



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Department Business Plan 2011-2012
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present Members with the proposed 2011/12 departmental plan for approval by Committee.
1.2	A series of workshops for Members have been held (8 th September 2010 & 27 th January 2011) to develop and confirm the new Corporate Plan. The content of this proposed departmental plan reflects the key actions that have been identified to deliver the Corporate Plan that was presented to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee in March.
1.3	Members will be aware that departmental estimates were considered on 7 th January of this year by Strategic Policy & Resources Committee including key actions for 2011/12 for each department. The specific financial estimates for the Development Department were considered and approved by Development Committee on 12 th January 2011. These were subsequently agreed by Council at its meeting in February.
1.4	Since then, Chief Officers have been finalising their departmental plans based on these approved estimates and actions and this report presents, at appendix 1, the final draft of the departmental plan. The plan sets out the new activities resulting from the priorities Members identified during the planning workshops as well as the major ongoing activities of the department. <u>Key challenges for Belfast</u>
1.5	The significant change in the economic climate and public sector finances means that the Development Department faces a fundamentally different environment than in previous years.

1.6	The Department has a crucial role to play in supporting Belfast's economic recovery via support for private sector growth, regeneration across the city and its neighbourhoods and developing new and innovative area based service provision and integration. The Department plays a leading role in interfacing with the private sector including SMEs, entrepreneurs, large scale companies, sectoral clusters and developers.
1.7	The ongoing impact of the economic downturn on vulnerable communities and the likely increase in demand for public services means that the Department will play a key role in ensuring access to services in local communities and will continue to invest in capacity-building, skills development and economic growth in those same communities.
<u>Meeting the challenge</u>	
1.8	The Department's plan is focused on leveraging the impact of our assets and resources including community assets, city events, tourism, culture and arts and private sector innovation to draw new resources, ideas and influence into Belfast.
1.9	The Department's work on urban regeneration will address the challenging economic environment in the city and its neighbourhoods. The Department will implement recommendations from the review of the Belfast Masterplan and focus on generating new integrated economic initiatives to support economic growth. The key themes of regenerating towns and cities, tackling poverty and inequalities and building strong, cohesive and welcoming communities will be echoed in our work.
1.10	The Department has a key role in terms of leading on the development of the City through the production of the new Masterplan and priorities for physical development and infrastructure; continuing the State of the City 'Development Debates' with key stakeholders and implementing an integrated Economic Strategy in partnership with key stakeholders. We will also continue to lobby on behalf of Belfast in Europe and actively pursue additional sources of external funding. A target of £5 million funding has been proposed for this year.
1.11	The Council's City Investment Framework will confirm the short to medium term plans for physical regeneration projects in Belfast, led by or supported by BCC. The Department will ensure that there is an integrated approach with the Department of Property and Projects on capital investment and asset management. We will also ensure an integrated approach to community facilities along with the Department for Parks and Leisure and to community and area based provision with all departments.
1.12	The plan also sets out the department's leading role in creating opportunities for new jobs, increasing people's employability and supporting small businesses through various programmes and expansion of the markets. Of particular importance in the coming year is ensuring that local people and businesses benefit fully from the investment in the Titanic Quarter. A target of over 100 jobs and support for over 1,000 businesses has been proposed for this year.
1.13	The Review of Public Administration (RPA) has been delayed. However, some transfer of functions in shadow form may happen before 2015. The Department will ensure that we are delivering on the Local Government's Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency agenda. In addition, the Department will play a key role in the Council's continued commitment to community planning and its two key

	<p>goals of integrated service planning and delivering and engaging communities and citizens in decision-making on service planning and delivery. Some aspects of this include our work on local area working via the SNAP team; the BIG community planning pilot; connecting the private sector to community planning and providing community services infrastructure and development to underpin community planning.</p>
1.14	<p>The Department will continue its positive relationship with Members, including with new Members post-election in May 2011. In addition, Members have an important role in our work in Europe. This is particularly the case given their ongoing membership of NI monitoring and steering committees for EU funding and increasing calls for engagement and scrutiny of EU matters at an Assembly level.</p>
1.15	<p>The Department will lead the Council's preparation for 2012, an iconic year for Belfast and a key opportunity to embed a positive, innovative Belfast brand. The Department will use the next year to develop City events; tourism development and product; cultural and arts development; economic focus and community development to ensure that 2012 is hugely successful and that its legacy continues long into future.</p>
1.16	<p>2012 will be a key milestone in the ongoing development of Titanic Quarter. This new City Quarter has the potential to drive tourism across the city through the development of the City's maritime heritage and the Titanic Signature Project. It will also be a key employment location for high value added investors in the financial and creative industry sectors. The Department will continue to lead the integrated development of Titanic Quarter through its Memorandum of Understanding with Titanic Quarter Ltd.</p>
1.17	<p>The next 18 months is also important from a tourism perspective and the associated economic benefit and job creation opportunities. It is hoped that 2013 will create enough interest in Belfast as a destination to allow us to beat the target of 9.3 million tourists contributing approximately £451M to the economy who visited in 2009. Consequently the plan highlights several important tourism activities including the MTV Europe awards; developing new tourism places and products such as the Maritime Heritage Trail and the Belfast Story; preparing for the 2012 World Police and Firefighter games; and, of course, developing a programme of events for the 2012 Titanic celebrations.</p>
1.18	<p>The plan also shows how exiting activities will be refined and developed such as the approach to supporting and encouraging culture and arts; a new City Events strategy with the aim of creating £6 for the Belfast economy for every £1 invested by Council; and reviewing options for expanding conference facilities to grow the business tourism market, which is currently estimate to be worth over £17 million for the economy.</p>
1.19	<p>Finally, the plan also sets out how the department will support people at the local level. This includes physical improvements via the next stage of the Renewing the Routes programme; creating a neighbourhood investment framework; and delivering four neighbourhood regeneration projects. There is also a commitment to deliver the Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Framework; the Community Development Strategy and Community Support Plan and pilots for community engagement.</p>

1.20	The departmental will continue to offer advice and support for communities through the 28 community centres, £2.5 million of funding, and a range of local programmes. It will continue to build on its successes working with children and young people and the Traveller community. We hope to exceed our proposed target of 70,000 volunteer hours and to beat the 412,000 visits to our community centres in the first three quarters of 2010-11.
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Key Issues	
2.1	<p>The content of the plan reflects the key actions that have been identified to deliver the Corporate Plan that was presented to SP&R in March.</p> <p>The plan sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the key achievements from 2010/11 - the key actions within the corporate plan that the department has responsibility for delivering in 2011/12 - the departments key performance indicators for 2011/12 - financial information relating to the estimates for 2011/12.
2.2	The plan provides a mechanism to enable committee and senior managers to performance manage the key work of departments in line with the Corporate Plan. It should also assist managers and officers in the relevant Services to make decisions and allocate resources in line with the agreed objectives and activities.
2.3	Departments will provide regular updates to Committee on the progress of their plans and key work as part of the performance management framework previously agreed by Members.
2.4	<p>The plan, once approved by Committee, also provides the Director with the delegated authority to deliver the key actions contained in the plan subject to regular monitoring and reporting to both COMT and the relevant Committees.</p> <p>The format of the plan follows the template issued corporately.</p>

3 Resource Implications	
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>A spending limit of £19,783,734, a decrease of 2.11% from the previous year, was agreed at Committee on 12 January 2011.</p>

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations	
4.1	None. Specific projects within the plan will be Equality Impact Assessed as appropriate.

5 Recommendations	
5.1	The Committee is asked to approve the Development Departmental Plan 2011-2012

6	Decision Tracking
A quarterly update of progress against the Development Department's Business Plan will be submitted to Committee. Timeline: June 2011 Reporting Officer: John McGrillen.	

7	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - The Development Department's Business Plan 2011-12.	