

**Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau  
Business Plan  
2013 - 2014**

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 BVCB MARKETING AND VISITOR SERVICING PLAN 2011-2014

Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) is Belfast's destination marketing organisation. Its core purpose is to "create and service visitors for Belfast in order to generate economic benefit for the City region".

BVCB's main funders are Belfast City Council (BCC), the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and additional funding levered from the private sector and its 468 members. Belfast City Council is by far the major funder, contributing £1.8 million in 2012/13 and accounting for 50% of all income. BVCB generates a further £1.4 million, 40% of income, from membership, sponsorship and commercial activities, followed by NITB contributing £359,251 (10% of income).

Two years ago, BVCB prepared a three year strategic business plan, for the period 2011/12-2013/14. The plan was accepted by BVCB's main funders and stakeholders, and set out the overall direction and priorities for the three year period. Therefore, this business plan details the priorities and activity to be undertaken in the third year of this three year strategy.

These priorities have been the drivers of activity within BVCB since 2011 and are briefly summarised below, in order to provide insight into the strategic framework established and approved for BVCB.

The business plan recognised that BVCB has finite resources and must focus on priority opportunities, to fulfil its key objectives of generating new visitors to the city and increasing bed nights. BVCB's business strategy should therefore focus on developing Belfast as:

- A major European City Break destination
- The leading convention destination in Ireland

#### Key Priorities of 2011-2014 Marketing and Visitor Servicing Plan

The **priority opportunities** for BVCB should be **City Breaks and Discretionary Business Tourism**, and the focus of BVCB's marketing activity should be on **driving up visitor nights**. Whilst the primary focus should be on generating overnights, the "day tripper" market is still recognised as an important economic generator, and so marketing activity *may* be designed to attract the day tripper market, but should always include an overnight message.

City Break marketing should **focus on its potential to generate bednights** and increase occupancy, with focus on the **key markets** of Republic of Ireland, Great Britain and Europe (through Tourism Ireland), and particularly markets with direct air or sea access. The key drivers of City Breaks are entertainment, arts, culture and historic sites.

<p><i>BVCB's activities over the last two years have been consistent with these objectives. BVCB has restructured its Leisure Tourism, Marketing and Communications team and appointed a Campaigns Manager and Digital Manager. Significant success has been achieved from its integrated multi platform campaigns and marketing activity in generating overnights, day trips and spend for the City.</i></p>
<p>BVCB should <b>focus on attracting conferences which require citywide services</b>, thus addressing increased bed-night capacity and reduced occupancy within the city. The Business Plan emphasises increased engagement with industry to develop "saleable" propositions.</p> <p><i>BVCB has restructured Business Tourism and actively targeted larger conferences with significant success. However, at the request of industry and in agreement with its stakeholders, attention has now broadened to also include smaller events and conferences.</i></p>
<p><b>Performance measures</b> used for reporting to stakeholders should be improved, in line with measures used by other international membership organisations.</p> <p><i>BVCB developed a set of 20 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in 2012-2013 upon which the company performance is measured by the Board and key stakeholders. Monitoring, measurement and evaluation techniques have been refined and developed on an ongoing basis.</i></p>
<p>A "<b>flying squad</b>" approach should be developed (as required), engaging with industry to identify opportunities for short-term support initiatives e.g. when forward bookings are low, in response to exchange rate variations, recent Christmas campaign etc.</p> <p><i>Later in the report there are specific examples of how both Leisure Tourism and Business Tourism teams have developed specific short term initiatives in response to industry requests and needs.</i></p>

### 1.2 BVCB BUSINESS PLAN 2013-2014

BVCB is now approaching the end of the second year of its 3 year strategic plan; this document presents the operational business plan for the final year of the strategy (2013-2014). Developed within the context of the 2011-2014 three year strategy, the purpose of the 2013-2014 operational business plan is to present a detailed, integrated plan of the activities, management, resources and monitoring required to ensure delivery of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final phase of the 2011-2014 Marketing and Visitor Servicing Plan. This 3<sup>rd</sup> year plan also builds upon the operational plan prepared by Dr John Heeley for the year 2012-2013.

However, the Plan is also set against the back drop of the very specific challenges created by the recent civil unrest and protests in the City, which have been on a level not seen for many years. This unrest has already severely damaged the city image and reputation, due to the international media coverage of the protests, and has the potential to undermine the progress and growth achieved in 2012.

The most worrying aspect is that confidence in the City as a tourism destination is being tested amongst conference organisers, group tour operators, cruise ship operators and the international community, as evidenced by the number of enquiries generated for January 2013. Indeed, BVCB has already been asked by to put forward a proposal for a short term plan specifically aimed at stimulating footfall and spend over the first Quarter of 2013, by rebuilding confidence, civic pride and counter the negative effects of the disturbances.

An over-arching theme of the 2013/14 Business plan must therefore be to reinforce and rebuild confidence in the City amongst the key decision makers and influencers within target tourism markets – ensuring that any business already booked is retained and new business continues to grow into the City. In addition to the strong sales focus inherent in BVCB's plans, customer relationship management will become all the more imperative to rebuild confidence, and so direct one-on-one contact with influencers and channels will be important along with strong communications plans. This emphasis will be evident across BVCB's activities in 2013/14.

### **1.2.1 PURPOSE OF THE 2013- 2014 BUSINESS PLAN**

The business plan for 2013-2014 will:

- (i) Review the organisation's progress to date in achieving the objectives set out in the 2011 -2014 plan and the further refinements adopted in the 2012-2013 operational plan.
- (ii) Set out clearly the operational action plans required to deliver on the targets in the 3-year business plan, including budget and performance reporting implications;
- (iii) Highlight additional activity required to address new market challenges and opportunities that have arisen since the 2011-2014 business plan was developed;
- (iv) Ensure that the key performance indicators used to monitor and track operational efficiency and progress towards objectives are robust and continue to deliver accurate measurement of outcomes achieved.

This business plan is, therefore, operational in its focus, given that the strategic context has already been agreed and established.

In addition to its role as an internal management tool for the Board of Directors, CEO and Senior Management Team of BVCB, the 2013-2014 operational plan is the necessary basis of any funding agreement between BVCB and its core funder Belfast City Council (BCC) and its other main funder, Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB).

## **1.2.2 KEY ACTIVITIES AND THEMES OF THE 2013-2014 BUSINESS PLAN**

The activities and themes presented below will be delivered within the context of the possible loss of confidence and damaging impact of the current civil unrest to all target markets. Having made significant progress throughout 2012, BVCB now recognises that this progress has been threatened and its challenge in 2013-2014 will be to redress and overcome any negative perceptions that have been generated.

The incoming year will see a number of major planned projects reach fruition.

In Visitor Servicing, the major projects to be undertaken are:

- The relocation of the Belfast Welcome Centre (BWC).
- Provision of accommodation booking and visitor servicing for the World Police and Fire Games (WPFG).
- Development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the Belfast Visitor Pass.

Efficient management of visitor servicing resources will be a priority throughout the year, but particularly in the run-up to and during the World Police & Fire Games in August 2013, and in light of future reduced NITB funding for Visitor Servicing.

For Leisure Tourism, the focus in 2013 will be to build on the successful partnerships which generate and lever significant marketing budgets for the City, ensuring the delivery of effective, coordinated and integrated marketing. The team will work closely with and integrate Belfast City Marketing Plans with NITB and Tourism Ireland and will also influence their activity by providing Belfast specific messages, images and city brand themes.

Leisure Tourism has also identified a number of additional areas of key activity which will drive its 2013-2014 operational plans:

- Adopt and utilise the new segmentation research from NITB / Tourism Ireland in all BVCB leisure marketing communications, shifting the focus from marketing products, to developing compelling experience propositions and distinctive visitor experiences that match the needs, interests and motivations of the prioritised segments.
- Working with partners to deliver targeted campaign activity in all key geographic markets.
- Utilising BVCB's in-house expertise in digital marketing and communications to build online presence to address the new priority segments.
- Position Belfast as a must visit port of call on the island of Ireland and maximise the impact of cruise tourism to the region.

In Business Tourism, the conference team focus will be on continuing its targeted sales approach and best prospect sales drive, embedding the new systems, structures and sales culture recently put in place, following a period of re-organisation and change. Key projects and initiatives will include:

- Launch of a new corporate ambassador programme and promotion of Belfast as a conference and meetings destination within the corporate market.
- A review of commercial income opportunities and initiatives for Business Tourism to maximise private sector investment from industry based members.
- Development of a joint sales and marketing plan with the Belfast Waterfront to launch the new 2016 extension and secure new city-wide business for the venue.
- Further development of the new conference industry taskforce to increase sales for the city and increase industry engagement and participation.

Membership is the cornerstone of BVCB and a renewed focus on membership retention, engagement and growth will underpin the company's operations during 2013-2014. A review of the current membership scheme has recently been undertaken and a new membership manager appointed.

### 1.2.3 BUSINESS PLAN STRUCTURE

This business plan is structured as follows:

BVCB Business Plan Structure 2013 - 2014
<p><b>Section 2</b> re-states the <b>core activities of BVCB</b>, outlining areas where strategic focus has been re-aligned according to recommendations in the Marketing and Visitor Servicing Plan for 2011 -2014.</p> <p>A summary of the <b>most recent key tourism performance statistics for Belfast</b> is also included, highlighting overall BVCB's contribution towards securing visitors and bed-nights for the City.</p> <p>Section 2 concludes with a review of the organisation's performance since the development of the 3 year strategic plan, against its <b>key performance indicators</b>.</p>
<p><b>Section 3</b> outlines BVCB's <b>strategic priorities for 2013-2014</b>. Each of the key strategic projects for the final year of its Business Plan is discussed in detail.</p>
<p><b>Section 4</b> presents the <b>detailed operational plans</b> for each core area of activity within BVCB.</p>
<p><b>Section 5</b> provides details of BVCB's <b>income and expenditure</b> and will detail the assumptions upon which the projections have been based.</p>
<p><b>Section 6</b> sets out BVCB's <b>2013 - 2014 targets</b> and the <b>monitoring and measurement systems</b> in place to track and report on performance.</p>

## **2. BVCB PROGRESS TO DATE AGAINST OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1 BVCB CORE ACTIVITIES**

Established in 1999, BVCB is the official tourism marketing agency for the Belfast City Region, dedicated to promoting Belfast as a city break, conference, cruise ship and day trip destination and is responsible for the operation of three gateway tourist information centres.

Its core activities are broadly categorised below.

#### **2.1.1 LEISURE TOURISM**

BVCB's leisure tourism focus is on marketing Belfast as a city break, cruise and day trip destination, with the specific objective of increasing overnight visitors and generating spend for the City.

In 2011, more than half all visits to Belfast (53%) were for a city break, short break or holiday; generating 47% of all overnight tourism spend, confirming the importance of this sector to BVCB's marketing plans.

Whilst BVCB's focus is to increase overnight stays, the day trip market will in the short term continue to be an important element of the tourism economy and our marketing plan. The key objective will be encouraging traditional day trip visitors into overnight stays. The opening of Titanic Belfast and the 2012 programme of events presented an unprecedented opportunity to increase day trips and overnight stays through integrated marketing, sales and communications activity.

BVCB continued to work in a coordinated and cohesive way with NITB, Tourism Ireland and commercial partners to deliver integrated campaigns with a strong Belfast focus in all the priority target markets to maximise the benefits of a momentous 2012 year.

The Cruise Belfast partnership continues to deliver success through promotion of Belfast as a port of call for Cruise Ship operators.

#### **2.1.2 BUSINESS TOURISM**

Historically, BVCB has been responsible for generating business tourism for Belfast from national and international associations, whilst NITB had responsibility for the corporate and incentive categories. Following the recommendations in the 2011-2014 Business Plan, BVCB's conference team has been focused to a much greater extent on targeting larger scale conference business which has citywide accommodation requirements (i.e. conferences that use the services of more than one hotel/venue).

However, over the course of the last year and at the request of the private sector membership, it was agreed with the key funders that BVCB should also seek to develop smaller scale conference business for the city. This new approach will see 80% of Business Tourism sales originating from large scale 'city-wide' events generating at least 600 bed nights with approximately 20% derived from smaller conferences with at least 100 bed nights.



Business Tourism has also re-organised its activities to ensure a more sales focused approach, involving rigorous prospect and pipeline management to focus on maximising conversion rates and driving new business for the city.

### **2.1.3 VISITOR SERVICING**

Visitor servicing has been a core activity of BVCB since 2000. BVCB manages the Belfast Welcome Centre; two gateway airport based Tourist Information Centres (TICs) at Belfast International Airport (since 2005) and George Best Belfast City Airport (since 2007) on behalf of NITB and BCC, and various outreach and industry engagement activities.

The visitor servicing element of BVCB faces significant change over the incoming year, with the relocation of the Welcome Centre to a new ground floor city centre location, an accompanying change of name, the introduction of new technology and a new modus operandi, development of Phase 2 of the Belfast Visitor Pass, and handling accommodation bookings for the World Police and Fire Games. Detailed planning for these major changes has been required throughout the current year, in addition to the “normal business” of managing the 3 TICs.

These developments will be critical to implementing the recommendations arising from a Strategic Review undertaken in 2012 into BVCB’s Visitor Servicing, which recommended a ‘hub and spoke’ approach to visitor servicing, with a new Welcome Centre as the core ‘hub’ and the satellite airport TICs, distributed local information centres and information points, and new technologies providing an outreach function.

The airport TICs are also facing reduced funding from NITB, and must find alternative funding sources and develop a sustainable funding model for 2014/15 onwards.

## **2.2 BELFAST VISITOR PERFORMANCE**

The most recent full year Belfast Tourism Monitor Report (BTM) pertains to 2011. Findings indicate a slight decline across a number of key performance indicators, particularly in relation to the total number of visitor trips to Belfast. Whilst the total number of out-of-state overnight visitors remained static in 2011, the total number of overnight visitors increased, emphasising the importance of the domestic market. The number of out-of-state day visitors also declined slightly in 2011 as did out-of-state expenditure, although total day trips and expenditure were almost on a par with 2010.

<b>Belfast Tourism Monitor Report – Key Statistics</b>		
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
Total Number of Visitor Trips	7.9 million	8 million
Total Tourism Expenditure	£401 million	£387 million
Total Overnight Visitor Trips	1.6 million	1.3 million
Number of out-of-state overnight visitors	1.33 million	1.33 million

Total Overnight Expenditure	£168 million	£219 million
Out-of-state overnight expenditure	£128 million	£190 million
Total day trippers	6.3 million	6.4 million
Out of state day visitors	1.4 million	1.7 million
Total day visitor expenditure	£233 million	£236 million
Out of state day visitor expenditure	£88 million	£113 million

*Source: Belfast Tourism Monitor 2010 and 2011*

Half year figures for 2012, from the Belfast Tourism Monitor, welcomed a return to growth in terms of out of state visitors to Belfast, up 14% compared to the same period in 2011. Pure holiday visitors (PHVs) continue to drive these numbers, representing three fifths of overnight trips, and undoubtedly curiosity and the ‘Titanic’ effect with the centenary commemorations and the opening of Titanic Belfast being a major factor.

BVCB also subscribes to the STR Global’s monthly analysis of hotel room occupancy and sales statistics. The information presented below is very timely and current, providing a barometer of how tourism is faring throughout the year. Backing up the indications of the BTM half year figures, 2012 statistics are very positive, illustrating average occupancy of 75% in Belfast hotels in the year to date (November 2012)<sup>1</sup>.

The STR Global statistics for Belfast are collated from feedback from 38 hotels in Greater Belfast with a combined stock of 3,575 rooms.

<b>Belfast Hotel Accommodation Performance</b>			
	Year to 30 Nov 10	Year to 30 Nov 11	Year to 30 Nov 12
Hotel Occupancy %	64.8	66.3	75.1
RevPar* £	36.17	35.36	41.43
Demand	739,610	784,470	896,958
Supply	1,034,356	1,077,680	1,086,800

As shown, performance within the hotel sector has been strong in 2012, across a range of measures. Consistently up throughout the year, with double digit increases between April and October, monthly hotel occupancy levels peaked in August 2012 at 88.7%, compared with 78.2% in the same month the previous year.

The revenue per available room also increased, indicating that hoteliers have not only achieved higher occupancy, but have increased the yield per available room.

STR Global’s analysis also includes some benchmark comparison with a number of other City Break destinations:

<sup>1</sup> STR Global 2012 (produced by destination research company Smith Travel Research).

<b>Comparative Occupancy Figures for European City Break Destinations 2011 &amp; 2012</b>		
	Year to date Nov 11 (%)	Year to Nov 12 (%)
<b>Belfast</b>	<b>65.9</b>	<b>75.1</b>
Liverpool	71	69.6
Cardiff	68.9	68.9
Bristol	73.5	73.7
Dublin	73.2	76.3
Cork	76.3	77.2
Bratislava	47.1	51.8
Tallinn	65.3	64.9
York	80.5	79.9

Of the 9 cities included in the analysis, Belfast has performed well on occupancy, with the fourth highest occupancy levels within the comparative group and on a similar par to Dublin.

## 2.3 BVCB PERFORMANCE AGAINST KPIS

2.3.1 The establishment of credible and reliable systems to report on the performance of Belfast as a city break and conference destination was a key recommendation of the 2011-2014 Business Plan which set out BVCB's key performance indicators for the first year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012. The subsequent year 2 operational plan prepared by Dr John Heeley modified these into a set of 20 KPIS upon which the organisation's performance was to be evaluated. BVCB's 2012-2013 Business Plan recommended increased focus on performance management against the annual KPIS. See Appendix I for Performance Against 2012/13 Key Performance Indicators.

2.3.2 As 2013-14 is the final year of the 3 year Business Plan, particular attention is being given to how BVCB has performed against the priorities and objectives set to date. The following sub-sections analyse BVCB's progress on key initiatives and KPIS for each of the organisation's core activities: leisure tourism, business tourism, membership and visitor servicing.

### New Company Name

The 2012-2013 Operational Plan recommended that BVCB should change its name as an indicator of BVCB's realignment and new and shared sense of purpose and mission. This is an organisation-wide initiative; its implementation is being led by the Marketing and Communications team. Research and consultation has been undertaken, and the Board has endorsed the decision that BVCB will change its name to "Visit Belfast" from April 2013. The new name will more accurately reflect the organisation's core purpose and should resonate with greater impact with the organisation's many and varied stakeholders.

### **Leisure Tourism**

Since the 2011-2014 Business Plan, Marketing and Communications have now been merged within Leisure Tourism, led by the Director of Marketing and Communications. This significant restructuring has facilitated greater co-ordination between marketing and communications activities, resulting in fully integrated campaigns across a range of channels and platforms. Leisure Tourism has quickly adapted to new web and digital media opportunities and challenges by developing in-house competence and skills, and is already implementing with success, multi-level marketing campaigns comprising of integrated offline and online channels.

### **Website and Digital Media**

The Marketing and Communications team has been strengthened by the recent appointment of a dedicated manager and an executive in this specialist and essential area, ensuring the full optimisation of new digital communication channels to engage with users in an appropriate and highly targeted way.

Considerable investment has been made in the gotoBelfast.com website, to develop applications, tools and functionality which put the visitor at the centre of site content. This investment has also included updated convention and cruise industry websites. Work is nearing completion on a corporate and member site.

The new websites have performed very well in engaging users, consistently exceeding the KPI target of 59,000 unique visitors per month. Tracking and monitoring analysis undertaken by the Marketing and Communications team shows that the mobile version of gotoBelfast.com accounts for 20% of web traffic and is continuing to grow.

BVCB has also strengthened Belfast's digital presence on main social media sites including Facebook and Twitter, with more than 65,000 combined followers and fans.

The production of monthly product and consumer e-zines, in tandem with list building and contact management, remains an integral part of all leisure tourism activity.

### **Belfast City Break Campaigns**

The fastest growing sector of leisure tourism over recent years is the city break market. BVCB has undertaken targeted, tactical activity in the key markets of NI, ROI and GB, working with commercial partners, Tourism Ireland and NITB, and has successfully achieved matched income targets totalling £352,501 representing 57% commercial partner contribution. In addition, £100,000 in-kind-support was provided by easyJet (Belfast presence on easyJet homepage and weekly e-shot):

Great Britain: Four cooperative campaigns targeting six cities were undertaken at key periods through out the year utilising a multi-platform approach, from traditional to online and digital channels:

- Stena /Tourism Ireland/BVCB: Spring/ Summer campaign for Scotland
- Flybe/Tourism Ireland/BVCB: September campaign Manchester, Birmingham Glasgow and Edinburgh

- Aer Lingus/Tourism Ireland/BVCB October campaign for London
- Easyjet/BVCB/Tourism Ireland Pre-Christmas Campaign for Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham Glasgow and Edinburgh

The impact of these campaigns is currently being evaluated through independent research (by Millward Brown Ulster). The Spring campaign generated a combined return of £1:£17.2 (BVCB part funding generated a return of £1:£54), generated an estimated 20,278 bednights and £1.6 million spend to the local economy. Therefore, this first campaign alone delivered almost 30% of BVCB's bednight targets for GB campaigns in 2012-2013 and 27% of the target visitor spend target for the same period.

NI / ROI: Partner campaigns were undertaken in September-October 2012 with Belfast Festival at Queens and November-December with Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce, DSD, Victoria Square, CastleCourt, Titanic Belfast and Translink. These campaigns achieved a matched income of £150,000 from commercial partners. The November-December Christmas campaign represented the largest partnership campaign undertaken to date, indicating the success of BVCB's role in coordinating and integrating city marketing. These campaigns are currently being evaluated by Millward Brown Ulster.

### **Cruise Ship Visits**

Belfast is now the fifth most popular cruise port in the UK and number three in Ireland. BVCB's current and future strategy in relation to cruise ship sales is focused on exploiting the position of Dublin as the Marquee Port for the island of Ireland, with the aspiration of positioning Belfast as the second most visited port on the island.

BVCB works in partnership with Belfast Harbour to deliver on its cruise ship targets, through the Cruise Belfast partnership. During the consultation process, Belfast Harbour was keen to emphasise the very crucial role played by BVCB in its professional and proactive approach to selling Belfast as a cruise ship destination.

Belfast's booked cruise calls for 2013 represent a significant level of growth from 2012 and particularly 2011 (when Belfast welcomed 32 ships) providing a sound platform for future growth and an increase of market share. BVCB's target was to secure 50 cruise ship visits for 2013, equating to a total of 80,000 day visits by passengers and crew and spend of £3.5 million. Subject to confirmation, 56 cruise ships are scheduled to dock in Belfast in 2013, equating to an estimated 114,000 passengers/crew and a potential economic impact of £6m for the local economy.

### **Leisure Tourism Publications**

BVCB produced a range of high quality printed material for marketing, sales and visitor servicing, including the annual Belfast Visitor Guide, the bi-monthly About Belfast guide, Titanic Belfast 2012 guide and leaflet, Belfast TIC and visitor maps and new Cruise Belfast brochure.

Advertising revenue is generated from the Belfast Visitor guide and About Belfast publications - the combined target income for 2012-2013 is £60,000. To date, over £42,000 has been generated and the target is expected to be achieved.

The About Belfast publication is regarded as the official visitor guide to Belfast, with an ABC classification (Audit Bureau's Classification) of 58,333 copies on average per edition (6 editions per year), making it the highest distributed free consumer magazine in Northern Ireland. About Belfast is also available in digital formats, downloadable from gotoBelfast.com; gotobelfast app and iBooks.

BVCB has dramatically reduced the quantities of literature being produced in recent years, ensuring that it maximises the utilisation of digital and online media. BVCB recognises that traditional versions of publications will continue to have a reduced role in its marketing and sales activities, however there continues to be a demand for a limited range of printed publications for both trade and consumer markets. This area is constantly under review.

### **Communications Activity**

Communications and PR continues to support and enhance all BVCB marketing and sales activity in its key markets. The activity is both corporate and consumer facing – corporate to represent the interests of the organisation and its funders and stakeholders; consumer to enhance the profile of Belfast and stimulate visits and spend.

Given the high profile of the 2012 year, the target for advertising equivalence value was set at £4m to reflect the potential higher interest in the destination and level of media activity. Through the organisation of media briefings, press visits and engagements, together with sustained distribution of press and information releases to worldwide media, including the handling of all press information enquiries relating to Belfast, BVCB is confident that this stretching target will be met.

### **Travel Trade Activity**

With the increasing importance of the leisure market to Belfast for overnight stays, Tour Operator business has gained in importance over the past couple of years, driving room sales and contributing to occupancy levels across the city. To date, evaluation has indicated that leads generated from sales calls and trade shows attended in 2012 have produced an estimated 87,000 bednights for the city.

During 2012/2013 the Sales team will attend a total of 16 trade shows, exhibitions and other events relating to leisure tourism with a target of 180 travel trade leads. To date 152 Active sales leads have been generated: 15% have existing tours to Belfast, 27% visit Northern Ireland but do not stay in Belfast; 17% are considering Belfast for 2014 and 41% visit ROI but not NI. The challenge here is to constantly communicate with all prospects through sales calls, e-zines and updates, and to actively network and convert those Group Tour Operators (GTOs) considering Belfast into actual bookings and those GTO's not yet visiting to actively consider Belfast by presenting compelling and tailored itinerary ideas.

### Flying Squad Engagement with Industry

The 3 year plan recommended a 'flying squad' approach to respond to immediate industry needs.

BVCB's teams are well placed to address external environmental changes, issues affecting the marketing and sales of the city and to respond quickly with activation plans to address issues as they arrive. The following examples highlight BVCB's flexibility and adaptability in being able to respond quickly to industry needs:

- BVCB has currently been called to develop a short term marketing campaign to rebuild confidence and footfall to the City, and counter balance the negative impact of the recent and ongoing civil unrest.
- During the onset of the recession BVCB was able to quickly capitalise on the strength of the Euro against Sterling and drive visitors and overnights to Belfast through retargeted ROI marketing.
- More recently BVCB provided integrated marketing and communications support to 'Belfast on the Move', the Lord Mayor's stakeholder group formed to address transport and access issues in the City.
- In the lead up to Christmas 2012, the Marketing and Communications team provided and implemented integrated real-time plans to address the negative impact of flag protests and to encourage shoppers back into the City. Using "call to action" promotions, the Marketing and Communications team led the development of creative campaigns for radio, TV and social media. The response was achieved within 48 hours.

Evaluation of the Christmas 2012 activity is currently being undertaken, but included below are some excerpts from industry feedback to the Leisure Tourism team on the campaign.

*Titanic Belfast, CEO, Tim Husbands: "Titanic Belfast celebrated its first ever Christmas in 2012 and so it was important that our festive messages reached customers via the best communication methods available to us. This was achieved through our partnership with BVCB. Its Christmas campaign promoting Belfast and activities in the City played a vital role in the overall success of seasonal visitor numbers to Titanic Belfast".*

*Victoria Square: "With regards to footfall and sales, things were very slow for the first 2 weeks of December resulting from the protests citywide. We did, however, see a surge in the last 2 weeks of the month which helped many retailers meet their targets. It is hard to say for certain if the campaign was a major contributing factor, however, I did receive lots of positive feedback regarding both the 48 sheets and TV ads and do think it helped support us for what was a more challenging December than expected!"*

*Translink: "We were delighted with the impact and exposure of the Christmas Campaign. Highlighting bus & rail travel as an easy way to travel to the City portrayed a very strong, modern and vibrant image that we felt helped move the campaign forward and add value for the other partners. Exploiting additional platforms through*

*Translink (banners, leaflet distribution, web/social media) was also very effective in extending the reach of the campaign. We look forward to working with BVCB again on the 2013 campaign”.*

### **Corporate Sponsorship**

At the time of writing, BVCB had achieved 97% of its corporate sponsorship target of £100k for 2012- 2013. The sponsors are Diageo NI and Value Cabs. Consultation feedback from both sponsors regarding BVCB was extremely positive, particularly regarding BVCB’s performance over the last year. However, sponsorship investment is not undertaken lightly and both organisations stated that they have been more demanding on BVCB in terms of reporting on value for money and tangible benefits. Value Cabs and Diageo NI both reported that BVCB is delivering value in terms of sponsorship benefits and its commitments, with proactive engagement from the team and valuable professional marketing skills.

Appendix I summarises Leisure Tourism performance against the 2012-2013 operational plan. The Leisure Tourism team has performed well against all its KPIs, and will meet or exceed the majority of its targets.

### **Business Tourism**

Following a review with NITB in 2011, it was agreed that only BVCB-led conference sales contribute towards the convention bureau targets and performance. Therefore, conferences for which BVCB performed a secondary, servicing role would no longer be included in the team’s performance. The original business tourism targets outlined in the three year plan have been realigned to take account of this new approach are outlined below.

To support this change in focus and to achieve the conference growth levels required, BVCB instigated an ambitious programme of change and investment during 2011/12 which is now having a positive impact.

The table below illustrates business tourism’s recent sales performance. BVCB conference wins have generated year on year sales growth of +12% in 2011/2012, and are on target to achieve +70% growth in 2012/2013. These growth figures have been achieved during a period of significant change and re-organisation within business tourism.

<b>Conference Sales Performance 2010-2013</b>				
<b>New bookings secured</b>	<b>2010/2011 actual</b>	<b>2011/2012 actual</b>	<b>2012/2013 (YTD - 9mths)</b>	<b>2012/2013 (Target)</b>
Economic impact	£14.4m	£16.05m	£18.9m	£27.3m
Delegates	11,639	12,860	14,750	21,000
Bed nights	33,480	35,380	38,785	42,000



### **Internal Re-organisation**

Significant internal change has taken place within Business Tourism since the development of the three year plan, demonstrating the commitment of BVCB to delivering on the recommendations and targets therein.

A new Director of Business Tourism joined the organisation in late 2011 and, in 2012, the Business Tourism team was restructured and now includes four conference sales managers, an ambassador/research executive and a conference sales co-ordinator responsible for accommodation bookings. A highly sales focused structure and system has been put in place, concentrated on pipeline development, prospecting and research to develop bid opportunities, and a sales conversion plan focused on the top priority opportunities.

### **Proposals and Bids for Association Conferences**

By the end of Qtr 3 of 2012/13, BVCB had submitted 72 bids worth £42.3m, against an annual target of 150 bids worth £54.6m equating to 77% of the annual value target. The current sales conversion rate on bids submitted during this year is 60%. Business tourism is currently on track towards achieving its challenging 2012-2013 targets on the value of proposals submitted and is currently well ahead on its target for conversion of bids.

Some of the key opportunities that could potentially be secured in the forthcoming quarters include:

- British Contact Lens Association – 1000 delegates x 4 days (£1.9m)
- British Orthopaedic Association – 1500 delegates x 4 days (£2.4m)
- Federation of Small Businesses Conference – 800 delegates x 3 days (£780k)
- British Academy of Management – 650 delegates x 4 days (£900k)

### **Conference Accommodation Booking Fees**

This is a challenging KPI as the general trends show visitors are increasingly adept at sourcing the best accommodation rates available by booking directly from the accommodation provider, through an OTA (online travel operator) or hotel booking engine which compares the best rates. Within the accommodation sector, all providers now reserve the best room rate for their own website, specifically to avoid having to pay booking fees, or via a third party site with a competitive rate to drive volume bookings.

Business Tourism has a target to generate £30,000 in income from conference led accommodation booking fees in 2012/13. Actual booking fee income in the first 9 months of 2012-2013 stands at just over £14,000. In light of a number of events booking 'around the block' either direct with hotels or via a third party comparison site with a lower rate, it is projected that income from conference accommodation bookings will finalise at £19,000 for 2012/13, 63% of the original target.

### **Launch of BVCB Conference Taskforce**

As recommended in its 3 year plan, BVCB has recently initiated a conference taskforce. The taskforce comprises key industry players who work with BVCB to identify new and review existing conference enquiries and, where possible, support BVCB in converting these into confirmed business.

Although it is still very early days in the development of the taskforce, BVCB has shown that it can offer a flexible and practical quick response approach to industry, using the flying squad approach recommended in its 2011-2014 Business Plans.

For example, during the current year some industry based members requested support for targeting smaller conference events. With discretionary business tourism hit particularly hard by the recession, BVCB agreed to work closely with Northern Ireland Hotel's Federation and NITB to address the reduced demand from this sector. BVCB has responded by undertaking a tactical sales campaign during quarter 2 focused on identifying smaller, short term conference opportunities for members and by developing a plan to target the corporate conference market during 2012/13. 312 clients were contacted, generating 28 leads with a potential value of £9.2 million.

### **New Marketing Tools**

A new conference website has been launched to support marketing activity, and a new conference iPhone app has recently been developed for delegates attending conferences in Belfast as a servicing and sales tool. In addition, BVCB has migrated to a new accommodation booking service platform during 2012, offering an enhanced service to users and conference organisers. BVCB has also rolled out a number of email marketing campaigns to prospective clients to increase awareness of Belfast as a conference destination.

### **Presentations to Buyers – Tradeshows and Sales Calls**

Business Tourism had a target to undertake 110 sales calls with clients considering Belfast as a potential conference destination and has already exceeded this target having completed 114 sales calls by the end of quarter 3.

The team have been involved in promoting Belfast as a leading conference destination at numerous tradeshows and events during 2012/2013, including:

- GB: Association Congress Liverpool, C&IT forum, Tourism Ireland business tourism networking event, BVCB destination showcase, London and International Confex
- Europe: IMEX Frankfurt, EIBTM, Tourism Ireland business tourism meet the buyer event (Brussels), Tourism Ireland sales blitz (Brussels).
- USA: IMEX America and Tourism Ireland association networking event (Washington).

### **Conference and Corporate Ambassador Programme**

Conference Ambassadors play a crucial role in helping BVCB to identify potential new conference business and in supporting the conversion of opportunities into confirmed business. BVCB has a target to recruit 60 new Ambassadors with new conference leads onto the Conference Ambassador Programme in 2012/13. At the end of Q3, 38 new Ambassadors have been recruited (63% of target) from a variety of sectors including aerospace, renewable energy and social care.

BVCB has been working on the development of an extension to its current Conference Ambassador Programme, the launch of a 'Corporate' Ambassador Programme, in conjunction with NITB and Invest NI. BVCB has met with senior executives within Invest NI about the new programme and support has been very positive. Although still at an early phase, the premise behind this initiative is to engage with Northern Ireland's key private sector businesses at executive level to attract out-of-state corporate business to the City, and target key industry sectors in which Northern Ireland has particular global expertise and for which Belfast would be an attractive international conference destination.

### **Contracted GB Sales Representative**

In the previous business plan, BVCB identified the need for a GB based sales representative who would help to identify additional conference leads for Belfast within the key markets. However, following subsequent discussions with Tourism Ireland, the GB office agreed to extend the existing lead generation contract for Sarah Fleming Associates (SFA) negating the need for a BVCB appointed representative.

Following the contract's inception in 2010, 74 leads have been generated by SFA which are currently being progressed by BVCB, worth £56.8m in economic impact. The leads are medium to long term but one conference has been secured to date - the World Conference on Mental Health and Blindness.

The significant increase in Business Tourism's sales performance in the current year is evidence that the change in strategic direction implemented on the recommendation of the 2011-2014 Business Plan is now generating very positive results. The level of organisational change required within the Business Tourism team was a key focus for 2011-2012, but the team has overcome these challenges and is both committed and motivated to sustain the momentum that has been developed in the current year. Appendix I details Business Tourism performance against its KPIs.

### **Membership**

BVCB has a strong private sector membership base and good representation from the hospitality sector in the City; with 468 members, the organisation outperforms a number of its counterparts in other regions of UK and Ireland<sup>2</sup>. The annual membership fee income generated by BVCB is greater than that achieved in Bath, Cardiff and Manchester. In the year to date, BVCB has invoiced £125,000 in

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membership fees and has retained 94% of its membership base, and it is anticipated that £165,000 in membership fees will be achieved in the current financial year (94% of target).

There has been some movement in membership over the last three years. On average membership has seen circa 55 non-renewing members in each year over this period, but the organisation has, on average, gained 50 new members. In the current financial climate, this movement in membership profile is not unexpected and, in any given year, around 50% of non-renewals are due to ceased trading or cancellations due to outstanding payments.

Crucially, BVCB has retained its higher fee category membership, which accounts for the majority of income and is the category also most likely to invest further in additional joint marketing opportunities. BVCB's own research<sup>2</sup> indicates that, for every £1 in membership fees that it generates, a further £2.74 is invested by members through participation in further BVCB led marketing opportunities and platforms. <sup>2</sup> *Research undertaken by Dr John Heeley in July 2012.*

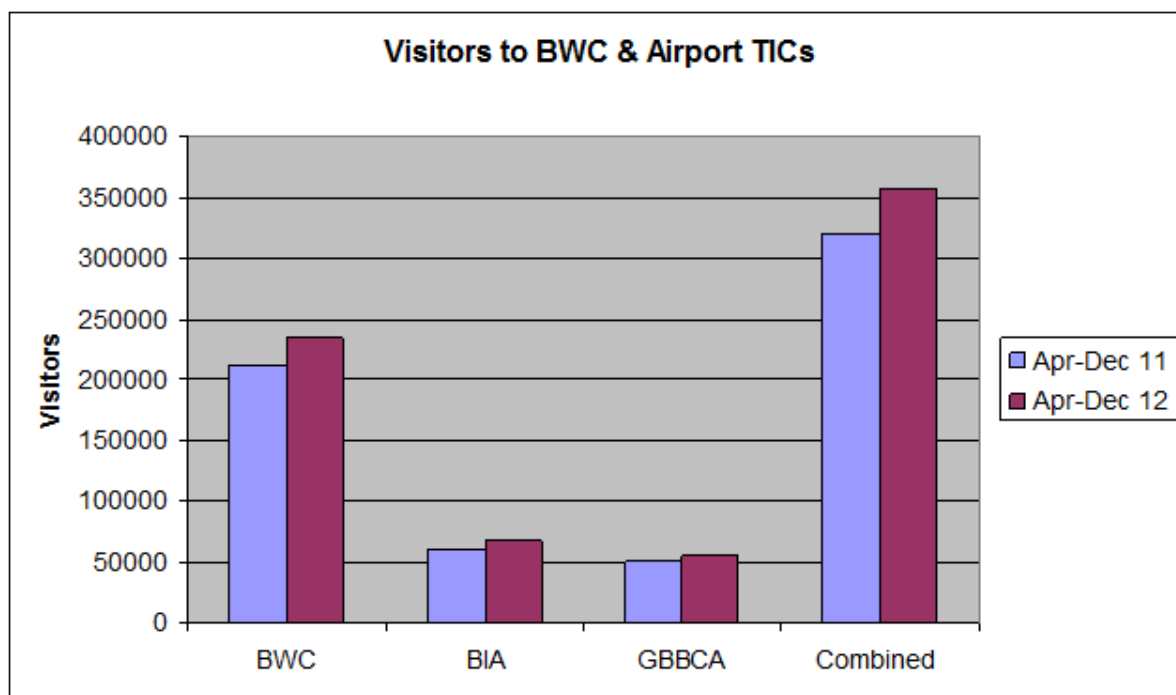
BVCB has already embarked on a new membership engagement strategy and appointed a new membership manager to implement the plan. The plan will ensure that the organisation is taking proactive steps to retain membership levels, increase BVCB's engagement with members and encourage participation, and to clearly demonstrate the membership value and strategic industry benefits. The strategy will involve agreeing on the appropriate service levels for different "bands" of membership and on a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) focus to retain membership levels. The membership engagement strategy is discussed further in section 3.

### **Visitor Servicing**

Separate Business Plans are developed for the Belfast Welcome Centre and each of the Airport TICs.

The overall number of visitors to the 3 TICs operated by BVCB has been strong in 2012-2013, showing continued growth (357,324 in the first 9 months of the current year against 319,972 in the same period last year, a 12% growth).

The Belfast Welcome Centre (BWC) enjoyed a particularly strong opening to the current year, boosted by increased tourist numbers for the opening of Titanic Belfast, with the gateway Belfast International Airport also outperforming on 2011-2012 comparable time periods.



In addition to the day to day running of the 3 tourist information centres, BVCB also undertook a number of specific additional projects over the course of 2012/13 – all of which reflect and enhance the added value and outreach activities managed from the BWC:

- Enhanced outreach and provision of information at Ferry ports and main train terminal;
- Enhanced use of new technology as a visitor servicing tool, through upgrade of ticketing software;
- BVCB development and launch of a further downloadable audio visual walking Belfast iTour in September 2010. Since then, BVCB has continued to develop and deliver the Belfast iTours, in conjunction with the Belfast Area Partnerships and Failte Feirste Thiar;
- Enhancement of links to coordinate and integrate with the tourism information centres at Queen’s University Belfast, Culturlann in West Belfast, and the East Belfast Partnership;
- Mobile/Pop Up Tourist Information Points;
- Front line staff “Learning Journeys” Greater Belfast Concierge programme;
- Events Ticketing and Enquiry Handling for a number of major Northern Ireland events;
- BCC City Tour Products – providing ticketing and enquiry handling;
- BWC secured the contract to deliver the visitor servicing and handling accommodation booking for the 2013 World Police and Fire Games;

- Launched a pilot Belfast Visitor Pass in April 2011, as a joint project between BCC, NITB and Translink. To date over 4,000 passes have been sold.

**Belfast Welcome Centre**

BWC typically handles between 350,000 - 400,000 enquiries per annum, and generates over £1 million gross income per annum from commercial and retail activities. It is a major asset and integral part of the tourism offering in Belfast, and also has a central gateway role to play as the main information centre in the capital City.

After a long period of year on year growth, BWC saw throughput fall from 2007/08 until 2010/11, before returning to growth last year and with a further 12% growth projected for the current year. The decline was mainly due to the economic downturn which in turn affected visitor numbers to the City, and the Streets Ahead works outside the Centre.

However, handling of the Titanic Belfast tickets, the Olympic and Paralympic flame wristbands, the Christmas Lights Switch On, the Titanic Centenary celebrations/events and Tier 1 events that went on throughout 2012 helped to push up the impressive growth recorded for 2012/13 – with a projected 12% increase in throughput and 14% increase in enquiries.

BWC’s performance against its KPIs is summarised below, indicating a strong projected uplift in throughput and enquiries for the current year.

<b>Key Performance Indicators 2009/10 to 2012/13</b>				
	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13proj</b>
Throughput (electronic eye)	290,872	236,325	262,318	285,926
Total Enquiries	383,112	319,314	328,900	370,147
Total gross Income	£1,157,257	£1,065,33	£1,061,823	£1,031,800

Gross income from retail sales have been fluctuating over recent years. After a record year in 2007/8 the picture has been more mixed in the last 5 years, exacerbated by the construction works related to the Streets Ahead project, and more recently by competing outlets in the City.

<b>Gross Profit/Net Income from retail sales</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>ACTUAL (£)</b>	<b>%</b>
2001/02	61,556	+52%
2002/03	93,511	+108%
2006/07	192,983	+4%
2007/08	244,174	+5%
2008/09	156,658	-35%
2009/10	165,679	+6%
2010/11	130,405	-21%
2011/12	122,729	-6%
2012/13	137,760	+12%

BVCB’s customer service target is to achieve an 80%-85% satisfaction rating in the annual mystery shop exercise. The Centre has been on target but, in 2012, a low score was achieved against the email contact during winter and the telephone contact during summer (which occurred during a key event, when the Centre was extremely busy). As a result, the overall average score for the Centre dropped from 85% in 2011 to 76% in 2012.

<b>BWC Mystery Shopper Ratings</b>						
	<b>Summer</b>		<b>Winter</b>		<b>Average</b>	
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Email	92%	87%	83%	48%	87%	68%
Telephone	92%	55%	92%	86%	92%	71%
Site visit	88%	75%	65%	98%	76%	87%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>76%</b>

**Airport TICs**

The strategic importance of the gateway airport TICs is well documented. The 2012 Strategic Review of BVCB’s Visitor Servicing concluded that the airport TICs “create a positive showcasing of the Northern Ireland/Belfast tourist offering and a true welcoming first impression of Northern Ireland”. The Review also notes that both airport TICs provide “commendable leverage on core funding” and the economic contribution to Northern Ireland as a whole was estimated at an additional £2.94 million into the local economy in 2012-2013.

However, BVCB is facing significant change in the funding model for its airport TICs. NITB has advised that its funding for Visitor Servicing will be reduced in each of the 2 following years. Furthermore, both airports are considering redeveloping their arrivals areas, which will have implications for the location and format of the TICs.

**Belfast International Airport**

Over the course of the current year (2012-2013) it is estimated that the Belfast International Airport (BIA) TIC will have handled just over 94,000 enquiries. In line with recession, the TIC saw enquiry levels drop slightly over 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. However, encouragingly, enquiry levels have picked up again and have now exceeded previous record levels. Two thirds of enquiries are counter enquiries made directly in the TIC, whilst the balancing third are day time browsers, telephone and email enquiries.

<b>BIA TIC: Total enquiries and income generated 2005/6 - 2012/13</b>									
<b>Year</b>	<b>2005/6</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2007/8</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13 (proj)</b>	<b>% Diff</b>
<b>Counter Enquiries</b>	49,174	57,965	64,628	62,680	61,940	52,221	59,062	64,563	+31%
<b>Total Enquiries</b>	54,947	76,814	90,463	91,353	88,241	80,463	86,605	94,405	+72%
<b>Total gross commercial Income*</b>	£96,020	£133,978	£146,349	£176,988	£170,606	£157,378	£194,315	£222,650	+132%

The gross private sector income generated from booking commissions, retail sales, sponsorship and advertising has increased by 132% over the last seven years, from £96,020 in 2005-2006 to an impressive projected £222,650 by 2012-2013. The TIC operates within a tight budget, and this income provides a valuable contribution towards running costs and staffing, which will become all the more important as NITB reduces its funding for Visitor Servicing.

The BIA TIC's target is to achieve a customer satisfaction score of 80%-85%. As shown below, since August 2011, the overall average (at 78%) is slightly below target. The main area of underperformance has been in the handling of telephone enquiries and, more concerning, performance in this area has been deteriorating. The main reason for the underperformance in this area has been lack of staff and time to deal with telephone enquiries when the TIC counter is busy.

Without additional staff, there are limited options to address this issue. However, staff training on handling telephone enquiries will be reinforced, and further training put in place to maintain a consistently high rating for the site visits.

<b>Mystery Shop Exercise at BIA</b>					
	<b>Aug '11</b>	<b>Nov '11</b>	<b>Feb '12</b>	<b>Aug '12</b>	<b>Overall Average %</b>
<b>Site Visit</b>	95%	63%	59%	95%	78%
<b>Phone Call</b>	74%	n/a	73%	63%	70%
<b>E Mail</b>	83%	n/a	85%	91%	86%
<b>Average</b>	<b>84%</b>		<b>72%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>78%</b>

### **George Best Belfast City Airport**

Since it first opened the George Best Belfast City Airport (GBBCA) TIC has exceeded its enquiry level targets. However, the last 2 years have been challenging for the TIC, with the withdrawal of Ryanair (October 2010), BMI and BMI Baby from GBBCA, resulting in a drop in passenger numbers and income. Since then, GBBCA has gained British Airways and Aer Lingus so enquiry levels have increased over the last six months of the current year.

The TIC's counter enquiries are now well above target and are projected to finalise at 5% above target with total enquiries up 6% by the end of the year.

Just under 60% of the enquiries are counter enquiries made directly in the TIC. Counter enquiries have increased by a sixth over the last 4 years to reach 43,294 (projected) in 2012-2013.



<b>GBBCA TIC: Total enquiries and income generated 2005/06 - 2012/13</b>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13 (proj)</b>	<b>% Diff</b>
<b>Counter Enquiries</b>	37,557	36,726	34,424	40,366	43,294	+15%
<b>Total Enquiries</b>	70,934	70,447	67,577	69,486	74,552	+5%
<b>Total gross Income</b>	£36,101	£59,166	£72,623	£57,494	£66,200	+83%

The gross private sector income generated from accommodation booking commissions, retail sales, sponsorship and advertising has increased by 83% over the last four years, from £36,101 in 2008-2009 to a projected £66,200 by 2012-2013. Income increased significantly in 2010-2011, due to the fluctuation in poster site sales, then dipped last year and then returned to growth in 2012-2013 as a result of the 2012 celebrations and the more recent addition of British Airways and Aer Lingus flights, which from introduction in November, increased passenger levels by 10% in November and almost 7% in December.

The GBBCA TIC's target is to achieve a customer satisfaction score of 80%-85%. As shown below, since August 2011 the overall average (at 81%) is on target, and satisfaction levels have been improving to an impressive 89% in August 2012.

<b>GBBCA Mystery Shop</b>					
	<b>Aug '11</b>	<b>Nov '11</b>	<b>Feb '12</b>	<b>Aug '12</b>	<b>Overall Average %</b>
<b>Site Visit</b>	73%	76%	81%	97%	82%
<b>Phone Call</b>	69%	n/a	90%	78%	79%
<b>E Mail</b>	91%	n/a	68%	92%	84%
<b>Average</b>	<b>78%</b>		<b>80%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>81%</b>

Both airport TICs face similar issues going forward; the need and importance of the airport TICs is accepted, but both are challenged by funding and commercial pressures; whereas demand for services is expected to grow in 2013, funding will be reduced. In parallel, both airports are considering redeveloping their arrivals areas.

TIC performance is analysed in greater detail in separate business plans, while Appendix I summarises performance of all 3 TICs against KPIs.

## 2.4 CONCLUSION

Analysis of BVCB performance against 2012-2013 KPIs and progress against the strategic objectives set out in the 2011-2014 strategy, shows that BVCB has made excellent progress.

The internal restructuring initiated in 2011-2012 and accelerated in 2012-2013, plus the realignment of strategy towards a more commercial and sales focus, has resulted in BVCB being on track to meet or exceed the majority of its 2012-2013 KPIs and to

deliver: 277,000 bednights and daytrips to the City; circa £60 million spend in the local economy; generating a return on investment of 16:1 and a leverage for BCC of approx 1:1.

The half-year results from the Belfast Tourism Monitor report a 14% increase in visitors for the first six months of 2012 compared to the same period in 2011. This double digit increase far exceeds the annual growth targets of 3.9% p.a. set out in the 2011-2014 plans, which should also see the City and BVCB meet the overall growth targets set by 2014.

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### 3. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2013-2014

3.1 The final year of BVCB's 3-year Marketing and Visitor Servicing Plan will see some significant changes being implemented. The major projects are summarised below; these are in addition to the ongoing work and initiatives outlined in Section 2.

#### 3.2 RELOCATION OF WELCOME CENTRE AND BVCB TO NEW PREMISES

The Belfast Welcome Centre (to become the Visit Belfast Welcome Centre) will open in new ground floor city centre premises in mid-late September 2013. The relocation has been planned to take place immediately after the World Police and Fire Games in August 2013, thereby avoiding any potentially negative impact on the servicing of the Games (in the possible event of a delay in the new premises becoming available).

The new state-of-the-art ground floor premises, located in the heart of the city centre at 8-9 Donegall Square North, will provide greater on-street visibility and access for tourists, with the potential to increase footfall at the Welcome Centre by 20%<sup>3</sup>.

A visioning paper prepared by Dr John Heeley for BVCB outlined the essential characteristics of the new Welcome Centre, which will showcase the "Belfast story". The new Welcome Centre will have a modern look and feel based on a design which encourages visitors to use the latest interactive touch screen technology. The larger premises will also enable staff to circulate throughout the floor space to "meet and greet" and assist visitors with their enquiries, and will provide more opportunities for advertising income. The Belfast Welcome Centre 2013-2014 business plan details the operational activity for the Centre in its current location from April 2013 to September 2013 and in its new location from September 2013 to March 2014.

#### 3.3 WORLD POLICE & FIRE GAMES

The WPFG in August 2013 is a significant event for Belfast's 2013 calendar. It is expected to attract some 25,000 visitors, including 10,000 competitors from around the world, and is projected to generate £16.3 million for the local economy. The Games will take place between 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> August 2013 in 40 venues across Northern Ireland, and BVCB has been contracted to handle the accommodation bookings for the Games. With a booking system now in place, BWC has already secured over 14,200 beds across 10 nights in the greater Belfast area, with currently just over 2,500 rooms booked, over 46,000 bednights and in the region of £2 million in sales. It is expected that this will increase significantly with BVCB aiming to get 18,500-19,000 bedspaces on its system.

In addition to managing accommodation bookings, the TICs managed by BVCB and particularly the Belfast Welcome Centre will play an important visitor servicing role throughout the Games. The additional footfall will place considerable pressure on the visitor servicing resources of BVCB. Specific plans to recruit temporary staff are being developed to facilitate the creation of pop-up TIC's where needed, and to coordinate volunteers and additional staff for existing TIC's. These plans are outlined in the BWC business plan for 2013-2014.

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<sup>3</sup> Business Case by TTCI

### 3.4 PHASE 2 VISITOR PASS

A pilot Belfast Visitor Pass was launched in April 2011, as a joint project between BCC, NITB and Translink. It features free public transport and discounts and offers 75 products throughout the city: attractions, tours, venues, restaurants and shops. To date over 4,490 passes have been sold (1, 2 and 3 day passes), representing sales of £40k.

BWC now hopes to roll out Phase 2 of the Visitor Pass, to take this to a fully integrated solution akin to the European models – whereby visitors paying a higher per day fee and get free admission to attractions and free public transport. The rationale for, and benefits of, Phase 2 of the Visitor Pass have already been reviewed and assessed in previous independent reports. It has been acknowledged that the development and extension of the Visitor Pass would result in a key tool for helping to spread the benefits of tourism throughout the City, strengthening value for money perceptions amongst visitors, and developing into a gateway tool to promote attractions and products across Northern Ireland. Commercially, the Visitor Pass is also an income generator for BVCB, providing a contribution to core expenditure. A Business Case for the development of Phase 2 of the Visitor Pass was completed in December 2011, detailing the set up costs required for the development of the Phase 2 Pass. BVCB will require one-off funding for this exceptional project, over and above the ongoing core operating costs of the Welcome Centre. These costs are detailed in the BWC Business Plan.

### 3.5 CORPORATE NAME CHANGE FOR BVCB

The corporate name change for BVCB has been approved by the Board and the organisation will be known as 'Visit Belfast' from the beginning of the 2013-2014 financial year. This new simplified name reflects the clarity of purpose within the organisation and is closely linked to its revised core purpose statement:

"To create and service visitors for Belfast in order to generate economic benefit for the City region". A Name Change Implementation Plan to roll out the new Visit Belfast name is outlined in Appendix II.

### 3.6 MEMBERSHIP RE-LAUNCH AND ENGAGEMENT

BVCB has had considerable success in attracting and maintaining a strong membership base, which brings in valuable income and levers buy-in through member participation in all its activities. Member engagement is a core part of the BVCB ethos but, in the current economic climate, past success can no longer be taken for granted.

A review of the current scheme has been undertaken to enhance and improve the service offered to BVCB members. During 2012/2013 the key priorities are to:

- Refresh and re-launch the new BVCB membership scheme for both existing and new members;

- Champion the needs of BVCB members amongst key stakeholders as the voice of the tourism and hospitality industry in Belfast;
- Grow BVCB membership to maximise market share in all key tourism sectors;
- Strengthen the existing membership base through new strategic account management practices, improved engagement, communications, measurement and reporting;
- Increase membership satisfaction.

BVCB has developed a detailed member engagement plan to ensure that members are more aware of the tangible benefits and value that the organisation can deliver.

### **3.7 CORPORATE AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME**

BVCB will build upon the success of its Conference Ambassador Programme by launching a Corporate Ambassador Programme, working closely with key business organisations and agencies in Belfast. This will be supported by sales and marketing activity to attract corporate conferences and events to Belfast and specifically within the key economic sectors where Northern Ireland has key strengths.

### **3.8 BELFAST WATERFRONT EXTENSION LAUNCH**

BVCB and Belfast Waterfront have identified the need to work closely together to maximise opportunities for the City in advance of the completion of the venue's extension. All top performing conference destinations have a common success factor – the primary conference centre and destination work together as 'one team' and take a collaborative sales approach to securing conference business. BVCB and Belfast Waterfront will develop a joint marketing plan in quarter 1 of 2013, for implementation in the run-up to the opening of the extension in 2016, to attract large city-wide conferences to Belfast. A collaborative marketing and sales plan will help underpin the significant capital investment that has been made in the new extension and maximise the return on investment.

### **3.9 DIGITAL MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

BVCB will continue to build on the progress already achieved in developing online and digital channel support for BVCB's marketing and communications activity. BVCB will focus on the communications power of mobile, tablets and apps and optimise website and digital campaigns to drive visitor numbers.

BVCB will take its social media to the next level through cost-effective engagement with online communities for enhanced engagement and impact. Through building Belfast's position on these channels it will proactively recruit and activate supporters online, integrating with the wider sales, marketing and visitor servicing activity.

BVCB will work with Belfast City Council and the industry to deliver the objectives and maximise the benefits of the Super-Connected Belfast project.

### **3.10 SEGMENTATION RESEARCH: NITB'S "PRIORITIES FOR GROWTH" AND TOURISM IRELAND'S "GB PATH TO GROWTH"**

BVCB will adopt the new segmentation research from NITB and Tourism Ireland (TI) in all its leisure marketing communications, prioritising and utilising those segments that offer the best fit and potential for Belfast. This will involve shifting the focus from marketing products, to developing compelling experience propositions and distinctive visitor experiences that match the needs, interests and motivations of those segments.

The Leisure Tourism team will continue to work closely with NITB and Tourism Ireland in integrating Belfast City Marketing Plans and also influencing activity by providing Belfast specific messages, images and city brand themes.

Campaign plans will be developed in close cooperation and consultation with NITB, BVCB's commercial partnerships and Tourism Ireland to ensure full integration, impact and avoid duplication or overlap. In this way, the combined strength of these campaigns will deliver maximum results for Belfast with BVCB's activity more tactically focused towards activation and driving audiences to book.

### **3.11 CONCLUSIONS**

The priority activities outlined above include a number of strategically important, but resource intensive projects which will require significant dedicated management time. This will be an exciting but challenging year for BVCB. Senior Management roles and responsibilities for delivery of these projects will continue to be refined during the current year; equally important will be the management of staff resources to ensure that key pressure points are identified and planned for. A strong management focus on KPI monitoring will also be critical in ensuring that there continues to be a balance between delivery on operational targets and strategic projects.

### 4. BVCB OPERATIONAL PLANS 2013-2014

4.1 This section of the Business Plan presents the detailed operational plans for each of the key areas of BVCB activity.

#### 4.2 LEISURE TOURISM

Appendix III contains the detailed action plans and budgets for Leisure Tourism.

##### Market Segments

Two important research reports have been released over recent months, identifying and profiling key market segments in GB and ROI:

- **'GB Path to Growth'** – a report commissioned by the Tourism Recovery Taskforce to address the decline in the number of visitors to the island of Ireland from GB in recent years.
- **NITB's 'Priorities for Growth'** – which identifies priority segments in the NI & ROI markets.

The focus of the research has been about understanding the needs and motivations of visitors in NI, ROI and GB and how they decide between one short break destination and another. The research highlights that leading destinations focus their efforts on a well defined group of visitors within key markets i.e. key segments, resulting in a segmentation driven research approach. This has therefore provided the industry with valuable insights and information which BVCB has reviewed in detail to identify the best prospect and priority segments for Belfast.

The reports highlight that target segments want to encounter something different, not necessarily a destination or even a product, but an 'experience'. There is a clear need therefore to develop and communicate relevant and motivating experiences to each of the segments that have been prioritised. This experiential approach is firmly embedded in other world-class destinations.

##### GB

Seven segments are profiled in the 'GB Path to Growth' report and three have been prioritised by Tourism Ireland. Prioritisation has been based on a range of key influencing factors including: immediate growth opportunities; 'warmth' to NI; segment size and growth potential; the ability for NI to meet their individual motivations by offering the experiences they want. Three key segments have been prioritised for the GB market as follows – Social Energisers, Culturally Curious and Great Escapers.

##### NI & ROI

NITB's 'Priorities for Growth' Report identified eight best prospect segments in the NI and ROI markets and four have been prioritised.

As with the GB market, prioritising the segments was based on the following factors: opportunity for growth in each segment; the match between the interests of each

segment and the product capability in NI; barriers that impede active consideration of NI as a short break destination; value of the opportunity V the difficulty of exploiting this opportunity.

The following key segments have been prioritised: Mature Cosmopolitans, Time Together, Young and Lively (and Family Fun – medium long term priority).

Illustrated below are the priority segments for GB and NI/ ROI markets.

**Market: GB**

<b>Social Energisers</b>	Young couples, adult groups looking for fun and excitement (city vibe)
<b>Culturally Curious</b>	Older couples with time, want to do a place (culture, living history)
<b>Great Escapers</b>	Younger couples, with or without young families (connecting with nature)

**Market: NI & ROI**

**Immediate Priorities (NITB)**

<b>Mature Cosmopolitans:</b>	older couples (50+) looking to relax and spend time together
<b>Time Together</b>	couples with children at home taking a romantic break together
<b>Young &amp; Lively</b>	groups of young adults looking for fun together

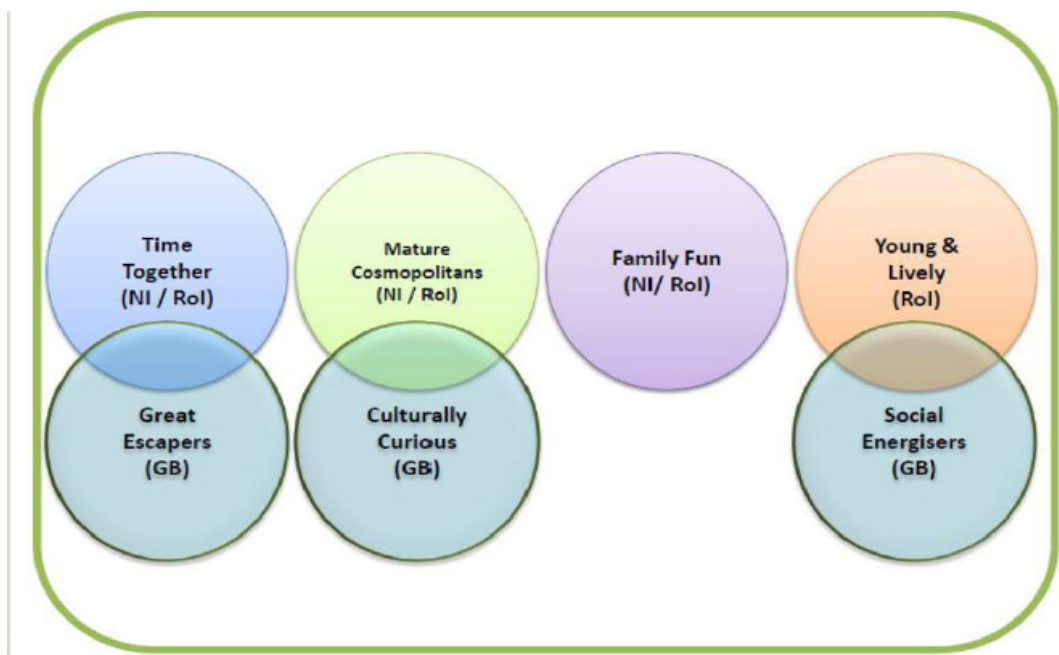
**Medium/Long term Priority**

<b>Family Fun</b>	family units spending quality time together
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There are similarities and overlap in the key characteristics of the prioritised segments across the main geographic markets, which are important in developing the experiential propositions for these core segments. See Diagram on next page.



Diagram: All Segments



From Belfast's perspective, it is imperative that BVCB focuses on identified best prospects and adopts a segmentation approach to city break marketing. From analysis and consideration of best fit, market size and potential, BVCB has identified the following priority segments for Belfast in the NI, ROI and GB markets and will adopt a marketing and communications strategy that focuses on compelling experiences that match the needs, interests and motivations of the segments:

GB: Social Energisers (primary segment) and Culturally Curious (secondary segment)

NI & ROI: Young and Lively (primary segment) and Mature Cosmopolitans (secondary segment)

The table overleaf presents the priority segments in the key geographic markets, linking the themes and messages that can connect with the segments and the products that will inform the experience pillars to ultimately grow market share.

**City Breaks**

Market	Segments	Products	Themes / Messages	Channels
<b>GB:</b> Scotland, N of England, London	<b>Social Energisers</b> (18-34yrs, no kids, couples, adult groups, urban adventurers)	Events, Festivals, Music, Nightlife, Retail, Heritage and Key Attractions	Vibe of the City; Only in Belfast; City of Festivals & Events; the Belfast Story / Experiences	Social media, online, VoD, cinema, radio
		Titanic, Cultural Quarters, Great Belfast Food	New experiences, vibrant location, action-packed days & fun-filled nights, excitement, fun, gateway role (city + experiences)	
<b>ROI:</b> Dublin, Dublin Corridor	<b>Young &amp; Lively</b> (18-34yrs, ABC1, couples, adult groups, interested in urban breaks)	Events, Festivals, Music, Nightlife, Retail, Heritage and Key Attractions (MAC, Lyric etc), Great Belfast Food, Cultural Quarters	Culture & Creative Vibe i.e. 'Signature Experience'; Only in Belfast; City of Festivals & Events; Belfast Experience	Above the line (digital TV, radio, press), digital & social platforms
		Titanic & Maritime – core products of the 'Living Legends' experience pillar	New experiences, vibrant location, excitement, fun	
			Welcome, compact, modern, new destination, VFM	
			Welcome, compact, modern, new destination, VFM	

Day Trips

Market	Segments	Products	Themes / Messages	Channels
NI	18-45yrs, couples and small groups, DINKYs, family, Empty nesters, culture seekers	Retail, Titanic Belfast, Titanic experiences, 2013 events, Cultural Quarters (an Culturlann, Shankill), Literature (CS Lewis), heritage & other attractions (Lyric, The MAC)	Only in Belfast; City of Festivals & Events; Maritime Heritage; the Belfast Story / Experiences  Welcome, VFM, variety	TV, press, radio, outdoor, online, digital, exhibitions
ROI: Dublin, Dublin Corridor	<b>Young &amp; Lively</b> (18-34yrs, ABC1, couples, adult groups, interested in urban breaks)	Events, Festivals, Music, Retail, Heritage and Key Attractions (MAC, Lyric etc), Cultural Quarters  Great Belfast Food	Culture & Creative Vibe i.e. 'Signature Experience'; Only in Belfast; City of Festivals & Events; Belfast Experience  New experiences, vibrant location, excitement, fun  Welcome, compact, modern, new destination, VFM	Social media, online, VoD, cinema, radio
ROI: Dublin, Dublin Corridor	<b>Young &amp; Lively</b> (18-34yrs, ABC1, couples, adult groups, interested in urban breaks)	Events, Festivals, Music, Nightlife, Retail, Heritage and Key Attractions (MAC, Lyric etc), Great Belfast Food, Cultural Quarters  Titanic & Maritime – core products of the 'Living Legends' experience pillar	Culture & Creative Vibe i.e. 'Signature Experience'; Only in Belfast; City of Festivals & Events; Belfast Experience  New experiences, vibrant location, excitement, fun  Welcome, compact, modern, new destination, VFM	Above the line (digital TV, radio, press), digital & social platforms

**Cruise Market**

Market	Segments	Products	Themes / Messages	Channels
<b>North America &amp; Germany</b>	Mature professionals & early retirees <i>(aligns with 'Culturally Curious' segment)</i>	Titanic Belfast, Titanic experiences, Cultural Quarters (an Culturlann, Gaeltacht Quarter, Shankill, Ulster-Scots), Literature (CS Lewis), retail	Only in Belfast; City of Festivals & Events; Maritime Heritage; the Belfast Story / Experiences; Rich & Diverse Culture	Cruise Operators, digital, sales-calls, exhibitions
	Cruise Operators		Welcome, compact, modern, new destination, VFM	

**Tour Operators/Groups**

Market	Segments	Products	Themes / Messages	Channels
<b>Tour Groups</b> <b>All</b>	Mature professionals & early retirees <i>(aligns with 'Mature Cosmopolitans' and 'Culturally Curious' segments)</i>	Titanic Belfast, Titanic experiences, Cultural Quarters (an Culturlann, Gaeltacht Quarter, Shankill, Ulster-Scots), Literature (CS Lewis), retail	Only in Belfast; City of Festivals & Events; Maritime Heritage; the Belfast Story / Experiences; Rich & Diverse Culture	GTOs, travel agents, digital press
	Cruise Operators		Welcome, compact, modern, new destination, VFM	
<b>Touring FIT</b> <b>All</b>	All ages, families, DINKYs, couples, empty nesters <i>(aligns with the following segments 'Time Together' 'Great Escapers' 'Mature Cosmopolitans' 'Culturally Curious' 'Family Fun')</i>	Titanic Belfast, Titanic experiences, Cultural Quarters (an Culturlann, Gaeltacht Quarter, Shankill, Ulster-Scots), Literature (CS Lewis)	Only in Belfast; City of Festivals & Events; Maritime Heritage; the Belfast Story / Experiences; Rich & Diverse Culture	GTOs, travel agents, digital press
	Cruise Operators		Welcome, compact, modern, new destination, VFM	

The key elements of the leisure marketing operational plan are:

### **City Break Campaigns**

#### **GB:**

BVCB will undertake targeted, tactical campaign activity in selected direct access cities in GB, working with Tourism Ireland and commercial partners to deliver integrated campaigns with a strong Belfast focus to the priority city break target segments. The main proposition of these campaigns will be to take a city break to Belfast to engage with the range of unique and compelling experiences, Only in Belfast.

In line with Tourism Ireland's marketing plans, the geographical focus of the multi-platform campaigns will be Scotland, London and the key direct access cities in midland and northern England. In addition to Tourism Ireland, commercial partners will include the following direct access carriers between GB and Belfast: Stena Line, Flybe, Aer Lingus, British Airways and Easyjet.

Key performance indicators for this activity will be to achieve £225,000 income from commercial partners, deliver a minimum return on marketing investment of £1:£15, generate an estimated 70,000 bednights and create additional expenditure of £5.7 million. All campaigns will be evaluated independently by Millward Brown Ulster to measure performance against KPIs set.

#### **NI & ROI Campaigns:**

The NI and ROI campaigns will be delivered in partnership with retail and industry operators during the key periods of Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter of 2013-2014. The geographic focus will be on domestic and ROI visitors and with particular emphasis on the greater Dublin area. The aim of these campaigns will be to increase footfall and spend in Belfast, stimulate daytrips and generate overnights for the City. Key performance indicators for this activity will be to achieve £150,000 matched income from industry partners, deliver a minimum return on marketing investment of £1:£8, generate an estimated 65,000 visits and create additional expenditure of £2.4 million. All campaigns will be evaluated independently by Millward Brown Ulster to measure performance against KPIs set.

#### **Total Campaign Expenditure**

The combined total expenditure on GB City Break and Island of Ireland campaigns in 2013-2014 is projected to be £656,000. Of this total figure, £375k (57%) will be matched income leveraged from commercial partners, enabling BVCB to deliver campaigns with more robust budgets and therefore achieve greater audience reach, penetration and impact across the key segments.

Specific to the GB market, BVCB projects that with a total campaign spend of £356,000, some £225,000 of income can be leveraged from its campaign partners (please note campaign activity with Easyjet generates a further £100k in-kind contribution).

Specific to the NI and ROI markets, total campaign expenditure is budgeted at £300,000, including matched income of £150,000 from campaign partners.

### **Key Product Marketing Support**

BVCB will also deliver key product marketing support across a number of Belfast city products and events utilising their tourism potential to attract additional leisure visitors, including **Belfast Restaurant Week** (October 2013) and **Belfast Music Week** (November 2013). This marketing support will be in addition to the local city marketing undertaken by Belfast City Council and BVCB will promote these product experiences as part of the overall tourism call to action.

The operational plan in Appendix III includes a detailed section relating specifically to BVCB's proposed marketing support for these key city products and events.

In addition, BVCB will seek to fully support and exploit the potential from The Gathering. The Gathering is a year-long initiative focused on global connections to the island of Ireland, in an attempt to persuade the great Irish diaspora to 'come home' for a visit.

BVCB will be working with its members and Tourism Ireland to utilise the marketing platforms and opportunities presented, and ensure Belfast is profiled and linked into all relevant activity and in particular the longer haul markets. Key events in the Belfast calendar will be highlighted as part of this initiative, and digital and web based communication plans implemented.

### **Cruise Marketing**

Cruise is considered to be the world's fastest growing tourism sector, and competition is acute between destinations and ports to gain market share. Belfast's position in the cruise market has increased significantly over the past 12-18 months, and BVCB will now seek to reinforce and further build on this success.

BVCB has an excellent partnership based relationship with Belfast Harbour, and both organisations will continue to work closely together to build Belfast's profile as a prominent UK cruise destination within the British Isle circuit. Joint sales initiatives mean that Belfast's cruise potential is presented very effectively; BVCB plans, develops and delivers the "destination" sales pitch, whilst Belfast Harbour delivers the technical "port and berthing" sales pitch. Both organisations believe that this joint approach provides Belfast with an important competitive advantage when pitching for new business.

Key activity in the 2013-2014 year will include attendance at the key trade shows under the banner of Cruise Ireland to include Cruise Shipping Miami (March), Seatrade Hamburg (September) and Tourism Ireland showcase West Coast USA (October). In addition, a number of targeted sales missions will be undertaken in the US and Germany, to both service and reinforce the continuation of existing committed cruise line business to Belfast as well as to stimulate and convert new interest in the destination.

These sales activities will be supported by the development of Cruise Belfast's online presence and bespoke, high-end collateral and image-rich sales presentations. Some advertising in trade magazines/websites running Irish Sea/British Isles supplements/features e.g. Cruise Industry News and Sea Trade Magazine will be placed as appropriate. BVCB will also deliver targeted fam trips with Belfast Harbour in support of Cruise Belfast.

BVCB's strategy is focused on exploiting the position of Dublin as the Marquee Port for the island of Ireland, with the aspiration of positioning Belfast as the second most visited.

The projected cost of the cruise ship activity is £29,500, which includes attendance at trade shows, fam visits, new marketing collateral and membership of Cruise Ireland.

The KPI target for 2013-2014 is to attract 60 cruise ships in 2014, generating £6 million for the local economy.

### **Trade Shows, Exhibitions & Workshops**

With the continued importance of the leisure market to Belfast for overnight stays, Tour Operator business is playing an important role in driving room sales and spend across the City.

BVCB remains committed to maintaining a strong destination presence, focusing on key leisure trade events and targeting business from across the globe, this year to include Spain and China. During the year the Sales team will attend a total of 20 trade shows, exhibitions and organised sales initiatives.

Member participation is sought for a number of these sales opportunities which assists in strengthening the destination sell and sales conversion, as well as driving business to member products. This provides a source of marketing income to support the activities.

An integrated programme of sales calls has been included within the 2013-2014 plan, prioritised on the following criteria:

- Tour Operator business with direct access to Belfast;
- Trade prospects with existing link with Northern Ireland (cultural, business or leisure);
- Follow-up activity with active leads from show attended.

Sales calls will be planned, where possible, in conjunction with colleagues from Tourism Ireland. This allows BVCB to benefit from the on-the-ground expertise in-market and the contacts already established by Tourism Ireland, thus promoting an integrated approach between both organisations.

The plan has allocated £40,250 against costs for undertaking this activity to generate 245 leads (representing an increase of 37% on 2012-2013). This includes £10,000 for costs towards stand design, photography and production of new travel trade collateral. An income target of £10,000 is to be achieved through member participation.

### Communications and PR

Communications and PR play a key role in BVCB's overall integrated marketing, sales and brand strategy, directing all communications and covering both corporate and consumer messaging.

A new and targeted communications activity programme will be developed focusing on the domestic, ROI, GB and direct access markets with particular emphasis on identified priority segments, providing destination stand-out for Belfast and assisting in driving overnight stays to the City.

The Communications team will use a selection of traditional and new channels presenting unique Belfast experiences to reach, engage, inspire and activate across the range of different consumer segments.

Communications will respond to local and international press information enquiries providing content, images and comment to promote and enhance Belfast as a new, must visit destination in all our markets. Consumer messaging will be tailored appropriately to the market, promoting Belfast's unique tourism experiences, welcome and vibe.

The World Police and Fire Games, along with the relocation and opening of the new Belfast Welcome Centre, will be a key project for communications and PR activity in 2013. Tactical plans are being developed to communicate to all BVCB's stakeholder audiences and maximise the PR opportunities to promote Belfast as a top European destination.

Key elements of communication activity will include:

- Press and PR activity – deliver a continuous and sustained calendar of PR activity through planned press releases, media events, press fams and multi-channel communication support to promote Belfast's tourism activities, events and experiences as well as highlighting city tourism successes.
- Media Briefings – a series of media events and briefings incorporating key stakeholders and as part of an on-going media relations development in support of destination marketing campaigns. These will be organised in all main markets, as well as ensuring the supply of timely information, images and newsworthy stories on a regular and sustained basis.
- Inbound media fam visits – working with NITB and Tourism Ireland, BVCB will support the generation and servicing of individual and group media familiarisation visits to Belfast from key target markets.
- Press Centre – an online media and press resource will also be developed with the [gotobelfast.com](http://gotobelfast.com) corporate website to enhance the media information service and deliver of news, imagery and copy.
- WPFG – BVCB will maximise its reporting of good news stories during the Games by working in partnership in the lead up and during the Games with WPFG-2013, NITB and Belfast City Council.



- Relocation of BWC – the Marketing and Communications team will provide support to the project team in the lead up to the relocation and opening of the Belfast Welcome Centre. Tactical, promotional plans will be developed in close consultation with BCC and NITB to position the new centre as a flagship tourist information centre for Northern Ireland and to support the launch event.

Communications and PR activity is evaluated by the resultant coverage and exposure in world-wide media - measured against an advertising equivalence target of £3m. A total budget of £110,500 has been allocated to deliver all communications and PR events and activities, together with agency costs and support materials.

### **Private Sector Commercial Sponsorships**

BVCB has longstanding relationships with its two key private sector sponsors – Diageo and Value Cabs, which are projected to account for sponsorship income of £100,000 in 2013-2014. Recognising the need to demonstrate value for money, BVCB has had detailed discussions with both sponsors and strategies aligned to their brand objectives e.g. less focus on general brand promotion and more “call to action” opportunities; these discussions provide the basis of the commercial sponsorship activity for the incoming year, along with more regular communication and feedback.

### **Digital and Online Marketing**

The use of digital and online channels is now a core element of BVCB’s marketing strategy and continues to offer new opportunities for communicating and engaging with Belfast’s priority target markets and segments.

BVCB’s objective is to be at the forefront of digital communication and to ensure that emerging digital, marketing and communication channels are fully exploited so as to engage with users in an appropriate and highly targeted way.

The 2013-2014 operational plan for digital and online marketing and communications activity includes:

- Search engine optimisation, email marketing, and social media will be utilised to drive traffic to the gotobelfast.com site, generating over 900,000 visitors in 2013-2014. This will be achieved by keeping content continually updated and optimised to the target audience and the devices they use to access gotoBelfast’s digital content.
- Priority development of e-mail marketing mailing list, to provide highly targeted opportunities for direct marketing in real time. This will require the development of a suitable e-DM (e-Direct Marketing) database which will enable the marketing team to segment data, based on user behaviour and demographics.
- Further exploiting the use of social media channels in BVCB’s marketing and communications activity, providing instant access to Belfast’s target audience and the ability to engage in real time discussion.

- With the increase in the use of smart phones and tablets, a particular focus will be made on optimising the user experience of gotoBelfast.com on mobile devices and further developing the iPhone app and creating a new Android version.
- The website and related digital platforms provide BVCB with potential revenue opportunities to generate future income streams in support of its activities, for example through banner advertising, endorsements, sponsorship, posts and email marketing. Plans will be developed whilst maintaining the relationship with current sponsors and RTPs (Regional Tourism Partners), to assess the degree and variety of opportunities that exist.

The projected cost of delivery of the digital strategy in 2013-2014 is £65,000 to include web hosting, web services and applications.

### **Publications**

BVCB produces a range of high quality printed material for marketing, sales and visitor servicing. Publications to be produced in 2013-2014 include the annual Belfast Visitor Guide, the bi-monthly About Belfast guide, and Belfast TIC and visitor maps.

The Belfast Visitor Guide raises the profile of the city region and markets the area, accommodation providers and tourism product to out-of-state markets via Tourism Ireland's overseas offices. Small quantities of the Visitor Guide will also be distributed through the Belfast Welcome Centre, NI TIC network, NITB Dublin, Connolly Station and Port of Cairnryan. The 2014 Belfast Visitor Guide will be developed in quarter 2/3 of 2013 and in time for World Travel Market in London in November 2013. It will include a print run of 25,000 copies and a web optimised digital version of the guide will be created and uploaded to gotobelfast.com. Total cost to produce the publication will be £20,000, of which £10,000 will be offset by advertising income generated from BVCB members.

The About Belfast publication is regarded as the official visitor guide to Belfast, containing events information, editorial features, maps and A directory of accommodation, attractions, tours, activities, arts and entertainment venues, pubs, clubs, restaurants and cafes. The guide has an ABC classification of 57,000 copies on average per edition (based on 6 editions per year), making it the highest distributed free consumer magazine in Northern Ireland. In 2013-2014, About Belfast will produce 5 editions per year, equating to 300,000 printed copies plus a digital version. The distribution plan (per edition) of approx 500 outlets will include the BVCB membership database, ports of entry, NI TIC network, NITB Dublin, Connolly Station and Port of Cairnryan. About Belfast will also be available in digital formats – downloadable from gotobelfast.com; gotobelfast app and iBooks. The total cost to design and produce About Belfast is £150k and the advertising income target is set at £50k.

Two maps have been designed and will be produced in the 2013-2014 year. The Belfast TIC map will have a print run of 130,000 to include an A3 double sided tear off map for TIC use. Distribution is mainly for Belfast Welcome Centre, Airport TIC's, NITB Dublin, Connolly Station and NI TIC Network. In addition, the Belfast Visitor Map

(brochure version) will be produced with a print run of 15,000 and future versions will be supported by commercial income and advertising plans being developed.

### 4.4 Business Tourism

The year 2012 has involved a period of significant change for Business Tourism with new key staff in place and a new approach to targeting conference business. The strategic and organisational change that has taken place is now beginning to yield very encouraging results. Business Tourism's priority for 2013-2014 is to continue to inject focused sales momentum to achieve its ambitious year 3 targets.

In 2013-2014 the Business Tourism team will focus on achieving its conference targets by increasing sales by a further 38% to £37.7 million. This sales performance would put BVCB on a par with Dublin Convention Bureau, despite having 14,000 fewer hotel bedrooms, circa 90 less air routes, and limited exhibition and breakout facilities (until completion of new Waterfront development). This equates to an additional 10,000 delegates and £10 million to the local economy.

Achievement of its 2013-2014 conference targets will however be dependent upon resourcing within the Business Tourism team. The 2013-2014 Business Tourism operational plan therefore assumes that there will be a further 12 month extension to the two additional temporary sales manager contracts<sup>4</sup>. This extension to crucial sales resources will underpin future conference sales growth and facilitate the achievement of the Business Tourism sales targets.

Sustaining the sales resources at this level will also facilitate the Business Tourism team in delivering on its additional key projects for 2013-2014, such as the development of the Corporate Ambassador Programme, corporate sales development and implementation of the Conference Industry Taskforce. The increased sales momentum will also be necessary to support the increase in conference capacity created by the new Belfast Waterfront extension in 2016.

#### **Corporate Ambassador Programme**

The aim of the Corporate Ambassador Programme is to engage local corporate ambassadors (as well as the Northern Ireland Diaspora) who have the contacts, networks and influence to assist BVCB to attract out-of-state corporate events. This will be achieved by extending the Conference Ambassador Programme into the corporate sector. Already working with NITB on this initiative, BVCB will seek to develop a partnership or "Team Belfast" approach with key business groups such as Invest NI, NI Connections, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce (NICC), Institute of Directors (IoD), CBI etc. The programme will initially be launched and promoted through all these key business groups to increase awareness and recruit potential ambassadors from within their networks.

Working with partners to identify best prospects, BVCB will develop strong corporate networks of CEO influencers for events such as staff conferences, sales events, training, client and incentive events. The strategic approach of using CEO level

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<sup>4</sup> In 2012, BVCB's Board of Directors approved the appointment of 2 conference sales managers for 12 months ending June 2013. The Business Plan now assumes that the contracts will be extended for a further 12 months, ending June 2014.

influencers to target other CEOs will generate opportunities that may not otherwise be achieved.

BVCB will work with partners to target key event agents and intermediaries that place corporate bookings and identify how best to service their event requirements. BVCB will play a key role in lead generation and research; it will also promote Belfast through new tradeshows, for example, the UK Meetings Show and Square Meal Venue and events and through promotion of Belfast at NI Alumni and Diaspora events. BVCB will identify Meet in Ireland breakfast / lunch events within key GB corporate offices, in partnership with Tourism Ireland GB offices.

Target prospects include the FDI company network, corporates with a significant local NI office, NI corporate from key international sectors, university GB and ROI research partners.

Targets for the Corporate Ambassador Programme in 2013-2014 are to recruit at least 20 key corporate ambassadors who can assist BVCB in attracting new MICE business to Belfast.

### **Review of Current Subvention Programme**

The market for conferences is highly competitive, with many of the top cities using subvention funds to attract not-for-profit sector conferences. The current Belfast Subvention fund from BCC and NITB is worth £145,000 per annum. Demand for subvention is high and is likely to increase in future; however the elongated sales and planning cycle for association conferences and the current financial procedures required to submit a subvention application make it difficult to secure and release subvention funding within a 12 month period.

Two key factors make it difficult to physically allocate the subvention funds and ensure that they are utilised:

- The current process requires clients to submit a copy of their past conference income and expenditure as well as a full income and expenditure report for the potential Belfast conference which can be difficult for clients to produce within the timescale required.
- Funds can only be issued to clients once they have contracted with venues and paid the costs which can be reimbursed through the scheme. Increasingly this is being delayed as clients negotiate later payment terms in order to manage cash-flow in advance of income being received.
- The minimum bed night figure (600) is not applicable to smaller (volume) conferences which the industry now needs, and corporate events are not eligible.

Other competing cities such as Dublin, Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow have more client friendly subvention processes in place. BVCB will undertake a review of the scheme in 2013 to identify potential improvements that could make it more accessible and report back to the subvention funders.

### **Establishment of a joint BVCB and Belfast Waterfront extension marketing plan for out-of-state business**

BVCB and Belfast Waterfront have identified the need to work closely together to maximise opportunities for the City in advance of the completion of the venue's extension. All top performing conference destinations have a critical success factor, the conference centre and destination work together as 'one team' and take a collective approach to securing conference business. BVCB and Belfast Waterfront will develop a joint marketing plan in quarter 1 of 2013, for implementation in the run-up to the opening of the extension in 2016. A number of joint marketing initiatives have already been planned for 2013-2014 including:

- Joint sales calls in Brussels, Washington and London
- London Waterfront launch event
- Washington Waterfront launch event
- Participation in all major trade shows and client events
- Joint lead generation programme and research to identify the Top 500 prospects for the new Waterfront extension.

### **Corporate Sales Development**

Following consultations with NITB, Northern Ireland Hotels Federation (NIHF), members and stakeholders, it has been agreed that BVCB will support the implementation of a sales plan to proactively target the corporate market in 2013-2014. This concept was developed to address sustained market failure in the corporate segment, which is a crucial area of business for many of BVCB's members. The sales plan will focus on attracting conferences generating at least 100 out-of-state bednights and above.

Whilst the majority of BVCB's activity will be focused on its priority target of city wide, high value association business generating 600-6,000 bed nights, the corporate sales plan will mean a slight change of focus to include corporate events with a lower economic value. It is anticipated that 80% of BVCB conference wins will still be at the higher value level, while 20% will be for events at 100 bed nights and above.

### **Implementation of Industry Taskforce Sales Plan**

The development of an Industry Taskforce was a recommendation in BVCB's 2011-2014 Business Plan. The conference taskforce was established in late 2012 with the aim of creating an industry-led sales team who can utilise their collective knowledge, expertise and experience to assist BVCB in securing new conference business for Belfast.

Over the next year the Taskforce will meet regularly; its role will be to help identify new conference opportunities, contacts and ambassadors for the City. The taskforce will also review BVCB's own sales pipeline to help close sales and increase conversion rates. Where bids have been lost, the Taskforce will provide input to objectively assess the issues contributing to lost business and any relevant learning to be applied in future.

This shared activity should drive business conversion by providing BVCB with access to shared industry knowledge, contacts and expertise. It will also identify and participate in additional tactical sales and marketing activity, promotions and campaigns.

The target for new leads generated through the Industry Taskforce is 50 out-of-state conference leads worth approximately £25m in economic impact.

### 4.5 MEMBERSHIP

#### **Membership Income and growth**

BVCB is projecting to generate membership income of £175k in the year 2013-2014, representing an increase of £10k over projected membership income for the current year (based on a forecast income of £165,000 for the current financial year / 94% of target). An operational budget of £18,000 (as per 2012-2013) has been allocated to the support of the membership engagement strategy.

The income fee target will be achieved by recruiting circa 80 new members in 2013-2014. BVCB has recognised that the potential for increasing membership in the higher fee membership band is limited, as the key organisations at this level are already members. The majority of new members are therefore likely to be at the entry level fee band and will include restaurants, pubs and smaller businesses.

#### **Retention**

The membership engagement strategy will also involve achieving higher retention levels than in the previous three years. The target for 2013-2014 is that any drop in income from non-renewing members should not exceed £5k or be greater than 20 members. This is a lower number of non-renewals than the average of 50 per annum in each of the previous financial years.

The new membership engagement plans include: "Locking-in" existing members and increasing loyalty to BVCB will be achieved through more proactive engagement and communications. A member contact plan has already been developed, which outlines the level of engagement and communication that each member should expect from BVCB. The member contact plan also ensures that BVCB staff recognises the new approach to segmenting the membership and the different benefits associated with each segment.

#### **Re-launch and refresh the membership scheme**

BVCB will "refresh and re-launch" its membership scheme, focusing particularly on benefits and value for money within each of the membership bands, and present it to both new and existing members throughout the incoming year. This will also include the launch of a new membership charter.

This level of proactive engagement with members will support the organisation's role as "champion" to its members and will reinforce BVCB's position as a member's voice for tourism and hospitality in greater Belfast.

### Events programme

BVCB will significantly increase its member events programme which will now include up to 14 social, educational and networking events in 2012-2013. It will also take a partnership approach in delivering aspects of this programme by working with Belfast City Council through its Destination Belfast initiative. The new programme will include:

- 8 member master-class events (BCC/BVCB)
- AGM
- 2x Business Tourism events
- 2 x Leisure / Digital events
- 2 x social events (May 13 & Dec 13)
- Hosted member tables at up to 9 key corporate events
- Business Plan Update and Marketing Opportunities Launch

The events programme will also retain key member events which have regularly been part of BVCB's member offering, including sector meeting, business planning and marketing planning opportunities.

### Membership satisfaction

For the first time, BVCB will implement an annual membership satisfaction survey. Member satisfaction with BVCB will be measured in quarter 4 2012-2013 and a target established for 2013-2014 in order to identify the impact of the new member engagement strategy and to identify any further improvements to the membership scheme.

## **4.6 VISITOR SERVICING**

The Belfast Welcome Centre, Belfast International Airport TIC and George Best Belfast City Airport TIC are dealt with in separate business plans but the overall income and expenditure for each is included in the BVCB financial tables in section 5 and the targets for 2013-2014 are outlined in section 6.

2013 is going to be a pivotal year for BVCB's Visitor Servicing function.

- The management and planning of the design, move and operation of the new Centre and the staff training required to deliver the new type of service and technologies that will be employed in the Centre.
- In addition, BVCB is also responsible for handling the accommodation bookings for the World Police and Fire Games in August 2013; another major additional task.
- If funding can be secured, Phase 2 of the Belfast Visitor Pass will also be developed towards the end of 2013, to go live by June 2014; again a substantial and time consuming project.

- New funding and operating models need to be developed for the airport TICs, to accommodate the reduction in funding from NITB and the plans by the airports to redevelop their respective arrivals areas. Immediate funding needs to be found to enable them to maintain a status quo for 2013/14, and then a longer term solution needs to be developed for 2014/15 onwards.

### **Belfast Welcome Centre**

The Welcome Centre will continue to operate in its current format and location for the first 6 months of 2013/14, with minimal disruption to services during September 2013 as the operation moves to the new location. When the Centre moves to its new location and opens as the *Visit Belfast* Welcome Centre, its core services will remain the same, but the way in which they are delivered will change, with a different look and feel to the Centre and new technologies.

Staff will no longer be predominantly counter based, and instead will be 'meeting and greeting' visitors to the Centre. New technology within the new Centre will include interactive touch-screens, plasma screens, wi-fi zone for downloading apps, portable handheld devices for staff to sell tours and events and dedicated ticket kiosks with staffed and self service options. Less floor space will be available for merchandise sales and the product range will be rationalised and revamped, to focus on differentiated products and local crafts. A retail plan is currently being developed, and it is projected that merchandise sales will grow as a result. There will be considerably more opportunity for income from advertising space, and it is anticipated that the Centre's Ticketing role will also continue to grow.

An outlined Communications Plan for the opening of the new centre is included in Appendix IV.

The new Centre and the visitor servicing plans are consistent with all the relevant tourism strategies for Belfast and Northern Ireland as a whole:

- Opening of the new BWC in a ground floor city centre location (*scheduled for end Sept 2013*);
- Roll out of newer technologies in the new BWC, used to ensure an integrated link with other outreach information points and the two airport TICs (*scheduled for end Sept 2013 and ongoing roll out to TICs and outreach points in phase two scheduled for to be complete by December 2014*);
- Development and support of local information points across the City, including points across the various 'tourist destinations/quarters', to ensure that visitors have a seamless experience (*underway and ongoing*);
- Further development and roll out of the Belfast Visitor Pass, to include restaurants and a wider range of service providers (*development planned for 2013, for launch 2014*); and
- Development of an on-line city planner for the industry, tracking conferences and major tourism events and marketing initiatives in the City (*already in place*).



The BWC Business Plan details the projected income and expenditure of the BWC for 2013/14 and 2014/15, and also highlights 3 other 'special' projects for which BWC/BVCB will need additional one-off funding:

- Development of Phase 2 of the Belfast Visitor Pass;
- Additional staff to service the WPFG
- Cruise Monitoring Officer.

### **Airport TICS Operational Plans**

A separate Business Plan has been prepared for the airport TICS.

The BIA TIC is projected to handle 68,437 counter enquiries in 2013-2014 (not including those who come in and browse during the day and the evenings, or telephone enquiries), which would result in an additional £1.75 million spend in the local economy.

The GBBCA TIC is projected to handle 45,891 counter enquiries in 2013-2014 resulting in an additional £1.19 million spend in the local economy.

The strategic need and importance of the airport TICS has been acknowledged. However, both airport TICS are challenged by funding and commercial pressures – whilst demand for the TICS is expected to continue to grow in 2013, funding has been reduced. In parallel, both airports are considering redeveloping their arrivals areas and it has been recommended that the TIC needs to invest in more digital technologies. These pressures are coming to bear in a year when BVCB's Visitor Servicing already has a number of major projects in hand – the relocation of the Welcome Centre and handling the accommodation bookings for the World Police and Fire Games and the planned development of Phase 2 of the Belfast Visitor Pass. Each of these projects is highly important, time consuming and resource heavy, and will have to be priorities for BVCB in 2013/14.

Therefore, the priority issues for the airport TICS over the course of 2013/14 will be:

- |   |
|---|
| <p>➤ Handling the anticipated <b>increase in visitors</b> as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the World Police and Fire Games, and as part of an integrated plan with the Belfast Welcome Centre and hub information points;</li><li>- Derry/Londonderry's City of Culture status;</li><li>- and other key City events including the Belfast 400 celebrations, the Féile 25th Anniversary events and Food and Music Week Festivals.</li></ul> |
|---|

The total number of enquiries handled by the airport TICS is projected to increase by 7,702 in 2012/13, whilst total gross income is projected to increase by 34,750 – an increase of 5% and 12% respectively.

- |   |
|---|
| <p>➤ <b>Agreeing development plans with the airports.</b></p> |
|---|

BIA is planning to redevelop its arrivals area, which may include relocating the TIC to a more strategic location so as to maximise its exposure to visitors. These development

plans should increase the footfall and number of enquiries to the TIC, and so any forward plans must consider the most effective way to handle the uplift in business. Whilst the redevelopment plans are unlikely to take effect in 2013/14, plans will be developed over the course of the year and BVCB will work closely with the Airport and its funders to scope out the most appropriate and sustainable model for the relocated TIC.

Similarly, GBBCA is looking at options to reconfigure its arrivals and check in areas, to ensure that it is making best use of the space. These plans could have implications for the location of the TIC and its operating model, with options such as shared services, different size of space, and different locations under consideration. These plans will be worked through with the airport during 2013/14 to agree a model for 2014/15 onwards.

- Securing '**alternative funding**' for 2013/14 and developing **longer term Business Model** for 2014/15 onward.

As explained earlier, BVCB needs to find additional funding for 2013/14, to replace the reduced funding from NITB. BVCB is currently in discussion with Derry~Londonderry City of Culture with a view to one-off funding for the two airport TICs – but particularly the TIC at BIA to take on a specific role in promoting the City of Culture through the TIC.

Over the course of 2013/14, management will also need to finalise the future operating and funding model for the TICs from April 2014 onwards, which will encompass the impact of the Airport's plans to redevelop the Arrivals area, the roll out of technologies employed in the new Welcome Centre and the further reductions in NITB funding. There are a number of options and models to be considered. However, at all costs, it is essential that the level of service and visitor experience is not compromised.

### **Local Tourism Destinations**

One of the key themes of Belfast City Council's Integrated Strategic Framework is to develop Local Tourism Destinations, in order to extend the tourism offer outside the city centre, spread the benefits of tourism and in general lift the standard of the visitor experience across the city.

The Local Tourism Destinations are neighbourhoods/quarters with the potential to become local destinations but still requiring development of the visitor offering.

The rationale is that, as a result of developing these Local Tourism Destinations, new city wide themes will be identified based on product strengths across the city. At a local level, it will allow local businesses, attractions and communities to influence and be part of shaping the city's product development, visitor servicing and marketing strategies and more importantly promote local clustering to target agreed segments/visitors.

The Framework identified the following 10 Local Tourism Destinations, based on their potential to add to the Belfast tourism offering;

1. Belfast Hills;
2. Connswater Community Greenway;
3. Cathedral Quarter;
4. Gaeltacht Quarter;
5. Lagan Corridor;
6. Lisburn Road;

7. North Belfast Cultural Corridor;
8. Queen's Quarter;
9. Shankill Quarter;
10. Titanic Quarter.

Blue Sail Destination Consultants were appointed by the Council in the summer 2012 to work with 5 of these areas, to help to define their unique selling points and develop a tourism development action plan for the destination:

- The Cathedral Quarter;
- Queens Quarter and Lisburn Road;
- The Shankill Quarter;
- The Gaeltacht Quarter; and
- East Belfast.

These destinations were selected on the basis of their readiness to deliver visitor experiences.

The draft Action Plan for The Gaeltacht Quarter was issued end 2012, and the Plans for the other key quarters are currently being finalised.

The Plans acknowledge that, to make the best progress, the Destinations should tap into and work closely with the different tourism development bodies already in place within the City. With this in mind, it is recommended that they should "use the marketing muscle of BVCB to get their message across".

Close working relationships will therefore be established between BVCB and the relevant 'champions' in each of the Tourism Destinations, to ensure that:

- BVCB and the visitor servicing staff are fully briefed on the key selling points and messages for each of the destinations, as well as any specific events or products being developed;
- The key selling messages for each destination are appropriately conveyed by BVCB in its marketing communications, and the destinations are appropriately profiled in the Welcome Centre (specific space will be allocated to profile the different Tourism Destinations in the new Visit Belfast Welcome Centre).
- BVCB can provide advice and expertise as required on marketing activities, research, monitoring and communications.

As an example, the Gaeltacht Quarter Action Plan includes the following specific actions involving BVCB during 2013-2014:

- 3 themed visitor itineraries to be developed and piloted during 2013, for roll out during 2014 (Failte Feirste Thiar and BVCB to lead)
- Develop a social media group in 2013 (Failte Feirste Thiar and BVCB to lead) and programme to develop social media skills
- Research and identify appropriate media and communications for different target audiences (Failte Feirste Thiar and BVCB to lead)
- Commission and manage the development of headline marketing communications strategy, including clarity on roles and responsibilities of different relevant partners (Failte Feirste Thiar and BVCB to lead)
- Regular liaison between BVCB and Failte Feirste Thiar on events and projects;
- Fam visits for BVCB staff and press to be organised to the region;

- BVCB to give appropriate space and profile to the Quarter in the new Welcome Centre.

Therefore, as the Tourism Destination Action plans are finalised, relevant staff in BVCB will:

- establish close working links with the tourism champions in each Destination, with a programme of regular formal update meetings;
- fully familiarise themselves with each of the Tourism Action Plans;
- organise FAM briefings and visits for all relevant staff, on the messages and products relevant to each Destination; and
- work with each of the destinations on the action points specific to their individual plans.

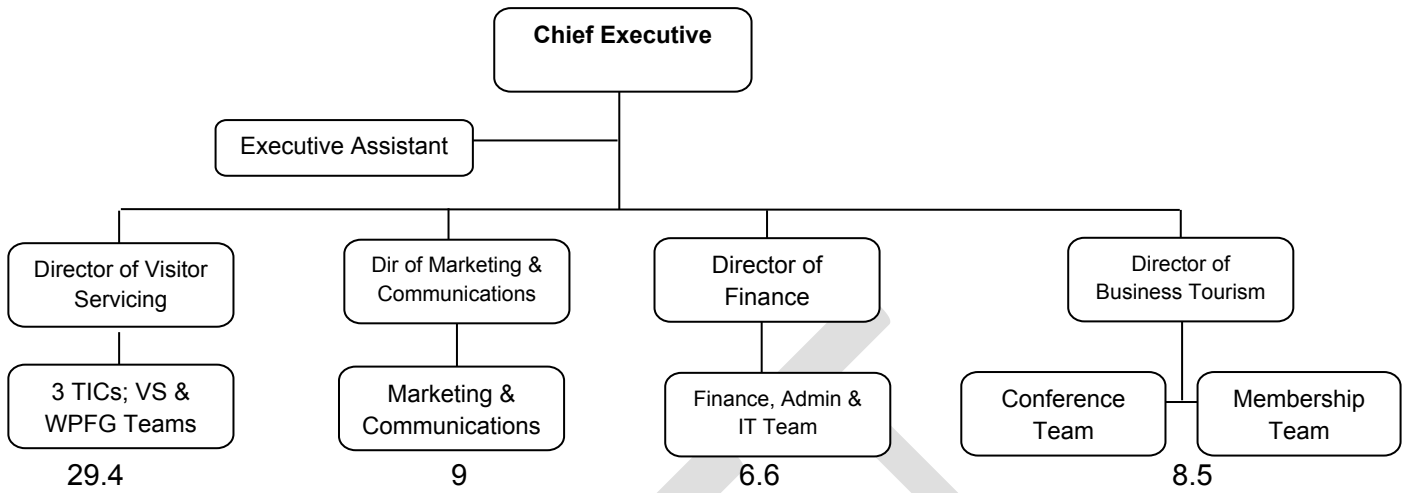
### 4.7 OPERATING STRUCTURE

The table below outlines the operating structure which is required to implement the 2013-2014 marketing and visitor servicing activities and deliver the associated KPIs.

Current approved labour headcount for 2012-2013 is 54 which includes the two extra temporary conference sales managers approved by the Board during 2012 and the two additional WPFM staff being funded by WPFM. The labour headcount for 2013-2014 increases from 54 to 55 employees and by 0.4 full-time equivalent posts – see Table below. This increase arises from the requirement for a dedicated seasonal cruise ship co-ordinator within Visitor Servicing, due to the significant number of cruise ships secured for 2013 (56). An extension of one year to April 2014 is required for the temporary conference sales managers in order to maintain the progress achieved in conference sales. These costs have been factored in the 2013-2014 budgets.

Composition of current and proposed BVCB operating structure:

	Approved 12/13		Proposed	
	Headcount	FTEs	Headcount	FTEs
<b>CEO/Corporate Services</b>	7	6.6	7	6.6
<b>Marketing and Communications</b>	9	9	9	9
<b>Business tourism/membership</b>	9	8.5	9	8.5
<b>Visitor servicing</b>	29	29	30	29.4
	<b>54</b>	<b>53.1</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>53.5</b>



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**5. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2013-2014**

The table below sets out the proposed budget for 2013-2014, with the latest 2012-2013 forecast to enable year-on-year comparisons to be made.

Budgeted income of £3.8 million in 2013-2014 is at a similar level to that being forecast for the current financial year, despite the anticipated 4.6% drop in public sector funding.

The ratio of Belfast City Council funding to other levered income in the 2013-2014 budget is £1: £1.09, compared with a latest forecast for the current year of £1: £1.04.

The ratio of overhead to operation is anticipated to improve in 2013-2014 to £1:£1.52 from the £1:£1.48 expected in the current year.

The budget for 2013-2014 includes an 8% year-on increase in private sector marketing income streams to reach a total of £850,250, made up of campaign partner income (44%), commercial membership fees (21%), corporate sponsorship (12%), advertising revenues (11%), business tourism and membership commercial income (6%) and partner income from exhibitions (6%). This increase is principally attributable to the greater exploitation of commercial opportunities within Business Tourism and the BVCB membership base. Trading, rental and other income from visitor servicing is budgeted to increase by 6% as the commercial opportunities presented by a relocated and completely updated and revitalised Visit Belfast Welcome Centre start to be realised.

**BVCB finances 2012/13 - 2013/14**

	Projected out turn	Budget
	2012/13	2013/14
	£	£
<b>Income</b>		
Reserves forward	168000	168000
<b>Public sector</b>		
BCC	1,886,115	1,827,465
Other local authority	60,000	60,000
NITB	416,500	359,251
NITB/BCC Conference Subvention	145,000	145,000
<b>Total public sector</b>	<b>2,507,615</b>	<b>2,391,716</b>
<b>Private sector/commercial</b>		
Corporate sponsorship	93117	100000
Commercial membership	175000	175000

**62.7%**

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

GB campaign partner income	187500	225000	
ROI/NI campaign partner income	180750	150000	
Advertising - About Belfast	52000	50000	
Advertising - other	16900	10000	
Leisure tourism exhibitions & fam trips - partner income	14000	10000	
Conference booking fees	21000	15000	
Commercial "pop up" opportunities		15000	
Membership initiatives		10000	
Advertising – conference guide	0	30000	
Advertising - other business tourism	5000	0	
Corporate ambassador scheme income	0	25000	
Business tourism exhibitions and fam trips - partner income	38230	34750	
Sundry Income	500	500	
<b>Total private sector/commercial</b>	<b>783,997</b>	<b>850,250</b>	
Visitor servicing – gross margin on trading and other income	385,502	407,558	
<b>Total private sector and commercial</b>	<b>1,169,499</b>	<b>1,257,808</b>	<b>32.9%</b>
<b>Total income</b>	<b>3,845,114</b>	<b>3,817,524</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

	Projected out turn		Budget
	2012/13		2013/14
	£		£
<b>Expenditure</b>			
<b>Marketing and sales</b>	<b>2,297,445</b>	<b>2,292,416</b>	<b>60.3%</b>
<b>Visitor servicing</b>	<b>1,161,514</b>	<b>1,119,229</b>	<b>29.4%</b>
<b>Overheads and admin</b>	<b>388,403</b>	<b>391,961</b>	<b>10.3%</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>3,847,362</b>	<b>3,803,606</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>-2,248</b>	<b>13,918</b>	

Marketing and Sales Expenditure

	Projected out turn		Budget
	2012/13		2013/14
	£		£
<b>Leisure tourism marketing campaigns</b>			
GB city breaks campaign	310000	356000	
Republic of Ireland campaigns	150750	150000	
NI retail/festivals campaign	215690	162000	
<b>Total campaigns</b>	<b>676,440</b>	<b>668,000</b>	
<b>Leisure campaign support activity</b>			
Publications	203400	183000	
Exhibitions shows and sales visits	26750	35250	
Familiarisation visits	6000	5000	



**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

Campaign evaluation studies	57000	50000
Cruise marketing	25500	29500
Other partner marketing activity	15000	0
Sponsorship activation costs	14000	0
Bannering	1500	0
<b>Total leisure campaign support activity</b>	<b>349,150</b>	<b>302,750</b>
<b>Communications</b>		
Improving competitiveness	11200	8000
Media briefings/events	12000	12000
PR Activities	58500	48500
PR Expenses	30000	33000
Press fam trips	20000	10000
<b>Total communications</b>	<b>131,700</b>	<b>111,500</b>
<b>Web and digital</b>		
Site hosting/support	6000	6000
Development	10000	20000
Web/digital marketing	43300	39000
<b>Total web and digital</b>	<b>59,300</b>	<b>65,000</b>
<b>Membership</b>	<b>18000</b>	<b>18000</b>

**Business Tourism**

	Projected out turn	Budget
	2012/13	2013/14
	£	£
<b>Business tourism marketing</b>		
Exhibitions and sales visits	100800	124500
Advertising	10000	7500
Conference guide	0	15000
Ambassador scheme	30000	35000
Association and membership	12700	12700
Bids	45000	30000
Site inspections/familiarisation trips	25245	20000
Primary and secondary marketing	2600	4000
Booking commission and database management	11700	11700
Subvention	145000	145000
<b>Total business tourism marketing</b>	<b>383,045</b>	<b>405,400</b>

<b>Total marketing and sales operational costs</b>	<b>1,617,635</b>	<b>1,570,650</b>
<b>Marketing and sales staff costs</b>	<b>679,810</b>	<b>721,766</b>
<b>Total marketing and sales costs</b>	<b>2,297,445</b>	<b>2,292,416</b>

**Total Visitor Servicing expenditure**

	<b>Projected out turn</b>	<b>Budget</b>
	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Belfast Welcome Centre	953948	914,368
BIA TIC	124918	118,661
GBBCA TIC	82648	86,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,161,514</b>	<b>1,119,229</b>

**Total Visitor Servicing income**

	<b>Projected out turn</b>	<b>Budget</b>	
	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	
BCC	539425	529,465	47.5%
NITB	229000	171,751	15.4%
Private Sector/Commercial	385502	407,558	36.5%
Belfast RTP Support	5000	7,000	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,158,927</b>	<b>1,115,774</b>	100.0%

In addition to the above detailed expenditure and funding, visitor servicing also has a number of additional 'special projects' planned for 2013/14 and for which additional one-off funding will be required; these are as follows:

- WPFPG: Additional funding of £19k towards increasing current BWC and airport staffing in the run up and during the World Police and Fire Games, as well as providing manned pop up TICs at 4 venues during the period of the Games and registration. Funding will be sought. If this cost was shared between WPFPG, BCC and NITB, it would equate to £6,300 per funder.
- Cruise Ship: Additional funding of £2k to continue to provide a Cruise Ship Monitoring officer. (Monitoring Bus tour operator activity at the shuttle bus terminus)
- Belfast Visitor Pass: Additional funding towards the Phase 2 Belfast Visitor Pass. The development costs would mainly be incurred in 2013/14, with a view to launching the new Pass in June 2014. Business Case was completed end 2011 and the costs of developing Phase 2 are noted below. BCC and NITB funded Phase 1 of the Visitor Pass. The Phase 2 project will also require specific funding support, and discussions have been taking place with both BCC and NITB. The Business Case included costs for employing a project officer. However, given current resources and skills, BVCB feels that this post will not be required in year one of the project, but a sum of £12k per annum in years 2 and 3 towards the HR resources required

in delivering the project. The cost of the project would be as follows:

	<b>Project cost</b>	<b>Cost per funder (based on 2 funders)</b>
<b>Year 1 (2013/14)</b>	£70,000	£35,000
<b>Year 2 (2014/15)</b>	£37,000	£18,500
<b>Year 3 (2015/16)</b>	£32,000	£16,000

These specific projects will require additional 'one off' funding over and above BWC's core budget outlined previously. Specific project proposals will be presented to potential funders. However, as they are critical projects of strategic importance, they are being highlighted in this Business Plan so that they are included in funders' considerations of future funding commitments.

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**6. 2013-2014 TARGETS, MONITORING & MEASUREMENT**

**6.1 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)**

BVCB's 2012-2013 operational business plan identified twenty KPIs which have focused the organisation on results driven reporting and monitoring throughout 2012-2013. In the third and final year of its 2011-2014 business plan, BVCB will largely continue to report against these KPIs, with amended targets, in order to achieve a level of consistency and facilitate more accurate comparison year on year.

A number of additional KPIs have been included; these specifically reflect priority areas of activity for BVCB in 2013-2014.

**6.2 2013-2014 KPIs – LEISURE TOURISM, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Leisure Tourism will now report on a number of KPIs relating to digital marketing and social media. This reflects the increasing importance of such channels to leisure marketing and its particular importance to the best prospect segments discussed in section 4.

The advertising equivalence target has been reduced for 2013-2014 even though it is very likely that Leisure Tourism will meet or even exceed its higher current target. This reduction acknowledges that exceptional PR opportunities were generated by Titanic Belfast 2012 internationally and that it will not be possible to maintain this level of momentum.

The value of publications income will remain as per 2012-2013 even though the main income generator for publications, About Belfast, will only have 5 editions next year, compared to 6 in the current year. An additional KPI has been included to monitor ABC circulation figures for About Belfast, which is of importance to potential advertisers.

The targets for GB and ROI city break campaign impact remains as for 2012-2013. Given to date only the first campaign evaluation results are available, it is too early to assess the potential for increasing this target.

<b>Leisure Tourism Marketing and Communications 2013-2014</b>	
<b>KPI</b>	<b>Target</b>
- Number of visits to websites	900,000
- Increased participation on BVCB's social media channels by 20,000	85,000
- Increase consumer email marketing database	10,000 new subscribers
- Advertising equivalence from PR activity including press visits and media briefings (2012 target was £4m)	£3 million
- Number of travel leads secured	245
- Value of corporate sponsorship	£100k
- Value of partner income from leisure tourism	£385,000

campaigns and <u>exhibitions</u>	
- Value of publications income from visitor guides	£60,000
- Average ABC rating per edition of About Belfast	57,000
- GB City Breaks campaigns – Return on Investment	15:1
- Number of bednights	70,000
- Value of spend	£5.7 million
- Island of Ireland campaigns - Return on Investment	8:1
- Number of visits (day and overnight)	65,000
- Value of direct spend	£2.4 million
- Number of cruise ships	60 ships
- Resultant day visits	115,000 visitors and crew
- Spend secured for 2014	£6 million

### 6.3 KPIs – BUSINESS TOURISM

Business Tourism’s target in the 2011-2014 Business Plan for the year 2013-2014 is to achieve £37.7 million in weighted business. This represents a substantial increase over the current year’s target and growth of 38% between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014.

The target for new proposals/bids for association conferences has also increased, rising from 150 bids in the current year to 200 in 2013-2014. The target for value of bids will rise by 47% from £54.6 million to £80 million.

Booking fees have proven consistently difficult to secure at the KPI target levels and is difficult for the Business Tourism team to influence, as outlined in section 2.3. This target has been revised downwards to £15,000 in 2013-2014 from £30,000 in 2012-2013.

<b>Key Performance Indicator 2013-2014</b>	<b>Target</b>
<b>Business Tourism</b>	
- Number of delegates	31,000 delegates
- Bed-nights	62,000 bednights
- Value of conference business won for Belfast by Business Tourism	£37.7m
- Number of proposals/bids in 2013-2014 for	200 bids

association conferences	
- Value of Proposals/Bids	£80m
- Average of Conversion rate over the year	40% conversion
- Value of conference accommodation booking fees	£15,000
- Number of new conference ambassadors recruited of which 20 will be corporate ambassadors	60
- Number of conference leads	200 leads
- Value of conference leads secured	£100m
- Number of bureau sales appointments / calls	150

**6.4 KPIs – MEMBERSHIP**

Overall membership fee income is projected to grow marginally, despite the recruitment target of 80 new members in 2013-2014. The profile of new members is likely to be dominated by smaller businesses taking up membership at the entry level. Whilst the member engagement strategy is designed to maximise retention rates, some loss is inevitable amongst smaller business members in current market conditions.

A new KPI has been included on member satisfaction with BVCB; a realistic baseline of satisfaction will be established by undertaking a satisfaction survey in 2012-2013, with targets to be set based on achieving improvements over the baseline levels.

<b>Key Performance Indicator 2013-2014</b>	<b>Target</b>
<b>Membership</b>	
- Value of membership fee income (+10k on current year)	£175,000
- Membership recruitment	80 new members
- % membership retained	90%
- Number of non renewals to not exceed 20	20 non-renewals
- Members Satisfaction	TBC *Target will be established on the results of the 2012-2013 survey

**6.5 KPIs – VISITOR SERVICING**

<b>KPIs – VISITOR SERVICING</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator 2013 -2014</b>
- Number of visitors for TIC network	442,194
- Total number of enquiries	595,699
- Gross profit margin and value of other income for TIC network	407,558
- Annual satisfaction index for TIC network	80-85%

**6.6 KPI MONITORING AND MEASUREMENT**

Progress against KPIs will continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis and presented to the BVCB Board of Directors. A number of performance measurements will continue to be based upon the use of industry accepted standards e.g. for Business Tourism the Visit Britain Delegate Expenditure Survey 2008. BVCB is committed to commissioning independent, bespoke research to evaluate the impact of its City Break campaigns.

**6.7 CONCLUSION**

This plan will deliver 312,000 bednights and visitors for Belfast City generating £60 million spend in the local economy giving a return on investment of 1:16, and a leverage for Belfast City Council of 1:1.09 with £1.4 million, or 37% of the operating budget generated through commercial activity.



**APPENDIX I: PERFORMANCE AGAINST 2012-2013 KPIs**

**Leisure Tourism Marketing and Communications**

Leisure Tourism, Marketing and Communications performed very well against their KPIs in 2012-2013 with the majority of targets estimated to be met or exceeded.

The results presented below illustrate performance for the first 9 months of the current year. Leisure Tourism, Marketing and Communications remain on track to deliver another year of solid results. Leisure Tourism targets became more challenging in 2012-2013, with the introduction of KPI targets for partner income generated and on the economic impact of campaigns. KPIs became more focused on impact and outputs, rather than measuring activity.

Of particular note is the increase in the number of cruise ships booked in the current year, compared with the previous year. By the end of quarter 2 the full target for 2013 cruise ships had already been achieved. The cruise ship KPI is now monitored against visitor numbers and estimated impact, as well as on the number of cruise ships.

Evaluation feedback from one GB co-op campaign to date has been very positive and indicates a higher economic return on marketing investment than projected in the KPIs.

<b>Leisure Tourism, Marketing and Communications Performance Against KPIs 2012-2013 (9 months)</b>		
<b>KPI</b>	<b>Target for 12 months</b>	<b>Q1-Q3 (to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012)</b>
<b>Average number of unique visitors per month to consumer web portal</b>	59,000	62,445 On target
<b>Number of travel leads secured</b>	180	152 On target
<b>Number of cruise ships and resultant day visits and spend secured for 2013</b>	50 ships 80,000 visitors £3.5m	56 ships 111,000 visitors Target exceeded within 6 months
<b>Advertising equivalence from PR activity including press visits and media briefings</b>	£4m	£2.9m Slightly below target
<b>Value of corporate sponsorship</b>	£100k	£97k 97% achieved On target
<b>Value of partner income from leisure tourism campaigns and exhibitions</b>	£338k	£342,501k (+£100k in-kind from Easyjet) Target exceeded
<b>Value of publications income from</b>	£60k	£42,043 On target

<b>visitor guides</b>		
<b>Number of bednights / value of spend from GB City Breaks campaigns</b>	15:1 / 70,000 £5.7m	17:1 / 20,278 £1.56m Stena campaign results progressing well against target
<b>Number of visits (day and overnight) and value of direct spend of ROI Island of Ireland retail and festival campaigns</b>	8:1 /65,000 £2.4m	Evaluation underway

### Business Tourism

Business tourism performance is substantially improved over 2011-2012 results, given that the re-structured team and new systems are now in place. Latest figures for quarter 3 2012-2013 continue to demonstrate that Business Tourism is very close to its target for the period and therefore on track to deliver its annual target for 2012-2013, which is a 70% increase in conference wins on the previous year.

Whilst the number of bids submitted is lower than anticipated at this stage in the year, the value of those bids is ahead of target by £2.3 million at the close of quarter 3. By the end of quarter 3 Business Tourism sales calls had already exceeded the annual target set for 2012-2013.

As explained already, conference accommodation booking fees will not achieved the target set for 2012-2013, largely due to market-led factors beyond the control of the Business Tourism team.

<b>Business Tourism Performance Against KPIs 2012-2013 Q1-Q3</b>		
<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Q1-Q3 (to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012)</b>
<b>Number of delegates, bed-nights and value of conference business won for Belfast by Business Tourism</b>	- 21,000 delegates - 42,000 bednights -63,000 delegate days - £27.3 m	-14,935 delegates - 39,235 bednights - 43,155 delegate days - £19.1m Close to target
<b>Number of proposals/bids in 2012 2013 for association conferences</b>	- 150 bids / £54.6m - 50% conversion	- 71 bids / £43.3m - 60% conversion On target
<b>Value of conference accommodation booking fees</b>	£30k* (Note: forecast revised to 19,000)	£14,855 Below target
<b>Number of new ambassadors recruited with potential conference enquiries</b>	60	38 On target
<b>Number of conference leads</b>	£100m / 200 leads	£83.1 m / 120 leads On target

<b>Number of bureau sales appointments / calls</b>	110	114 Ahead of target
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**Membership**

Membership fee income is unlikely to reach £175,000 in the current year and a more realistic forecast of £165k has been made. This is due to 38 non renewals from the previous year (2011-2012) coming to light in 2012-2013. These historic non-renewals equate to £13k loss of income which has been accounted for in the current year. Therefore, achieving £165k is an increase of £25k on 2011-2012 and growth of 18%.

<b>Membership Performance Against KPIs 2012-2013 Q1-Q3</b>		
<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Q1-Q3 (31<sup>st</sup> December 2012)</b>
<b>Value of membership fee income</b>	£175k	£129,309  Behind target – forecast is £165,000
<b>% membership retained</b> BVCB currently has 468 private sector members	95%	93%

**Visitor Servicing**

<b>Visitor Servicing Performance Against KPIs in 2012/13</b>		
<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Q1 - Q3 (to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012)</b>
<b>Number of visitors for TIC network and total number of enquiries</b>	371,300	357,324
	495,000	451,555
<b>Gross profit margin and value of other income for TIC network</b>	£351k	£266k
<b>Annual satisfaction index for TIC network</b>	85-90%	Not yet available

**APPENDIX II: VISIT BELFAST CORPORATE NAME CHANGE FOR BELFAST VISITOR  
AND CONVENTION BUREAU**

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN SUMMARY**

**Implementation**

- Recommend plan to the December Board
- Register Visit Belfast as the company name
- Finalise visual formats, variations and usage guidelines
- Register ownership as a trademark
- Plan implementation to roll-out during Jan-Apr 2013

**Stakeholder communications**

- Informal briefing with DETI Minister's private office;
- Collate key stakeholder database and agree communication formats;
- Develop key messages and Q&A for stakeholder/media use;
- Informal one-to-one or group briefings for key stakeholders and influencers (BCC, sponsors, NITB, etc).
- Audit completed of all required printed, digital and physical material with replacement plans
- External communications
- Main NI daily press/business monthlies
- Secure positive endorsement from stakeholders
- Update stationery and physical manifestation
- Re-name website and install pointers from old site
- New e-zine templates and email signatures
- Digital media outreach – Facebook/Twitter/blogs
- 'Go Live' date: agreed and implemented
- Roll-out of communications plan

**APPENDIX III: OPERATIONAL PLANS – BUSINESS TOURISM**

DRAFT

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

<b>BUSINESS TOURISM OPERATIONAL PLAN 2013/14 -DRAFT</b>	
<b>CONFERENCE SALES TARGETS (CATEGORY 1 &amp; 2 ONLY)</b>	
<b>AREA</b>	<b>TARGET</b>
Economic Impact	£37.7m
Delegates	31,000
Bed nights	62,000
Number of Conferences	75

<b>SALES PRODUCTIVITY TARGETS</b>				
<b>AREA</b>	<b>MARKET SEGMENTS</b>	<b>DATE OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COSTS</b>
Bids & Proposals	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	200 proposals / £80m 30% conversion rate (average proposal £400k)	£15,000 Bid support £2,000 Bid documents
Sales Calls: - NI (Amb) & ROI - GB - Europe & USA	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	Sales meetings with 150 clients. 70 50 30	£8,000 UK sales calls £7,000 European and US sales calls (Income: trade participation £1,000)
Site Inspections	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	Host 35 site inspections	£12,000

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

FAM Trips – Buyers	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	Host 30 buyers on Belfast FAM trips	£8,000
Lead Generation	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	200 leads / £100m	£3,000
BVCB conference taskforce	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	<p>Development of the new industry-led sales team who will utilise their collective knowledge and networks to support BVCB in securing new conference business for Belfast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify a shared top prospect list for targeted and strategic marketing activity</li> <li>- generate approximately 50 <u>new</u> out-of-state conference leads for the city</li> <li>- Where possible, secure conference wins for periods of low occupancy, calendar ‘gaps’ and within the city’s sectoral strengths.</li> </ul>	
CRM	Association and Corporate	April 13- March 14	Client database maintenance	£3,700 chaser licence fee

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

SALES EVENT OUTPUT TARGETS				
AREA	MARKET SEGMENTS	DATE OF ACTIVITY	KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS	ESTIMATED COSTS (inc VAT)
Destination Showcase Event – Buyers	GB Association and Corporate	September 13	80 buyers	£30,000  (Income £12,000)
Trade Shows – Total leads:  - Confex - EIBTM - IMEX Frankfurt - IMEX USA - UK Meetings Show - Square Meal Venues and Events	GB Association and Corporate  EU Association and Corporate  EU Association and Corporate  US Association and Corporate  GB Association and Corporate  GB Corporate	March 14  November 13  May 13  October 13  July 13  September 13	Promote Belfast to 120 buyers  Generate 40 leads (corporate and association)	Confex - £29,000 (inc dinner)  EIBTM - £4,400  IMEX Frankfurt - £8,000  IMEX US - £10,800  UK Meetings show - £1,500  Square Meal - £1,000  <u>Income:</u>  <b>Confex (£3700)</b> 4 partners @£800 and client dinner £500  <b>EIBTM (£2,400)</b> 1 partner



## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

				<b>IMEX Frankfurt (£6,000)</b> 3 partners @ £2,000  <b>IMEX USA (£6150)</b> 3 partners @ £2,050
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Client events:			<i>Promote Belfast as a conference destination to:</i>	
- BVCB Washington client event	US Association	October 13	40 association buyers	£10,000 (Trade income £1,500)
- London waterfront launch event (TI/ Waterfront Led event)	GB Association and Corporate	July 13	50 GB association and corporate buyers	£2,000
- Tourism Ireland Chicago event	US Association	June 13	30 US association buyers	£1,500
- Tourism Ireland Brussels embassy event	EU Association	TBC	10 EU association buyers	£1,500 (Income £500)
- C&IT Forum	GB Association and Corporate	October 13	15 GB association and corporate buyers	£4,300 (Income £2,000)
- Tourism Ireland GB networking event London	GB Association and Corporate	November 13	40 GB buyers	£750
- Tourism Ireland Brussels association networking event	EU Association	June 13	20 EU association buyers	£750
	GB Corporate	TBC	Promote Belfast as a conference destination to potential GB clients	£1,000

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

- Ad hoc TI events (corporate)	International Corporate	TBC	Engage NI Diaspora to help attract potential conferences and events to Belfast via Invest NI / Ni connections partnership	£3,000
- Ad hoc NI connections events (corporate)				

### AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME TARGETS

AREA	MARKET SEGMENTS	DATE OF ACTIVITY	KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS	ESTIMATED COSTS /(INCOME)
Recruit new ambassadors with conference opportunities	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	80 new ambassadors	£35,000 £25,000 income forecast
Ezines – news and updates	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	4 ezines	
Newsletter – editorial, case studies etc	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	2 newsletters	
Loyalty event – Ambassadors	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	50 attendees	
Engagement events – Ambassadors	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	4 events	
Corporate Ambassador Programme / NI connections / TI events	Corporate	April 13 – March 14	Launch corporate ambassador programme in partnership with INI – details TBC	

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

<b>ACCOMMODATION BOOKING SYSTEM</b>				
<b>AREA</b>	<b>MARKET SEGMENTS</b>	<b>DATE OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COSTS</b>
Accommodation booking commissions	Association	April 13 – March 14	£15,000 income	£8,000 passkey system fees* (forecast based on bookings)
Launch accommodation up-sell packages to membership and trade	Association	April 13 – March 14	£1,500 income through advertising platforms to delegates booked via accommodation system.	

<b>PRIMARY &amp; SECONDARY MARKETING</b>				
<b>AREA</b>	<b>MARKET SEGMENTS</b>	<b>DATE OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COSTS</b>
Support conferences to boost attendance at the 2014 event in Belfast	Association	April 13 – March 14	Support 6 conferences	£3,000
Distribute literature to 7,000 delegates	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	7,000	£1,000
Development of the new conference iPhone app and support conferences to encourage delegate spend and spread amongst members	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 conferences</li> <li>- Collate Belfast conference offers from members for the app</li> </ul>	N/A

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

<b>COMMS, MARKETING &amp; PR</b>				
<b>AREA</b>	<b>MARKET SEGMENTS</b>	<b>DATE OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COSTS</b>
Quarterly email campaign to BT database	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	Increase awareness and drive	£1,000
Advertising	GB association and Corporate	Jul 13 – March 14	Increase awareness of Belfast as a conference destination	£7,500
Development of the conference website	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase awareness of Belfast as a conference destination</li> <li>- Promote product and drive enquiries</li> </ul>	£1,000
Promotional and marketing materials	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	Promote Belfast as a leading conference destination	£3,000
Belfast Conference Guide 2014-2016 (Digital and printed versions)	Association and Corporate	Jan 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote Belfast as a leading conference destination</li> <li>- £30k advertising income</li> </ul>	£15,000 cost and (£30,000 income)
Industry membership and associated activity	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	Industry engagement, awareness and best practice	£12,700
Conference Taskforce	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	Engage BVCB members and partners to identify new conference opportunities for Belfast and take a collaborative approach to generate new business for the	N/A

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

			city.	
Media relations	Association and Corporate Trade Press	April 13 – March 14	Increase media coverage within trade publications to increase awareness of Belfast as a conference destination	N/A
2 Trade engagement events	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	2 events	£3,000 trade events and engagement
4 Trade email updates per year	Association and Corporate	April 13 – March 14	4 trade updates	

<b>MEMBERSHIP OPERATIONAL PLAN 2013/14</b>	
<b>AREA</b>	<b>TARGET</b>
Membership fee Income	£175,000 (£10k)
Recruitment	80 new members
Membership marketing initiatives	£25,000 participation fee income
Non-renewing members (retention)	20 members / £5,000 revenue loss
Membership satisfaction	TBC

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

<b>RECRUITMENT</b>				
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>DATE OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COSTS</b>
Recruitment campaign for new BVCB members:  - Member research - Direct marketing and sales calls - Referral campaign (staff and existing members)	Priority categories are:  Bars & restaurants  Arts & entertainment  Associate & corporate	April 13 – October 13	- Generate an additional £15,000 income and recruit approximately 80 new BVCB members in areas where market share could be increased: - Bars, restaurants, arts, entertainment and associate and corporate members.	£1,000
Production of BVCB member recruitment brochure and marketing materials	All	April 13	Launch April	£500
Development of a new marketing opportunities recruitment pack to promote (paid for) marketing platforms	All	April 13	Launch April	£1,500

<b>RETENTION &amp; SERVICING</b>				
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>DATE OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COSTS</b>
Membership servicing meetings	All	April 13- March 14	- Meet with 10 members per week - 440 meetings per year	£1,000
Retention campaign / non-renewals	All	April 13 – March 14	- Reduce non-renewals by 50% - Non-renewing member income losses should not exceed £5,000 / aprox 20 members - Proactive retention plan for 'at risk'	N/A

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>members</li> <li>Outside of greater Belfast members should not exceed 20% of BVCB membership</li> </ul>	
Membership satisfaction	All	March 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase membership satisfaction</li> </ul> <p>NB: This will be measured against a member survey that will be issued to members in the new year</p>	N/A
Membership charter	All	TBC	Launch a new membership charter which outlines the commitment of both BVCB and its members	N/A

<p>Segment our BVCB membership base and implement a membership engagement plan for each new membership tier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Platinum members (1-45) £ x BVCB spend and above</li> <li>Gold members (46-75) £x BVCB spend and above</li> <li>Silver members (76 – 468) £x BVCB spend and above</li> </ul>	All	April 13- March 14	<p><u>Platinum members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SMT representative assigned to each member</li> <li>Half yearly review with SMT member</li> <li>Multi-contact strategy in place within each member company – CEO / Sales Director / Manager etc</li> <li>Annual CEO lunch</li> <li>Annual membership report</li> <li>VIP event invites</li> <li>CEO comms and access to briefing materials and research</li> <li>Free attendance at up to 14 free BVCB member events</li> </ul> <p><u>Gold members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Half yearly reviews with membership manager</li> <li>SMT support as appropriate</li> <li>Annual membership report</li> </ul>	£1,000
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## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VIP event invites</li> <li>- CEO comms and access to briefing materials and research</li> <li>- Free attendance at up to 14 free BVCB member events</li> </ul> <p><u>Silver members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual membership meeting</li> <li>- Free attendance at up to 14 free BVCB member events</li> </ul>	
Launch membership section of BVCB website and online resource hub	All	June 13	Enhance membership package by value added online resources and services – images, research, Belfast facts and figures, testimonials, member promotions, presentation tools, feedback etc	£2,000
<p>Launch new BVCB events programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social events</li> <li>- AGM</li> <li>- Business / leisure briefing breakfasts</li> <li>- Master-class series of educational events in partnership with BCC / Destination Belfast and key partners</li> </ul>	All	April 13 – March 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 8 member master-class events (BCC/BVCB)</li> <li>- 1 x AGM (June 13)</li> <li>- 2 x Business Tourism events (April 13 &amp; Jan 14)</li> <li>- 2 x Leisure / Digital events (TBC)</li> <li>- 2 x social events (May 13 &amp; Dec 13)</li> <li>- Business planning consultation with members (TBC)</li> <li>- 9 x hosted table at key corporate events (Platinum and gold members only)</li> <li>- <i>IoD dinner</i></li> <li>- <i>CIM awards</i></li> <li>- <i>CBI dinner</i></li> <li>- <i>Belfast business awards</i></li> <li>- <i>Hospitality exchange</i></li> <li>- <i>Janice awards</i></li> <li>- <i>NI Travel &amp; Leisure news</i></li> <li>- <i>NITB tourism awards</i></li> <li>- <i>NICC annual event</i></li> </ul>	£5,000 (from membership budget)



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Membership invoicing and renewals	All	April 13-March 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monthly invoice instructions to be issued to finance</li> <li>- Outstanding payments (30+ days) to be chased weekly</li> </ul>	
Maintenance of the members directory, database and publications	All	April 13 – March 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weekly member updates to be communicated to staff 'member champions'</li> <li>- Website and CRM amends to be updated weekly</li> <li>- Membership directory to be amended and updated bi-monthly within the About Belfast Guide</li> <li>- Membership information to be collated and updated annually within the Visitor Guide</li> <li>- Distribution list of the About Belfast guide to be maintained and updated on a bi-monthly basis</li> <li>- Annual visitor map to be updated membership updates</li> </ul>	
<b>MEMBERSHIP MARKETING INITIATIVES</b>				
Restaurant & food membership marketing initiative	Restaurant members	October 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate £10,000 income through restaurant participation in Belfast Restaurant week</li> </ul>	£10,000 income
TIC member promotional exhibition	TBC	April- 13 – Dec 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate £25,000 income through temporary promotional space in the welcome centre</li> </ul>	£25,000 income

<b>MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATION / POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b>				
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>DATE OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>KEY OBJECTIVES TARGETS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COSTS</b>
Implement a new membership CRM system	All	Sept 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Define requirements for system</li> <li>- Issue tender</li> <li>- Implement new system – IT, staff training etc</li> </ul>	£7,000
Review finance process and the feasibility of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- direct debit membership renewals</li> <li>- debit/credit card payment option</li> </ul>	All	May 13  (To be undertaken in partnership with finance dept)	Objectives (subject to feasibility study) are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce membership renewal administration, increase efficiency and improve payment times and cash flow</li> <li>- Provide greater payment options for members and expedite payment times</li> </ul>	TBC
Review and amend membership terms and conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sanctions for breach of BVCB membership code of conduct</li> <li>- Visitor complaint policy</li> <li>- Member compliant policy and process</li> </ul>	All	April 13  (To be undertaken in partnership with SMT, legal advice and also Board approval would be required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that BVCB members maintain the highest standards of service and professionalism at all times and to enhance the reputation of Belfast as a tourist destination</li> <li>- Clarify standards and code of conduct for members</li> <li>- Implement sanctions for breaches of the code of conduct and processes for the cancellation of BVCB membership</li> <li>- Implement complaint policies internally to ensure issues are logged and dealt with efficiently and effectively</li> </ul>	N/A  TBC

**APPENDIX III: OPERATIONAL PLANS – LEISURE TOURISM**

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<b>CAMPAIGNS</b>						
<b>Product/ Geographic Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>Monitoring Evaluation</b>
NI - Spring / Summer	Above the line, more traditional platforms inc. Radio & Press to promote key experiences and products inc: Events, Festivals, Entertainment; Heritage and Attractions	Primarily Day Trips; Aligns with "Time Together," "Mature Cosmopolitans" and "Family Fun" segments	March-April July-August	<i>Encourage day and overnight visitors ; Drive footfall and spend to the city; Change perceptions; Promote contemporary and vibrant city; Promote best in class experiences</i>	£50,000	ROI £1:£8  £25,000 income from commercial partners
NI - Autumn/ Winter	Above the line, more traditional platforms inc TV, Radio & Press to promote key experiences and products inc: Retail; Events, Festivals, Entertainment and Nightlife; Heritage and Attractions	Primarily Day Trips; Aligns with "Time Together", "Mature Cosmopolitans" and "Family Fun" segments	October/ November-December	<i>Drive footfall and spend to the city; Encourage day and overnight visitors; Change perceptions; Promote contemporary and vibrant city; Promote best in class experiences, family fun</i>	£100,000	ROI £1:£8  £50,000 income from commercial partners  Retail performance year-on-year year

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

ROI - Spring / Summer	Digital, more innovative platforms inc. online advertising, social media, Video-on-Demand (VOD), targeted radio, to promote key experiences as per segment (Events, Festivals, Music; Nightlife; and key attractions)	City Breaks;  Aligns with “Young and Lively” segment	March-April  July-August	<i>Encourage day and overnight visitors ; Drive footfall and spend to the city; Change perceptions; Promote contemporary and vibrant city; Promote best in class experiences</i>	£50,000	ROI £1:£8  £25,000 income from commercial partners
ROI - Winter	Digital, more innovative platforms inc. online advertising, social media, VOD, targeted radio, to promote key experiences as per segments (Retail; Festivals, Music; Nightlife; and key attractions)	City Breaks;  Aligns with “Young and Lively” segment	October/ November-December	<i>Encourage day and overnight visitors ; Drive footfall and spend to the city; Change perceptions; Promote contemporary and vibrant city; Promote best in class experiences</i>	£100,000	ROI £1:£8  £50,000 income from commercial partners  Retail performance year-on-year year
GB – City Breaks	Co-op Carrier Campaigns delivered in partnership with Tourism Ireland and direct access carriers (e.g. Stena, flyBE, Aer Lingus, easyJet, British Airways)	Aligns with “Social Energisers” segment	TBC e.g.  British Airways: May;  Stena Line: June;  flyBE: September;  Aer Lingus: October  easyJet: November	<i>Encourage city break visitors ; Drive overnights and spend to the city; Change perceptions; Promote contemporary and vibrant city; Promote best in class, hero experiences;</i>  Raise profile of city	£354,000 + vat + £100,000 IN KIND	ROI £1:£15  Bookings & online activity  £225,000 - Income from commercial

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

				destination; Generate bed nights; and Support air & sea routes		partners + £100,000 IN KIND
NI, ROI, GB	Photography to support all campaign activity	As required	Various	Keeping visual communications fresh & updated, real-time	£10,000	Enhanced brand image linked to segments
<b>Total Campaigns</b>					<b>£664,000</b>	
<b><u>CAMPAIGN EVALUATION STUDIES</u></b>						
NI, ROI, GB	External Research	Post Campaign Activity	various times as per campaign activity	Measure campaign ROI & effectiveness	£50,000	Measurement of ROI & campaign ROI effectiveness
<b>Total Campaign Evaluation Studies</b>					<b>£50,000</b>	

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

<b>KEY PRODUCT MARKETING SUPPORT</b>						
<i>Belfast Restaurant Week</i>	<i>Radio/Press or Outdoor;</i>	<i>Primarily Day Trips;</i>	<i>Event Dates: 5 - 12 October 2013</i>	<i>To raise the profile of Belfast's tourism food experiences;</i>	<i>£25,000</i>	<i>Restaurant bookings;</i>
<i>NI/ ROI</i>	<i>gotobelfast.com/ visitbelfast.com; About Belfast editorial and event listing;</i>	<i>Aligns with "Time Together";</i>	<i>September-October</i>	<i>Use restaurant call to action to encourage day and overnight visitors ; Drive footfall and spend to the city;</i>		<i>Google analytics;</i>
	<i>social media;</i>	<i>"Mature Cosmopolitans";</i>		<i>Change perceptions;</i>		<i>PR value;</i>
	<i>PR</i>	<i>"Young and Lively" &amp; "Mature Cosmopolitans" segments</i>		<i>Promote contemporary and vibrant city;</i>		<i>Media reach evaluation; Belfast Tourism Monitor</i>
	<i>Upweight NI platforms as extension to BCC domestic marketing activity</i>			<i>Promote best in class culinary experiences</i>		
<i>Belfast Music Week</i>	<i>Radio;</i>	<i>Aligns with "Young and Lively" and "Social Energisers" segments</i>	<i>Event Date: November 2013</i>	<i>To showcase and strengthen Belfast's 'City of Music' reputation;</i>	<i>£25,000</i>	<i>Event attendance across series of venues;</i>
<i>ROI/ GB</i>	<i>gotobelfast.com/ visitbelfast.com; About Belfast editorial and event listing;</i>		<i>October-November</i>	<i>position city as a primary destination for music and entertainment; Promote packages and experiences targeting day and</i>		<i>Google analytics;</i>
						<i>PR value;</i>
						<i>Media reach</i>

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

	<i>social media;</i> <i>digital advertising;</i> <i>eazines;</i> <i>PR events and activity</i>			<i>overnight visitors;</i> <i>Drive bednights and spend to the city;</i> <i>Change perceptions;</i> <i>Promote contemporary and vibrant city;</i> <i>Promote best in class experiences</i>		<i>evaluation; Belfast Tourism Monitor</i>
<b>Total for Key Product Marketing Support:</b>					<b>£50,000</b>	
<b><u>PUBLICATIONS</u></b>						
<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>Monitoring Evaluation</b>
All	Belfast Visitor Guide	All	Nov 13	20,000 print with digital version  Members profile  Visitor servicing  Create destination awareness	£20,000	20,000 distributed  £10,000 income
NI – for all markets	About Belfast	All	5 editions per year	300,000 print & digital visitor servicing members profile	£150,000	300,000 distributed  £50,000 ad income  £60,000 income  Maintain an average ABC rating



**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

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						of 57,000 per edition
NI	Belfast TIC Map	All	13/14	130,000 print run A3 double sided tear off map for TIC use		N/A
NI	Belfast Visitor Map	All	13/14	15,000 print run Members grid reference & listing on reverse Visitor Servicing		N/A
<b>Total Publications</b>					<b>£170,000</b>	

**LEISURE TOURISM OPERATIONAL PLAN 2013/2014**

<b><u>TRADE &amp; EXHIBITIONS</u></b>						
<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>KPI</b>
Spain	Tourism Ireland SITC / Trade & Consumer Show (Barcelona)	Groups, FIT (Culturally Curious, Mature Cosmopolitans)	19–21 Apr 13	Destination / Product awareness & stimulating sales / bookings	£1,500*	12 Trade Leads
All	NITB: Meet the Buyers / B2B Workshop (Derry-Londonderry)	Groups, FIT (Culturally Curious, Mature Cosmopolitans, Young & Lively)	24-25 Apr 13	Priming Market & Stimulating sales / bookings	£800	20 Trade leads
USA	Tourism Ireland Destination Ireland Expo & Workshop (Kilkenny)	Groups, FIT (Culturally Curious, Mature Cosmopolitans)	May 13	Priming Market & Stimulating sales / bookings	£850	Present to 30 Agents
GB, Europe	City Fair , ETOA Workshop / B2B Workshop (London)	Groups, FIT (Culturally Curious, Family Fun, Mature Cosmopolitans)	24 Jun 13	Priming Market & Stimulating sales / bookings	£1,500	20 Trade leads

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

NI	NITB GB Coach Operators Workshop / B2B Workshop (NI)	Groups (Culturally Curious, Family Fun, Mature Cosmopolitans)	Sept 13	B2B / destination sell	£700	10 Trade leads
Asia	Tourism Ireland Developing Markets Workshop / B2B Workshop (NI)	Groups (Culturally Curious)	Oct 13	Destination / Product awareness & stimulating sales / bookings	£500	15 Trade leads
All	Tourism Ireland World Travel Market (London)	All	4–7 Nov 13	Priming Market & Stimulating sales / bookings	£6,000	4 partners, £4k income 20 leads
Asia	Tourism Ireland Mission (China)	Groups (Culturally Curious)	Nov 13	Destination / Product awareness & stimulating sales / bookings	£4,500 (inc Country Club)	15 Trade leads
Netherlands	Tourism Ireland Vakantiebeurs (Utrecht)	Groups, FIT (Culturally Curious, Family Fun)	6–12 Jan 14	Priming Market & Stimulating sales / bookings	£1,500*	15 Trade Leads
NI	Holiday World (Belfast)	Consumer	Jan 14	Destination / Product awareness & stimulating sales / bookings	£3,500	4 partners / £1,000 income
ROI	Holiday World (Dublin)	Consumer	Jan 14	Destination / Product	£4,000	4 partners / £1,000 income

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

				awareness & stimulating sales / bookings		
NI	NITB: Great Days Out for Groups (NI)	Social Groups (Culturally Curious, Family Fun, Mature Cosmopolitans)	Feb 14	Destination / Product awareness & stimulating sales	£400	15 Social Group leads
All	BIM ETOA Workshop / B2B Workshop (London)	Groups, FIT (Culturally Curious, Mature Cosmopolitans)	Mar 14	Priming Market & Stimulating sales / bookings	£1,000	20 Trade leads
GB	Best of Britain & Ireland (Birmingham)	Groups, FIT (Culturally Curious, Family Fun, Mature Cosmopolitans)	12-13 Mar 14	Priming Market & Stimulating sales / bookings	£2,500	£2,000 income 4 partners 15 leads
ROI	ITOA Workshop / B2B Workshop (Dublin)	Groups, FIT (Culturally Curious, Family Fun, Mature Cosmopolitans)	Mar 14	Priming Market & Stimulating sales / bookings	£1,000	10 Trade leads
<b>Total Trade &amp; Exhibitions</b>					<b>£30,250</b>	<b>187 Trade leads</b>

