



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Request from Belfast Media Group Regarding an Event at The Alamo, Texas
Date:	11 March, 2009
Reporting Officer:	Marie-Thérèse McGivern, Director of Development ext. 3470
Contact Officer:	Marie-Thérèse McGivern, Director of Development, ext. 3470

Relevant Background Information

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Michael Browne, has received a request from the Belfast Media Group (BMG), attached as Appendix 1.

The BMG has been working jointly with the Irish Echo on a number of activities and events across the USA on an ongoing basis. The attached appendix details a new initiative of the Group in Texas, where, linking with the local Harp and Shamrock Society in San Antonio, the inaugural Texas Irish American Leaders Awards event will be held on 4 June, 2009.

The Group has suggested a number of ways in which the Development Committee may wish to support the process.

Key Issues

The Development Committee and Department have been pursuing the development and implementation of a linking strategy with the USA over a number of years. While in the early part of the decade this took the form of a Friends of Belfast network and Memorandum signings with a number of cities, successive evaluation and monitoring of the work has led us to be more focussed in our linking work. Presently that work concentrates on building our relationship through links with our Sister City, Nashville, and, in general, working to create strong economic developments and outcomes, especially in the creative industries and tourism sectors.

Through our work at South by South-West we have established links in Texas and this request from the BMG could be seen as part of our work there - a link with Texas offers

both economic and tourism potential.

In relation to the request, Members are asked to:

- Consider the “Partnership Packages” in the attached appendix and decide if one of these is appropriate;
- Ask the Lord Mayor to send a letter of greeting from Belfast City Council and possibly a City gift;
- Send a letter of encouragement from the Chairman to Tourism Ireland.

Resource Implications

Up to \$10,000 (approx. £7,000) depending on the Committee decision.

Recommendations

For Members to consider the request and decide appropriate action.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Correspondence from the Belfast Media Group

Abbreviations

BMG – Belfast Media Group