



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework and Local Economic Development Plan – request for Special Meeting
Date:	9 June 2010
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
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Relevant Background Information

1. Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 – 2014

Members approved the draft Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 – 2014 in January 2010 and agreed it would go for public consultation.

The Framework is a joint report commissioned by Belfast City Council and Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB). The document provides strategic direction for Product Development, Marketing, Visitor Management and Quality Standards.

The Framework was placed on Belfast City Council's website with access links from NITB's website on the 2 March 2010 for a period of 4 weeks. Over 700 stakeholders were invited by email to respond to the document and presentations were offered to groups/organisations on request. Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau's (BVCB) Members were invited to attend presentations on the Framework as part of BVCB's wider sector meetings to discuss marketing for the city. Over 100 members attended these sessions.

Members will also be aware that party briefings were held on the Framework before presentation to Committee.

25 written consultation responses were received and 3 requests for presentations (West Belfast Tourism Forum, Environment and Heritage Service, Linen Hall Library).

2. Local Economic Development (LED) Plan

At the 16 October 2009 meeting of the Development Committee, Members approved a review of the current local economic development (LED) plan and the development of a new one year plan for 2010-2011. They endorsed a structured consultation process for the development of the new plan and agreed that one of the key objectives should be to work towards an integrated economic strategy for the city from 2011 onwards.

Discussions have taken place with a range of agencies and individuals involved in business start-up and growth. These include businesses participating in our development programmes, other business support agencies such as the local enterprise

agency (LEA) network, Invest NI, sector skills sector representatives and universities and colleges. The Lord Mayor also hosted a meeting with the city's largest businesses and party briefings were undertaken with all party groupings.

Key Issues

1. Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 – 2014

Overall the responses to the Framework have been positive, however a number of issues have been flagged from West Belfast. These are currently being reviewed.

The aim was to finalise and launch the framework before the Summer season. In order for us to follow this timetable, we would like to schedule a special meeting before the end of June with Development Committee to review the consultation responses and agree final changes to the Framework document.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee agrees to a special meeting on the Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 – 2014 and the Local Economic Development Plan before the end of June 2010

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking is required.

2. Local Economic Development (LED) Plan

A draft plan has now been developed and it is proposed that this is brought back to the Development Committee for approval and endorsement. Preliminary discussions have also been undertaken with Invest NI with regard to further collaboration on economic development provision in the city and these will be progressed in the coming months.

Recommendations

As above.

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking is required.

Key to Abbreviations

NITB - Northern Ireland Tourist Board
BVCB - Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau
LED – Local Economic Development Plan