



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	State of the City Development Debates – Proposal for the Future Events
<b>Date:</b>	26 June 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
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<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	<p>In September 2011 Development Committee agreed to a 'Marketing Belfast' theme for the 2011/12 State of the City debate series. It was noted at the time that the debates provided the Council with a strong opportunity to provide additional momentum and encourage strategic decision-making on the future marketing of the city. The Development Department organised and delivered three events:</p> <p><u>City Branding:</u> Held in October 2011 Dr John Heeley, Chief Executive of European Cities Marketing shared his expertise on the successful approaches to city branding taken by a number of global cities, (citing Amsterdam as the most successful). He shared practice on the successful marketing of a city brand and encouraged Belfast to commit fully to its 'B' brand.</p> <p><u>Marketing Manchester:</u> How we are growing tourism and investment by Andrew Stokes, Chief Executive of Marketing Manchester, held in January 2012. Andrew Stokes described the success of Marketing Manchester and the ways that Manchester is promoted to the wider world. He also shared his ideas on how Belfast can maximize its investment and grow the volume and value of our tourism.</p> <p><u>Tourism, Culture and Regeneration:</u> held in April 2012. Delivered in partnership with Titanic Foundation and Titanic Belfast. Professor Michael Parkinson chaired a panel discussion with Julian Dobson from Urban Pollinators; Mike Smith, CEO of Titanic Quarter Limited; Scott Burnham, Creative Director and Strategist and Alderman Christopher Stalford, Chair of Development Committee. The debate</p>

	<p>identified clear 'wins' for Belfast and helped us in framing some of the key stakeholder messages for international platform<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>To date the debates have been well received and attended with around 90 people present at each event. Feedback has been consistently positive and various new topics have been suggested by participants such as transport policy for a sustainable city; urban regeneration; integrated approaches to deprived areas; neighbourhood governance structures; and sustainable development. It is clear that after eight years of the State of the City, we have a very highly recognised brand that has been fulfilling its aim – to provide a platform for nurturing the debate on a wider urban policy agenda.</p>
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<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<p>With the Marketing Belfast events coming to an end, there is now an opportunity to move to other strategic areas of concern facing the city. The implementation of the Investment Programme and the new Belfast Masterplan have become priorities for the council. It is thus appropriate to rebrand and reshape the next series of the State of the City Development Debates to incorporate the Investment Programme priorities and design.</p>
2.2	<p>Specifically, it is proposed to focus the next series on the various delivery aspects of the Investment Programme. The events would incorporate the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Urban development, particularly city centre development. Urban Pollinators<sup>2</sup>, a practical think tank specialising in issues of place-making and regeneration who worked with Mary Portas on the review of the high streets, would be valuable contributors. Their Director, Julian Dobson would be an excellent position to share with Belfast his experience in regeneration across the UK and to provide us with ideas on how to progress some city centre projects within the Investment Programme. Belfast City Centre Management and other key stakeholders could also be involved in shaping this event.</li> <li>- Mechanisms for alternative city finance in support of urban development, specifically linked to potential ideas for the European JESSICA programme<sup>3</sup>. It may be useful to invite representatives of English JESSICA projects – one led by Manchester City Council and the other based in Liverpool. There is also an option to include the JESSICA-backed Amber Green Consortium which has developed a Scottish Partnership for Regeneration of Urban Centres. This debate would help us consider the potential of JESSICA and other alternative financing mechanisms required to drive the city development agenda.</li> <li>- Maximising the opportunities presented by the Belfast Masterplan is</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Full details on these events are available at [www.belfastcity.gov.uk](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk).

<sup>2</sup> <http://urbanpollinators.co.uk>

<sup>3</sup> JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas) is an initiative of the European Commission developed in co-operation with the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB). It supports sustainable urban development and regeneration through financial engineering mechanisms.

EU countries can choose to invest some of their EU structural fund allocations in revolving funds to help recycle financial resources to accelerate investment in Europe's urban areas.

	<p>another potential topic. The State of the City could be used as a platform to launch the Belfast Masterplan consultation after we have taken on board the views of the relevant Executive Ministers and senior officials. Also we could use this platform to discuss place shaping agenda built upon the Place Shaping conference in Venice in 2011, which would identify our regeneration priorities and discuss these with the council's key stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An examination of community planning within the Investment Programme as part of the State of the City platform would bring benefits in terms of showcasing the implementation of ambitious, multi-partner initiatives. This would prove useful as it would examine the organisational challenges of partnership working, developing collaborative outcome frameworks and joint delivery structures. Such a discussion could be a stepping stone in preparing the council for undertaking community planning responsibilities.</li> </ul>
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<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	The budget for State of the City is £35,000 and is included in the Development Department budget for 2012/13.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	The events promote equality and good relations

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are asked to agree the programme of events for 2012/13.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
6.1	<p>Director of Development to present a report on progress and proposed future events for 2013/14 in June 2013</p> <p>Timeline: June 2013 <span style="float: right;">Reporting Officer: John McGrillen</span></p>