



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Core Cities Request
Date:	20 April, 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 Core Cities Group was set up in 2000 to assist the 8 core cities of England (outside London) to work together on common issues.

The cities are:

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|-------------|--------------|
| - Liverpool | - Birmingham |
| - Leeds | - Manchester |
| - Sheffield | - Bristol |
| - Newcastle | - Gateshead |

This collaboration has been very successful and when the leaders, key politicians and senior officers meet together during the year and have the annual conference, they research and publish on common issues. A number of joint initiatives have emerged as a result, in particular, on issues related to transport, regeneration and employability. The cities have appointed a small secretariat. Over the years they have had informal talks with the cities of Cardiff, Belfast, Glasgow and Edinburgh about becoming "associates" to the Core Cities Group.

The Lord Mayor recently received an invitation from the Core Cities Leaders' Group to invite Belfast to become an associate member of Core Cities with Cardiff, Glasgow and Edinburgh. (Appendix 1).

Key Issues

The Core Cities is a very prestigious group and works directly with national Government on issues related to cities and their development. The invitation to Belfast is to become an “associate” to the Group, not to be a full member as the Core Cities Group believes that cities within the U.K. outside England have their own regional Assemblies.

The scope of “association” is to share their information and data banks and for us to have our own, to meet annually at the Core Cities Conference, usually in late Autumn and attracting up to 1,000 participants, and to participate in Group meetings between politicians and officers, as appropriate.

Such an association has a positive benefit for the City of Belfast and brings the original idea of the Cities of the Isles to a stronger platform. The City is not being asked, at this point, for any financial contribution.

Resource Implications

As yet none. If approval is given to association then costs for attending the annual conference for Members and officers is likely.

Recommendations

Members are asked to consider the request from the Core Cities Group and approve the acceptance of this invitation by the Lord Mayor.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - Invitation from Core Cities