



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Tourism Unit Update
Date:	15 October 2008
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Relevant Background Information

World Travel Market

Members will be aware that the Belfast Brand was launched in June and there is now an opportunity in partnership with the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) to launch the Brand at the World Travel Market (WTM) in London at the Excel Conference Centre on 10 November 2008. The WTM will take place from Monday 10 to Thursday 13 November 2008 and it is the leading international travel and tourism industry's dedicated business-to-business event. WTM is the place where the world's travel suppliers meet annually with the world's most influential industry buyers. It is the largest travel trade exhibition in the UK with over 48,000 travel trade and media attending.

This is an opportunity to sell Belfast as a destination and to create awareness of the Belfast brand worldwide. Members will be aware that at the September Development Committee the need was expressed for strong representation by Belfast at WTM.

Go Belfast Awards

A request has been received from Penton Publications, publisher of the *Go Belfast* magazine, seeking endorsement from Belfast City Council for the *Go Belfast Awards* which will take place on 14 November 2008. Members will be aware that they agreed to support the Awards Scheme last year in line with the Council's Corporate Identity Guidelines and the approval of the Council's Head of Corporate Communications. This magazine is an independent publication that promotes all that there is to see and do in Belfast and is distributed free of charge throughout the city and is very popular with both residents and visitors alike. The range of awards recognise the efforts of many of our tourism trade in the city. *Go Belfast* has also indicated that it will use the new Belfast Brand alongside the Council logo, thereby providing a platform for brand awareness and buy-in to the Belfast brand.

The Awards Scheme is decided by public nomination through the submission of entries on the website and by mail. The awards ceremony is aimed at celebrating success and recognising entrepreneurial drive in Belfast.

The *Go Belfast* Awards will feature the following categories

- Fashion Retailer of the Year
- Café of the Year
- Restaurant of the Year
- Pub of the Year
- Hotel of the Year
- Club of the Year
- Live Music Venue of the Year
- Festival/Event of the Year
- Visitor Attraction of the Year
- Newcomer of the Year
- Sports Star of the Year
- Hair Salon of the Year
- Media Personality of the Year

Spotcheck Northern Ireland will authenticate the votes and the awards are voted for directly by the public. Last year there were over 17,000 votes cast.

At this stage funding has not been requested for City Council's support. However, if support is granted the City Council's logo and the Belfast Brand will feature on marketing, advertising and public relations activity. Initial publicity has commenced on the Awards Scheme.

Resource Implications

World Travel Market

The cost for travel, accommodation and subsistence is £550 per person

Go Belfast Awards

N/A

Recommendations

World Travel Market

It is recommended that Members approve the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Committee, or their nominees, and an Officer attend the World Travel Market on 10 – 11 November 2008 and to approve travel and subsistence.

Go Belfast Awards

It is recommended that Members endorse the Go Belfast Awards on 14 November 2008 through the use of City Council logo and the new Belfast Brand.

Key to abbreviations

WTM – World Travel Market

BVCB – Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau