, improved visitor services, and enhanced marketing efforts.
- 3.9 Economic Impact: Tourism plays a significant role in Belfast's economy, and a long-term commitment to Visit Belfast will help ensure continued economic benefits, including job creation and revenue generation.
- 3.10 Based on the rationale and considerations outlined above, committee are asked to consider the recommendations to review and progress amending the existing management agreement for Visit Belfast from July 2028 to July 2033. The management agreement will remain subject to annual review against annual business and project plans
- 3.11 **Translink Sharing Agreement**
 - i) Approval of renewal of the Sharing Agreement with Translink and Visit Belfast for the operation of a ticketing area within Belfast Welcome Centre at 8-9 Donegall Square North up to 31 March 2026.
- 3.12 There has been a partnership agreement in place since 2017 with Translink and Visit Belfast to operate a ticketing area within Belfast Welcome Centre. The agreement is due for renewal for a further three years, the extension of which will ensure that there is continued ticketing services being provided at this key location in Belfast and Translink has indicated it wishes to continue to provide that service.
- 3.13 Subject to Members approval, officers will work to make the relevant changes to the current management agreement and any resultant modifications to the lease agreement if required; and the Sharing Agreement with Translink will be renewed.

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| 3.14 | <p><u>Financial and Resources Implications</u></p> <p>No financial implications – Visit Belfast funding is subject to an annual funding agreement from recurrent budget.</p> |
| 3.15 | <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p> |
| 4.0 | <p>Appendices - Documents Attached</p> |
| | <p>None</p> |