



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Waterfront and Ulster Halls Marketing Services Contract
<b>Date:</b>	12 June 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen Director of Development ext 3470
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Jacqui Owens Operations Manager ext 1690

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Marketing Services for Belfast Waterfront and The Ulster Hall are currently provided under contract by an external supplier. This contract was awarded after a public tendering exercise to AV Browne, in July 2009 for a one year period, with an option to extend for a further 2 years. The contract is due to expire in July 2012.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	A recent economic appraisal by RSM McClure Waters has resulted in initial planning for the development of an International Convention Centre for Belfast at the site of the Belfast Waterfront.
2.2	If this project comes to fruition the impact on marketing services will be significant and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The need to address new and extended target markets, specifically the international conference and exhibition sector, and as a result the development of new marketing strategies.</li><li>- A rebranding exercise for the venue – realigning core values, objectives and marketing activity.</li><li>- Opportunities to explore a wider range of options for procuring all of the contracted services.</li></ul>

2.3	Given the early stage of development of the proposed new convention centre it is not yet appropriate to enter a new contract for marketing services relating to the new operating environment.
2.4	Equally however the rigours of the tendering process and the development of a change management programme around the appointment of a new contractor for the interim period of time are not viable. For this reason management are seeking to extend the current contract with AV Browne for a period of up to 12 months dependant on progress on the plans for the new development.
2.5	This contract is not covered by the EU rules and advice from both legal services and the procurement manager is that there would be no legal or procurement impediment in regard to a proposed extension on the current contract.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	None

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
	There are no equality and good relations considerations

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	<p>The Development Committee is asked to :</p> <p>Give approval to extend the Waterfront and Ulster Halls Marketing Services contract with AVBrowne up to March 2013 which will represent an extension to the existing contract of 9 months. The extension to be monitored on a month by month basis thereafter for up to a further three months depending on the progress of plans for the development of a Convention Centre for Belfast.</p>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	<p>Further to approval, extension of the contract will run on a month by month basis in line with decisions on the potential redevelopment and any associated timeline and then monthly up to August 2013.</p> <p>Reporting Officer: Jacqui Owens</p>