



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Creative Industries – Blick Shared Studios
Date:	11 August 2010
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3427

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that, since 2005, Belfast City Council has invested in the creative industries as part of its programme of support for the local economy.

One of the projects in which we have previously invested is Blick Shared Studios. This is a business incubation project for the creative sector. It is based on the Malone Road in a property which has been let by the private sector at favourable rates. The building currently houses 12 companies across a range of disciplines including fashion, textiles, graphic/web design, jewellery, television production, photography, game development, motion graphics, magazine production and feature film development.

Key Issues

Blick has developed a structured programme of business growth for its tenant companies. This comprises a number of elements:

- Mentoring programme – year-long mentoring programme for tenant companies, linking them with industry experts
- Monthly business growth events – this will incorporate networking sessions, workshops and seminars. Topics to be covered are likely to include intellectual property, copyright, patenting, product development and procurement
- Quarterly business growth clinics – these will be full-day/half-day workshops on a range of topics relevant to creative businesses such as PR, sales and marketing, accessing funding and legal issues.

The aim of this programme is to enhance the business skills of participating companies and subsequently support them in improving their productivity and competitiveness.

Resource Implications

The request for support from Blick to carry out this work is £30,000. Match-funding of £15,000 is available from DETI under the EU Structural Funds programme.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee agrees to the proposed allocation of £30,000 for the delivery of the identified activity, of which £15,000 will come from Belfast City Council monies and £15,000 from EU funds.

Decision Tracking

If recommendation is accepted, an update will be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.

Time frame: June 2011 Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay