



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Belfast Restaurant Week 2013
Date:	23 April 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	At the Development Committee 22 May 2012, Members agreed to support Belfast Restaurant Week for a three-year period commencing in 2012.
1.2	Belfast Restaurant Week 2012 attracted match funding from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Tourism Ireland, the Pork and Bacon Forum and the private sector. Additional support was delivered via social networking, marketing and communications.
1.3	The success of Belfast Restaurant Week 2012 which took place from 6 to 13 October has been measured by: the number of participating restaurants, the success of the sell out events delivered during the week as well as the excellent positive PR it generated for Belfast and our world class food offer.
1.4	<p>In summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 82 restaurants registered to participate offering special menus and added value offers. – 30 highly popular events were delivered by the sector, attracting significant media interest and coverage. – Two showcase events were hosted in BCC venues including the “Battle of the Chefs” at St George’s Market and “An Evening with Charles Campion” at the City Hall. – Public feedback has been extremely positive and there is a clear indication that food tourism is a very important, sustainable product to capitalise on. – Innovative and high profile marketing campaign delivered (appendix 1). – BRW2012 has established a strong sector working group with a commitment to ensuring the food offer and service in the city is world class. – The PR value generated from the Belfast Restaurant Week campaign is valued at £151,648.00.

1.5	The aim of Belfast Restaurant Week aligns with the pledges contained in the Investment Strategy and the Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework 2010 to 2014. Belfast Restaurant Week is also integral to the development of the Food Tourism product, increase trade, encourage excellence in service, celebrate the importance of the restaurant/food sector for the local economy and employment, and to showcase the best of local food, producers and fresh produce.
1.6	A number of debrief meetings have been facilitated to learn from BRW2012 (appendix 1). The outcomes of these workshops have informed the development of plans for Belfast Restaurant Week 2013.
1.7	The objectives of the Belfast Restaurant Week 2013 are to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the number of culinary events - Increase footfall and mid week dining - Promote eating out as a must do activity during that week - Showcase new and multi cultural food offering across the city - Showcase the range of dining experiences for a range of lifestyles - Showcase local produce, excellent chefs, skills and wealth of the food offer

2	Key Issues
2.1	It is crucial to build on the success of BRW2012 and ensure that BRW2013 creates more economic impact and support for the restaurant/hospitality sector. It is therefore necessary that adequate resources and support are in place to achieve the aims and objectives.
2.2	BRW 2013 (5 to 12 October 2013) – year two planning is underway and it is proposed that additional funding will be sought to support BCC investment.
2.3	A key stakeholder Steering/Working group has been established to implement the plans as well as a Sector Steering Group to ensure that BRW2013 delivers for the industry.
2.4	To instigate registration it is proposed that BRW2013 will be launched to the industry on Thursday 9 May 2013 with a launch to the consumer in August 2013.

3	Resource Implications
	BRW2013 requires a budget of approximately £60,000. The sum of £40K has been identified for BRW2013. Proposed funding On approval additional funding will be sought from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) - Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) - Pork and Bacon Forum - Food NI - Potential sponsors - