



Belfast City Council

Report to: Development Committee

Subject: **Expo Real 2012 Event, Munich**

Date: 4 September 2012

Reporting Officer: John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

Contact Officer: Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Expo Real event takes place each year in Munich, Germany. It is Europe's largest business-to-business trade fair for commercial property and investment. The 2012 event will take place from 8-10 October 2012.
1.2	Expo Real comprises an exhibition (involving over 1600 exhibitors from 72 countries) as well as an extensive conference programme involving 400 speakers on a range of topics within the real estate, investment and financial markets.
1.3	The event is expected to attract 37,000 participants to include exhibitors showcasing their property and investment portfolios and representatives from the property sector including developers, investors and architects as well as representatives from economic regions and cities.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Members will be aware that there is a significant volume of work under way to develop an international marketing and promotional strategy for the city. This has been included as a priority within the Council's Investment Programme 2012-2015. It is expected the future strategy will consider how Belfast can position itself as an international destination in order to attract talent and investment and grow visitor numbers.
2.2	Showcasing Belfast on an international platform is expected to be a key focus of the future strategy. Events such as Expo Real offer the Council a platform to target and promote the city's investment potential to international companies.
2.3	A number of priority investment and promotion activities/events have been identified in the course of the research for this work. These include Expo Real and MIPIM. Members will recall that Belfast City Council was involved in MIPIM in the past but did not attend in 2012. A report on the way forward on this – as part of the wider

	international marketing work – will be presented to Committee next month.
2.4	It is understood that representatives from Belfast Harbour are planning to attend Expo Real to explore the potential of this event to identify and target potential investors for their development sites. It may be appropriate to consider attending the event with them in order to look at the potential wider interest for the city.
2.5	Given that the scale of the opportunity is unclear at this stage, it would be recommended that Belfast City Council attends in an observer capacity only, and therefore there would be no requirement to have a stand at the event, at this stage. However, if it was considered that the event was a viable proposition for attracting potential inward investors to the city, it may be appropriate to consider having a stand – along with other partners from the city – in future years.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> The cost of attending EXPO REAL 2012 in Munich is approximately £1500 per person. This is inclusive of delegate fees, flights and accommodation costs.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	There are no specific equality or good relations implications attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that that the Chair and Deputy Chair of Development Committee or their nominees attend the EXPO REAL 2012 event in Munich on 8-12 October along with one officer to consider and review the potential of REAL EXPO as a platform to promote the investment potential of the city in future years.

6	Decision Tracking
A report will be presented to the December 2012 Development Committee, if the visit is approved.	
Timeframe: December 2012	Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay