



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	One City/New York-New Belfast Conferences
<b>Date:</b>	21 February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members may be aware of the One City and New York-New Belfast conferences which have been running over the last three years. Both events are hosted by the Belfast Media Group and feature a series of high profile speakers debating the economic future of the city and how the international connections which the city has can be exploited to ensure maximum advantage.
1.2	The One City conference takes place in Belfast on 10-11 May 2012 while the New York-New Belfast event takes place in New York on 13-14 June 2012. A request to provide a speaker from Belfast City Council to address both conferences has been received.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<u>One city conference; Belfast – 10-11 May 2012</u> The One City conference will be held in a number of venues across the city including Titanic Belfast; Cultúrlann McAdam-Ó Fiaich and Waterfront Hall. Current sponsors include Titanic Quarter; An Cheathrú Ghaeltachta; University of Ulster; Community Relations Council, Foras na Gaeilge and Continental Airlines.
2.2	The theme for this year is “unlocking the potential of a city on the rise”. The programme for the event is currently being finalised but is likely to encompass a range of speakers from business, community and political life, each presenting their perspectives on the opportunities for Belfast and actions needed to seize the opportunities.

2.3	Speakers will include Rep Eugene O'Flaherty, Chair Judiciary Committee, House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Rep O'Flaherty will lead the biggest delegation from Boston to Belfast in a decade to coincide with the conference. A number of key local representatives have also been invited to present, including Minister Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development; Minister Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure and the Mayor of Cardiff Cllr Professor Delme Bowen.
2.4	<u>New York-New Belfast conference; New York – 13-14 June 2012</u> The New York-New Belfast conference will be held at Fordham University, New York, similar to previous years. Confirmed sponsors include Titanic Belfast; KPMG and Tourism Ireland.
2.5	The conference theme is “building bridges of mutual benefit between Belfast and New York”. The conference will be hosted by the Irish Echo and the Belfast Media Group with Honorary Chairs, Geraldine Hughes (actress), Terry George (film director), John Connorton (former Chair; Friends of Belfast, New York), John J. Reilly (partner in Squires, Sands, Dempsey) and Danny Moore (founder, Loughshore Investments).
2.6	The conference will culminate with the fifth annual Irish Echo Index luncheon, honouring of 30 top companies with operations in the US and Ireland. Following the gala luncheon, Robert Walsh, Commissioner of Small Business Services, New York City, will lead a walking tour of one of New York's most vibrant neighbourhoods.
2.7	The conference programme is currently being finalised but speakers at previous events have included Christine Quinn, Speaker of New York City Council, John Liu, Comptroller of New York City, Kieran McLaughlin, CEO of Worldwide Ireland Funds, Peter Fitzgerald, CEO of Radox and Benjamin Chnelich, CFO of NYSE Technologies.
2.8	A request has been received to have a speaker from Belfast City Council to present at both conferences on the Council's investment programme for the city and how it can support economic growth.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	Costs of travel to New York-New Belfast conference – likely to be around £1500 per person, including travel and accommodation.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	There are no specific equality or good relations implications attached to this report.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note the request for a speaker from Belfast City Council to present on the Council's investment programme at the One City conference in Belfast on 10-11 May 2012 and the New York-New Belfast event takes place in New York on 13-14 June 2012 and to consider attendance.</li> </ul>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
There is no decision tracking attached to this report.	