



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Maritime and Titanic Signage Project
Date:	14 September 2011
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<u>Cultural Tourism Visitor Management Plan</u> The award winning Cultural Tourism Visitor Management Plan (CTVMP) was developed and initiated in 2004 to encourage visitor flow throughout Belfast through the provision of an integrated navigation, orientation and interpretative signage system.
1.2	Approximately 200 signs have been installed throughout the City to date including welcome hubs, primary hubs, navigational blades, building blades and finger posts. New signs are erected subject to demand and budget availability.
1.3	The Tourism Development Scheme (TDS) is a Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) initiative that provides financial assistance towards tourism capital projects which can demonstrate that they will increase tourism activity to and within Northern Ireland. The scheme is about to open.
1.4	NITB will match fund projects up to a maximum of 50% of eligible project costs.
1.5	<u>Maritime and Titanic Signage Project</u> The proposed Maritime and Titanic Signage Project will specifically target maritime heritage and Titanic 2012.
1.6	The objective of the project is to animate the streets, motorways and roads and orientate and inform the people who live in, work in and visit Belfast. The deadline for the project is March 2012, prior to the opening of Titanic Belfast.

1.7	The aim is to connect pedestrians to Belfast City Centre from the Titanic Quarter and Signature Building through a series of planned signed pedestrian trails. The routes will in turn enhance our existing city signage, provide pathways for visitors to navigate the wider city and in turn deliver on the Council's Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 - 2014 under Tourism Place Destinations.
1.8	The pedestrian routes will be reinforced through complementary street maps. In conjunction with the signage trails, the visitor maps will be produced and distributed to inform and interpret key attractions along the routes. As part of the city interpretation, QR codes (mobile website Interpretation) will be developed and used on key pedestrian signs throughout the city. These codes will provide additional web based interpretation.
1.9	It is envisaged that vehicular routes will be signed from motorways, and within the city road signage will be used to orientate traffic and will connect the Titanic Quarter and city centre
1.10	<p>The project involves;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The design, development, manufacture and installation of white on brown signage on the Motorways and off-slips into the Titanic Quarter. This will also include the development of a unique Titanic Quarter mark/symbol. – Enhancement of the current suite of city based tourism signs. (CTVMP) – The design, development, manufacture and installation of tourism signs supporting Titanic and maritime heritage trails. – The development of key themed trails linking the Titanic Quarter with the city centre. – The design, production and distribution of Titanic and Maritime Visitor Trail maps
1.11	<p><u>Benefits</u></p> <p>The trails, with their distinctive signs and design features will give visitors to Belfast essential key interpretation and orientation throughout the city. They will provide a distinctive experience for visitors and create a competitive advantage for Belfast as an internationally distinctive tourist destination.</p>
1.12	They will offer visitors an unrivalled engagement with the city and the signature project. The trails will increase city-wide accessibility and appeal to all tourists. The routes will enhance our existing city signage and provide pathways for visitors to navigate the wider city.
1.13	The trails and maps will offer the tourist the opportunity to explore the maritime heritage of the city at their leisure.
1.14	Additionally, this project offers an opportunity to engage with the retail sector, to interpret the public realm and to direct pedestrians between and through cultural, historic and retail hubs.
1.15	By offering this unique product in Belfast, it can only encourage the city's visitors to locate and explore the city's maritime heritage, stay longer and take advantage of the unique offer.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<u>Maritime and Titanic Signage Project</u> The project is a priority for NITB and they will match fund the project up to a maximum of 50% of eligible project costs.
2.2	A detailed signage scoping has been conducted by the Council's Project Management Unit and the cost of the proposed project for the design, manufacture, delivery and installation of 208 signage items is £385,394
2.3	The deadline for delivery of the Maritime and Titanic Signage Project is March 2012.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	NITB will match fund the project up to a maximum of 50% of eligible project costs.
3.2	£190,000 has been included in the 2011/2012 Tourism Culture and Arts Budget for the delivery of this project.
3.3	The cost of the proposed Maritime and Titanic Signage Project for 208 signage items is £385,394.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members approve the spend of £190,000, subject to this amount being match-funded by NITB.

6	Decision Tracking
Members will receive a full report on the programme in March 2012.	
Timescale: March 2012	Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

	Key to Abbreviations
NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board TDS – Tourism Development Scheme CTVMP – Cultural Tourism Visitor Management Plan	