



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Details of Proposed State of the City V Conference
Date:	21 February 2008
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Relevant Background Information

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the plans for the Belfast State of the City V Conference scheduled on Tuesday 20th May 2008 in Waterfront Hall.

Members will be aware that as part of the *Belfast: State of the City Initiative*, the Belfast: State of the City IV conference was held in Waterfront Hall on 19 April 2007. Once again the initiative successfully brought together representatives from the city's key regeneration and development organisations to take forward Belfast's urban agenda in order to maximise the city's potential and competitiveness, through keynote speeches from Professor Michael Parkinson, Councillor Alex Maskey, Stephen Purcell (Leader of Glasgow City Council) and Tristram Hunt (historian).

Key Issues

Following the recommendations of delegates at the most recent event, plans are now underway to deliver the fifth annual Belfast: State of the City Conference on Tuesday, 20th May 2008 at Belfast Waterfront Hall.

This year's conference will focus on the economic development research carried out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on behalf of Belfast City Council.

This study on Belfast will provide the Council with recommendations on how to move forward economic and regional development agenda. It particularly focuses on economic inclusion, quality of place/life and, leadership & delivery arrangements.

During this study the OECD team has been talking to a number of key decision makers in the city:

- Councillors;
- Ministers;
- Senior Civil Servants;
- Key agencies;
- Cross-border organisations;
- Business sector;
- Voluntary and community sector; and
- Belfast City Council officers.

The conference will aim to present the findings of this study and further engage with the Council's stakeholders to ensure prosperity of Belfast.

Resource Implications

Financial

In line with last year's event the budget for the conference is £25,000 to cover venue, equipment, catering, communication, etc. This was previously approved at Development Committee on the 8 August 2007.

Recommendations

The Committee are asked to

1. Note the date and venue for the 2008 Belfast: State of the City V Conference as Tuesday 20 May 2008 in the Waterfront Hall.
2. To approve the attendance of all Members of the Council at the proposed State of the City V Conference.