



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Belfast City Centre Management – funding for 2012-2013
Date:	21 February 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development ext. 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) made a presentation to the Development Committee in December 2011 reporting back on progress against target within their business plan. This is a two year business plan (2011-2013) which was previously endorsed by the Development Committee in February 2011. A copy of the business plan is attached for information (Appendix 1).
1.2	At the December 2011 meeting, members noted the proposed areas of work for the coming financial year and posed a number of questions regarding planned activity and how this aligned with the work of other organisations, including the Council.
1.3	It was noted that the draft business plan assumed a Belfast City Council contribution of £190,000 per annum core funding, with an expectation of additional support for specific events and initiatives including Belfast Business Awards, community safety activities and Retail NI conference.
1.4	It was agreed that a report would be presented to a future meeting of the Development Committee outlining proposed funding for the organisation for the coming financial year (2012-2013).

2	Key Issues
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2.1	Belfast City Centre Management proposes to “deliver additional services in Belfast, on behalf of its core funders, which contribute in a measurable way to a cleaner, safer and more economically vibrant and accessible city centre”.
2.2	<p>A draft business plan for the period 2011-2013 was developed in early 2011 and has been agreed by BCCM’s Board (and this committee previously). It sets out a series of activities which are coordinated through three working groups, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public space management - Safer city - Economic performance
2.2	Each working group is responsible for the development and delivery of action plan which includes targets, measurements and resource allocation. Quarterly reports outlining progress against target are presented in order to release the next tranche of funding from Belfast City Council.
2.3	The work of the organisation is wide-ranging and crosses a number of departments and services, principally within the Development and Health and Environmental Services Departments. The Director of Environmental Health chairs the Public Space Management group while the Director of Development and Head of Economic Initiatives – along with elected members – are represented on the board. Other officers across the council are also represented on other working groups.
2.4	At the February 2011 meeting of the Development Committee, it was agreed that, subject to general endorsement of the business plan by this Committee, officers would work with the management team at BCCM to further refine the work of these groups, to ensure compliance with wider council policies and to support the delivery of council objectives. It is proposed that members agree to this as a way forward for the coming financial year.
2.5	<p>From the Development Committee’s perspective, there are a number of key areas of work in which BCCM can support our activities in the coming year. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of targeted strategy to attract brands and retailers not currently present in the city - Coordination of activities to animate vacant premises, in conjunction with other relevant partners - Support in delivery of Belfast Business Awards - Support in development and delivery of initiatives to support the independent retail sector - Support for progressing major schemes, including Royal Exchange - Support in delivery of street dressing and lighting initiatives.
2.6	Members will be aware that the draft masterplan for the city has identified the need to nurture city centre cohesion, “leading the continued multifunctional regeneration of the city”. It is clear that there is a need for a concerted approach to developing “the most important economic space in the region”. Belfast City Centre Management, among others, has a role to play in this regard. However it is also important to take account of wider issues impacting on city centre development and to support the emergence of a “mixed-economy” city centre, as opposed to the traditional retail-led regeneration schemes which have been pursued in the past.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The business plan for the period 2012-2013 identifies a core funding contribution from Belfast City Council of £190,000. A number of additional schemes involving Council financial support are also identified but these will be brought back for Committee approval, if required.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality or good relations implications.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the BCCM business plan 2011-2013, attached - Note and approve the funding request for £190,000 core funding in the coming year - Agree that, if the funding is approved, officers should work with the management team at BCCM to further refine the work of the organisation, to ensure compliance with wider council policies and to support the delivery of council objectives.

6	Decision Tracking
6.1	BCCM to make bi-annual presentations to the Development Committee outlining progress against target. Next presentation due – October 2012.

7	Key to Abbreviations
BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 – BCCM Business Plan	