



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Brussels
<b>Date:</b>	9 December 2009
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Shirley McCay Acting Director of Development ext 3459
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### Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that the new European Parliament has been in place since the June elections of 2009 and will cover the period 2009-2013. Northern Ireland as a region of Europe is represented at the European Parliament by three MEPs, namely Bairbre de Brun, Jim Nicholson and Diane Dodds.

### Key Issues

On 27 January 2010 the Parliament will hold an event entitled "Cities 4 Europe" in partnership with the Parliament Urban Inter Group and Eurocities. This is an important opportunity for city elected representatives to engage in direct dialogue with MEPs in relation to the already initiated negotiations around future funding and urban policy for regions and cities post 2013.

At the recent Eurocities AGM attended by the Chair of Development, cities were encouraged by the network to attend this MEP event to mobilise and champion the city agenda particularly in a time when future European funding will be limited and increasingly focused on central and eastern Europe.

On 28 January, the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau will host a Belfast Tourism Showcase in the new office premises of the NI Executive Bureau in Brussels. The aim of this event is to maximise the opportunity of having such a high level gathering in Brussels for the MEP and cities event. The BVCB has invited Belfast City Council through the Chair of Development to jointly host a showcasing and promotional evening and OFMDFM has agreed to offer the use of the new NIEB premises.

**Resource Implications**

Estimated costing:  
Return flights Belfast to Brussels: 400.00  
Accommodation x two nights 200.00  
Subsistence x two full days 150.00

Total estimated cost per person £750.00

Resources are available within the European Unit's showcase budget 2009-2010

**Recommendations**

Members are requested to approve the attendance of the Chair and Deputy Chair of Development, the Head of Economic Initiatives and the European Manager or their nominees at the MEP "Cities 4 Europe" event to be held in Brussels on 27 January and to co-host the Belfast tourism promotional event on 28 January 2010.

**Decision Tracking**

Further to approval, the Chair of Development and the European Manager (or their nominees), will attend the Cities 4 Europe event and the Belfast Tourism Showcase in Brussels.

Timeline: January 2010

Reporting Officer: Laura Leonard

**Key Abbreviations**

MEP: Member of the European Parliament