**LEISURE TOURISM OPERATIONAL PLAN 2013/2014**

**SALES CALLS**

<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>KPI</b>
GB, Europe	Sales Calls (GB/ROI)	Groups, FIT	Autumn, Winter, Spring	Priming Market & Stimulating Sales	£3,000	Present to 30 Agents / Operators  30 Leads
Netherlands	Sales calls at Vakantiebeurs (Utrecht)	Groups, FIT / Curiously curious / Family Fun	6–12 Jan 14	Priming Market & Stimulating Sales	£500 *	10 Trade Leads
Spain	Sales Calls at SITC (Barcelona)	Groups, FIT / Curiously curious / mature cosmopolitans	21-25 Apr 13	Priming Market & Stimulating Sales	£500 *	5 Trade leads
Scotland	Sales Calls Celtic Connections Workshop (Glasgow)	Groups, FIT / Family Fun / mature cosmopolitans / Young & Lively	13-16 Jan 14	Priming Market & Stimulating Sales	£500 *	5 Trade Leads
GB	Sales Calls at Great Days Out for Groups	Social Groups, Curiously curious / Family Fun / mature	4-8 Feb 14	Destination / Product awareness & stimulating	£500	10 Trade Leads

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

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	(Manchester)	cosmopolitans		sales	*	
<b>Total Sales Calls</b>					<b>£5,000</b>	<b>60 Trade Leads</b>

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**LEISURE TOURISM OPERATIONAL PLAN 2013/2014**

<b><u>EXHIBITION SUPPORT</u></b>						
<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>KPI</b>
All	Stand Design	Groups	Ongoing	Destination / Product profile	£5,000	Support sales leads generation
All	Collateral	Groups	Ongoing	Destination / Product profile	£5,000	Support sales leads generation
<b>Total Exhibition Support</b>					<b>£10,000</b>	
<b><u>FAMILIARISATION VISITS</u></b>						
<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>Monitoring Evaluation</b>
All	Fam visit & support	All	Ongoing	Raise profile of destination/product	£5,000	10 Trade

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

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<b>Total Familiarisation Visits</b>					<b>£5,000</b>	

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**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

<b><u>CRUISE BELFAST PARTNERSHIP</u></b>						
<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>Monitoring Evaluation</b>
USA	Sales Calls	Cruise Operators: Miami and West Coast - B2B	Oct 13	Repeat & new cruise calls and confirm business and generate additional business	£5,000	Secure repeat visits by cruise lines, increase calls & secure new cruise calls
All	Seatrade Mediterranean, Hamburg (German sales calls)	Cruise Operators B2B	Oct 13	Attend show, destination sell Repeat trade calls & new cruise calls	£3,000	Secure repeat visits by cruise lines, increase calls & secure new cruise calls
USA	Tourism Ireland Jump into Ireland: San Diego/Santa Barbara	Groups, FIT – B2B	Oct 13	Destination/Product awareness & sales	£2,000	Promote to Travel Agents and Travel Media
All	Fam Trips	Cruise	Ongoing	Secure 1 cruise Fam trip	£3,000	Secure executive Fam trip
All	Membership	Cruise	Jan 14	Membership of Cruise Ireland	£1,500	
USA	Seatrade Exhibition Miami	Cruise Operators B2B	10-13 Mar 14	Raise profile of Belfast & NI as cruise destination	£5,000	58 cruise ships for 2013

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

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All	Advertising	Cruise Operators	Ongoing	Advertising in high end trade mags & websites e.g. cruise industry newspapers and magazines	£5,000	
All	Collateral	Cruise	Ongoing	Bespoke marketing materials to market Belfast & NI as a cruise destination	£5,000	
<b>Total Cruise Belfast Partnership</b>					<b>£29,500</b>	

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LEISURE TOURISM OPERATIONAL PLAN 2013/2014

<b>COMMUNICATIONS &amp; PR</b>						
<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>Monitoring Evaluation</b>
NI, ROI, GB	Media briefings	<p><b>NI:</b> Day Trips ; Time Together; Mature Cosmopolitan; Family Fun</p> <p><b>ROI:</b> City Breaks; Young and Lively</p> <p><b>GB:</b> Social Energizers; Culturally Curious</p>	<p><b>NI:</b> Nov 13</p> <p><b>ROI:</b> Spring 13</p> <p><b>GB:</b> Glasgow May 13; London Sept/Oct 13</p>	<p>Changing perceptions of Belfast as a visitor destination;</p> <p>Informs and fill knowledge gaps / Introducing 'something new through media channels'</p> <p>Promoting music, food, festivals and Titanic</p> <p>Maintain and enhance media contacts in market</p> <p>Working in partnership with</p>	£12,000	<p>Contributing to £3m ad equiv.</p> <p>Contribute to the generation of 100 press enquiries annually</p>

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

				travel trade and Tourism Ireland to generate positive coverage and interest		
GB, ROI, direct access markets	Host media fam visits (press, TV, online, bloggers) from key markets	<p><b>ROI:</b> City Breaks; Young and Lively</p> <p><b>GB:</b> Social Energizers; Culturally curious; business/conference</p> <p>Ad-hoc direct access as appropriate</p>	Throughout the year	<p>Raise the profile of Belfast as a city break &amp; business destination</p> <p>Changing perceptions of Belfast as a visitor destination;</p> <p>Informs and fill knowledge gaps /introducing 'something new through media channels'</p> <p>Support the promotion of key tourism products: Titanic, Music, Festivals and Great Belfast Food</p>	£10,000	<p>30 press</p> <p>Secure coverage from all press fam participants</p> <p>Contributing to £3 ad equiv.</p>
NI, ROI, GB	<p>Press, Media and PR Activity to:</p> <p>- maintain and build BVCB's</p>	<b>NI:</b> daily and monthly	Throughout the year	Support wider BVCB activity;	£48,500	Minimum of 40 press releases / statements issued

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

	<p>corporate image to industry, stakeholders and wider NI public; maintain corporate profile of BVCB (and BWC) in local press; promote the value of tourism to local economy</p> <p>- Develop range of communications and PR activity to further build awareness of Belfast as a vibrant tourism destination in NI, ROI, GB and other markets</p>	<p>business and travel trade press; stakeholder communications</p> <p><b>ROI/GB:</b> travel trade; conference and meetings press</p> <p><b>NI:</b> Day Trips ; Time Together; Mature Cosmopolitans; Family Fun</p> <p><b>ROI:</b> City Breaks; Young and Lively</p> <p><b>GB:</b> Social Energizers; Culturally curious</p> <p>All other markets</p>		<p>raise profile of partnership and activity success – leisure, business and cruise tourism</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement</p> <p>Communication support to enhance the promotion of tourism experiences, products and key consumer messaging – providing relevant copy / info / imagery for e-zines, publications, and promotional material (on / offline)</p> <p>Develop a calendar of PR Campaign support activity that can more effectively engage in key segments, products and experiences</p> <p>Timely delivery of material (copy</p>	<p>(consumer facing &amp; corporate)</p> <p>Contributing to £3 ad equiv.</p>
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**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

				<p>/ images / offers/ competitions) that can be distributed to national / international media (print / media and online) via TI market offices and NITB Dublin that will:</p> <p>- <i>Inform and fill knowledge gaps /introduce 'something new' / support the promotion of key tourism products: Titanic, Music, Festivals, Great Belfast Food and retail.</i></p>		
NI, ROI, GB	<p>Support services for communications, PR and marketing activity across all of BVCB (inc. BWC):</p> <p>Photography and related costs (props/event support)</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation (clippings)</p> <p>Contacts database development</p>	<p><b>Corporate</b></p> <p><b>NI:</b> daily and monthly business and travel trade press; stakeholder communications</p> <p><b>ROI/GB:</b> travel trade; conference and meetings press</p> <p><b>Consumer</b></p> <p><b>NI:</b> Day Trips ; Time Together; Mature</p>	Year long	<p>To support the Communications and PR activity to enhance BVCB's profile locally / nationally and underpin Destination Marketing both on and offline.</p> <p>Photography for press/media/online attention (corporate and consumer) and ancillary activity to ensure press/media placement and maximise PR success - props, digitalisation, dressing, models,</p>	£28,000	Contributing to £3m ad equiv.

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

		<p>Cosmopolitans; Family Fun</p> <p><b>ROI:</b> City Breaks;</p> <p>Young and Lively</p> <p><b>GB:</b> Social Energizers; Culturally curious</p> <p>All other markets</p>		<p>press tool kits</p> <p>Media monitoring service &amp; evaluation to accurately evaluate PR/Comms activity</p> <p>Optimise press generation through development of press contacts database</p>		
<b>All</b>	Belfast / Visit-Belfast branded promotional items	Key stakeholders, corporate	All year	<p>Produce a range of Belfast 'B' branded promotional items (pin-badges etc) to encourage wider industry buy-in of the Belfast brand.</p> <p>Support roll out of new 'Visit-Belfast' identity name</p>	£5,000	
<b>Total Corporate Marketing / Promotional Support</b>					<b>£103,500</b>	

**LEISURE TOURISM OPERATIONAL PLAN 2013/2014**

**SPONSORSHIP**

<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>Monitoring Evaluation</b>
All	Private sector commercial sponsorship generation with Value Cabs (Diageo NI TBC)	Corporate, Stakeholder	All Year	Secure private sector sponsorship and deliver benefits of £100,000		As per agreement



<b><u>WEB &amp; DIGITAL</u></b>						
<b>Market</b>	<b>Marketing Activity</b>	<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Key Objectives Targets</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>Monitoring Evaluation</b>
All	Website hosting & software support		Ongoing	Hosting, domains, software & maintenance	£6,000	
All	Digital Marketing (Social media, competitions, viral campaigns, videos, apps)	All day trips, Social energisers, Young and lively, Family Fun	Ongoing	Increase website traffic, promote a contemporary and vibrant city, increase social media fans.	£24,000	Website traffic – 800,000 unique visitors. App downloads. Social media fans.
All	Website development (Blog, competitions, itineraries, search engine optimisation)	All day and overnight segments	Ongoing	Increase website traffic, optimise user journey, promote a contemporary and vibrant city	£20,000	Website traffic - 800,000 unique visitors.
All	Email marketing (Corporate ezine – product update)	Members, press, tour operators, cruise	Monthly	Promote BVCB & member activity, promote tourism	£10,000 (Contribution)	Open rates - 25%.

**BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014**

		industry		product	required from each department based on size of mailing list and design requirements.)	Click-through rates.
All	Email marketing (Consumer ezines)	All	Every two weeks and aligned with campaigns	Promote events and things to do in Belfast, and increase website traffic		Open rates - 25%. Click-through rates.
Greater Belfast	Email marketing (Front of house staff ezine)	Front of house staff	Weekly	Raise awareness of tourism products among front line staff in hotels etc so that they can advise visitors		Open rates - 25%. Click-through rates.
Greater Belfast	Email marketing (Business tourism ezines)	Members, ambassadors, trade and stakeholders	Quarterly and ad hoc	Promote member events and BVCB activity		Open rates - 25%. Click-through rates.
All	CRM database development (Competitions etc)	All	Ongoing	Capture detailed data on consumers from market segments, resulting in highly targeted marketing via email	£5,000	List building
<b>Total Digital</b>					<b>£65,000</b>	

**APPENDIX IV: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN FOR  
BELFAST WELCOME CENTRE RELOCATION**

**COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY (OPENING OF THE NEW WELCOME CENTRE)**

To support the opening of the new Welcome Centre at Donegall Square, BVCB (Visit Belfast) will deliver a sustained period of communications activity which will create awareness, drive interest and promote positive advocacy across all target audiences, ensuring that the facility is enthusiastically welcomed and utilized fully from its opening date.

**Key Objectives**

- To ensure that all relevant stakeholders, members, media and consumers (general public, visitors) are fully informed of the change.
- To underline the positive reasons for the change, rationale for the move, and to promote the benefits the new facility will bring.
- To promote and encourage target audiences to utilize and experience the new facility and to create positive advocates as a result.
- To secure wide-ranging support for the new facility and the benefits it will bring to the city.

**Key Messages**

- The new Welcome Centre is a state-of-the-art facility designed to meet Belfast's tourism requirements for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- The new Welcome Centre has the capacity and facilities to more effectively handle the increasing numbers of tourists visiting the city.
- The facility is jointly-funded by key funders Belfast City Council and Northern Ireland Tourist Board
- The facility will be fully open and operating by Q4 2013
- The opening of the new facility underlines Belfast's tourism success and will underpin the economic benefits to the local and regional economy

**Key Activities**

1. BVCB (Visit Belfast) will deliver a proactive communications campaign in 2013, in consultation with our partners, which will incorporate all key messages and ensure objectives are fully met. Media Relations activity will be a core feature of this activity and will be focused on corporate and consumer audiences alike.
2. BVCB will plan and manage an official launch of the new facility in Q4 2013 which will provide a pivotal opportunity to reach target audiences, meet communications objectives and further underline stakeholder engagement activity.
3. BVCB will ensure that positive influential advocates are fully utilized to support the campaign, securing endorsement from well-known personalities from popular culture and business.

**APPENDIX V: FINANCIAL APPENDICES**

**Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau**

**PROFIT & LOSS FORECAST**

	<b>13 - 14</b>
	<b>£</b>
<b>RESERVES FORWARD</b>	
Reserves forward	168,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>168,000</u>
<b>BELFAST CITY COUNCIL</b>	
Belfast City Council Main Funding	1,130,000
Belfast City Council - Whatabout	65,000
Belfast City Council - Domestic event marketing	103,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>1,298,000</u>
<b>OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES</b>	
Other Local Authorities	60,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>60,000</u>
<b>NITB</b>	
NITB SLA Funding	187,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>187,500</u>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>	
Private Sector Marketing Support	100,000
UBBFQ Marketing Support	50,000
Private Sector Membership	175,000
Sponsorship revenue	100,000
Advertising - Whatabout	50,000
Advertising - Conference Guide	30,000
Advertising - Other	10,000
Conference booking fees	15,000
Corporate Ambassador Scheme	25,000
Commercial "pop up" opportunities	15,000
Membership Initiatives	10,000
Leisure Exhibition Participation	10,000
Business Exhibition Participation	34,750
Out of State Campaigns	225,000
Sundry income	500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>850,250</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,563,750</b>
<b>MARKETING COSTS</b>	
City Break Campaigns	
City Break Campaigns GB	356,000
City Break Campaigns ROI	150,000
City Break Campaigns NI	112,000
City Break Campaigns Belfast Events	50,000
Sub-Total	<u>668,000</u>
Leisure Marketing	
Collateral production	183,000
Exhibitions and Roadshows	35,250

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

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Cruise Marketing	29,500
Familiarisation visits	5,000
Belfast RTP Support for GBBCA TIC	7,000
Research	50,000
Sub-Total	<hr/> 309,750
Business Tourism and Membership	
Exhibitions and sales visits	124,500

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**Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau**

**PROFIT & LOSS FORECAST**

	<b>13 - 14</b>
	<b>£</b>
Advertisements	7,500
Conference Guide	15,000
Ambassador Programme	35,000
Association and membership activity	12,700
Bid and promotional materials	30,000
Site Inspections and Fam Trips	20,000
Primary and secondary marketing	4,000
Booking commission and database maintenance	11,700
BVCB Membership	18,000
Sub-Total	278,400
<b>Web and Digital</b>	
Site Hosting and support	6,000
Site and app development	20,000
Web and digital marketing	34,000
CRM and Database	5,000
Sub-Total	65,000
<b>Communications</b>	
PR Activities	48,500
Industry Engagement	8,000
Press Fams	10,000
Media briefings and events	12,000
Photography, design and other PR expenses	33,000
Sub-Total	111,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,432,650
<b>TOTAL NON OVERHEAD COSTS</b>	1,432,650
<b>NET INCOME BEFORE OVERHEADS</b>	1,131,100
<b>OVERHEADS</b>	
Salaries (80% Marketing/20% Admin)	902,207
Management charges	(30,000)
Training	7,000
Travel and Subsistence	19,000
Cleaning	3,300
Health and Safety	500
Waste Disposal	2,000
Telephone	10,000
Printing and Stationery	9,000
Postage and Courier	10,000
Computer support & software	11,000
Office equipment maintenance	500
Miscellaneous expenses	2,550
Rent and service charges	71,520
Bad Debts	1,000
Rates	13,000
Insurances	6,000
Hire of rooms	1,500
Hire of equipment	500

## BVCB Business Plan 2013-2014

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Corporate meetings	1,500
Trade and Industry Events (ECM, etc.)	3,500
Repairs & refurbishment	4,000
Audit fees	3,500
Legal fees	1,500
Professional subs	1,400

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**Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau**

**PROFIT & LOSS FORECAST**

	<b>13 - 14</b>
	<b>£</b>
Recruitment costs	9,000
HR & general consultancy	12,000
Project consultancy	24,000
Bank charges	750
Tender Costs	3,000
Depreciation	9,000
	<hr/>
	1,113,727
	<hr/>
<b>OVERHEAD AS % OF INCOME</b>	43.5%
<b>ADMIN OVERHEAD AS % OF INCOME</b>	15.3%
<b>SALARIES AS % OF INCOME</b>	34.0%
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT)</b>	17,373
<b>NET SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT)</b>	<hr/>
	17,373
<b>CUMULATIVE</b>	<hr/>
	17,373
	<hr/>

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**Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau**

**BALANCE SHEET FORECAST**

	<b>Opening</b>	<b>Jun 13</b>	<b>Sep 13</b>	<b>Dec 13</b>	<b>Mar 14</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	12,215	10,487	9,784	7,836	6,133
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Bank	5,828	381,864	58,049	393,406	91,266
Trade Debtors					
Invoiced Sales	239,415	165,876	171,127	171,126	181,428
Other Local Authorities	-	-	36,000	-	36,000
NITB SLA Funding	15,625	-	-	-	-
Private Sector Marketing Support	4,896	20,001	20,001	20,001	10,000
Sub-Total	259,936	185,877	227,128	191,127	227,428
Other Debtors	29,440	15,241	6,826	12,556	6,506
Prepayments	4,910	27,616	25,020	28,396	25,402
	300,114	610,598	317,023	625,485	350,602
<b>CREDITORS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR</b>					
Trade Creditors					
Invoiced Costs	273,965	274,671	274,672	271,289	266,899
Exhibitions and sales visits	6,863	12,033	12,033	12,033	24,066
Management charges	(30,000)	(7,500)	-	(15,000)	(30,000)
Rent and service charges	17,203	39,155	20,737	20,737	20,737
13/14 additions	-	-	2,320	-	-
Sub-Total	268,031	318,359	309,762	289,059	281,702
Other Creditors	22,280	33,738	33,738	33,738	33,738
Accruals	2,852	2,250	3,804	2,750	4,756
Pensions payable	11,788	11,788	11,788	11,788	11,788
	304,951	366,135	359,092	337,335	331,984
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	(4,837)	244,463	(42,069)	288,150	18,618
<b>CREDITORS DUE AFTER ONE YEAR</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	7,378	254,950	(32,285)	295,986	24,751
<b>CAPITAL &amp; RESERVES</b>					
Retained Earnings	7,378	254,950	(32,285)	295,986	24,751
	7,378	254,950	(32,285)	295,986	24,751

**Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau**

**CASH FLOW FORECAST**

	<b>Apr 13 - - Jun 13 £</b>	<b>Jul 13 - - Sep 13 £</b>	<b>Oct 13 - - Dec 13 £</b>	<b>Jan 14 - - Mar 14 £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
Invoiced Sales	371,368	292,879	297,830	287,828	1,249,905
Belfast City Council Main Funding	565,000	-	565,000	-	1,130,000
Belfast City Council - Whatabout	-	-	65,000	-	65,000
Other Local Authorities	-	-	36,000	-	36,000
NITB SLA Funding	71,875	56,250	56,250	56,250	240,625
Private Sector Marketing Support	14,896	30,001	30,001	40,002	114,900
VAT	29,440	15,241	6,826	12,556	64,063
	<u>1,052,579</u>	<u>394,371</u>	<u>1,056,907</u>	<u>396,636</u>	<u>2,900,493</u>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>					
Invoiced Costs	423,324	424,030	427,413	428,421	1,703,188
Business Tourism and Membership	30,929	36,099	36,099	24,066	127,193
Salaries (80% Marketing/20% Admin)	124,338	124,338	124,337	124,338	497,351
Management charges	(22,500)	(7,500)	-	-	(30,000)
Rent and service charges	17,203	39,155	20,737	20,737	97,832
Rates	6,048	-	6,048	-	12,096
Insurances	6,380	850	3,382	-	10,612
13/14 additions	1,065	-	2,320	-	3,385
PAYE/NI	89,756	101,214	101,214	101,214	393,398
	<u>676,543</u>	<u>718,186</u>	<u>721,550</u>	<u>698,776</u>	<u>2,815,055</u>
<b>NET CASH FLOW</b>	<u>376,036</u>	<u>(323,815)</u>	<u>335,357</u>	<u>(302,140)</u>	<u>85,438</u>
<b>OPENING BANK</b>	5,828	381,864	58,049	393,406	5,828
<b>CLOSING BANK</b>	<u>381,864</u>	<u>58,049</u>	<u>393,406</u>	<u>91,266</u>	<u>91,266</u>