



Report to: Development Committee

Subject: BVCB and BCCM

Date: 26 June 2012

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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Following a proposal agreed at Development Committee, a cross-party group of Members were convened to discuss interrelationships between Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) and Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM). A session was held recently which was attended by two Members – Councillors Maskey and Webb. Given limited attendance at this meeting, the Members agreed that a further report be brought back to Development Committee by way of update.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Discussion centred around the roles and responsibilities of Council's two arms-length organisations, BVCB and BCCM and any potential overlaps or duplications. The conclusion reached was that both organisations had bespoke missions which whilst related were distinct.
2.2	Going forward there may be scope for shared services across administrative or support back-office. Such sharing of services should be looked at in the context of cost reduction and efficiency. There is the potential of some cross-over of membership between Belfast Chamber of Commerce (as managed via BCCM) and membership of BVCB. Marketing is a current area of close cooperation between BVCB and BCCM and it is clearly recognised that BVCB take the lead in this area with BCCM inputting budget for special campaigns and initiatives.
2.3	The future of both organisations involves differing sets of challenges although both must be set in the context of increasing the competitiveness of Belfast and internationalising our profile and agenda.
2.4	<u>Belfast City Centre Management</u> Belfast City Centre Management Company (BCCM) is a partnership vehicle owned by Belfast City Council, the Department for Social Development and the

	city centre business through Belfast Chamber of Trade & Commerce
2.5	Belfast City Centre Management .delivers additional services into Belfast city centre, on behalf of its core funders, which contribute in a measurable way to a cleaner, safer, more attractive, accessible and economically vibrant city. Belfast City Centre Management engages in city centre issues through:
2.6	Partnership between Government and city centre Businesses Belfast City Centre Management provides a partnership vehicle through which regional and local government can partner with city centre businesses – at all times facilitating strong communication and the maintenance of an agreed agenda.
2.7	BCCM Business Plan addresses three areas of work in the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic performance • Making the city safer and enhancing perceptions of safety • Public space management
2.8	Many of the initiatives that are delivered by BCCM could be more equitably funded across private sector funders through the use of statutory Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). DSD are presently bringing legislations for BIDs through the NI Assembly, with secondary legislation forecast to be in place by Autumn 2013.
2.9	BCCM believe that there are at least three BID's opportunities in Belfast City Centre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core retail area BID, with retail focused portfolio of initiatives • Cathedral Quarter BID, with night time economy focused portfolio of initiatives • Main Office Area BID (behind City Hall), with business services focused portfolio of initiatives
2.10	Business Improvements Districts will not be able to deliver all of the functions presently delivered by BCCM. There will still be a need for city centre partnership coordination across the BIDs and city centre management of those areas in the city centre, outside the BIDs.
2.11	<u>Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau</u> The Development Committee agreed the BVCB Business Plan for 2012-13 which articulates the following: BVCB Core Purpose – 'To create and service visitors for Belfast in order to generate economic benefit for the City region'. BVCB/Belfast Core Mission – 'Belfast will be in the top 15 performing tourism cities as measured by the annual European Cities benchmarking Report by 2020'.
2.12	BVCB continue to implement their business plan which was presented to committee in January 2012. In the meantime key activity includes the launch of a

	revised www.gotobelfast.com , working with sea and air carriers to exploit access routes between Belfast and England/Scotland as well as competing for new conference business for the city. A quarterly update on BVCB's progress will be presented to committee in August 2012. The relocation of the Belfast Welcome Centre remains on target for delivery by Summer 2013.
2.13	In going forward the future of city marketing will be considered as part of the wider international marketing /relations activity that has been flagged up as a project within the Investment Programme. There is a need to develop a new city narrative based on a refreshed brand which has now been in place for the last 4 years. The role of BVCB in this context will be considered; in the interim BVCB are considering renaming to become Visit Belfast in the foreseeable future which is an agreed position of the BVCB Board at present.
2.14	Going forward BVCB are keen to undertake a change management programme to refocus on a vigorous sales oriented approach and to concentrate on growing the volume and value of tourism to Belfast. They see the issues of business tourism connected to the expanded Waterfront facilities and the issues of air access to be critical and recognise that there needs to be continuous investment in events and new product development which should be market led. BVCB will bring forward specific proposals on these issues to BCC in due course.
2.15	Based on contact and experience with both BVCB and BCCM they have strong working relationships in the field of city marketing. It is clear that BVCB takes the lead in marketing and that BCCM working alongside Chamber buy into particular campaigns as the case arises.
2.16	The proposed way forward is for a review to take place on integrated city marketing which will be brought to Committee in due course. In the interim Members are asked to agree to officers continuing to explore shared services where appropriate between BVCB and BCCM which may incorporate financial management support.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	None at this stage.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	None.

5	Recommendations
5.1	That Members agree to officers exploring shared services and continued partnership working between BVCB and BCCM.

6	Decision Tracking
	N/A

7	Key to Abbreviations
	BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management BVCB – Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau

	BID – Business Improvement District
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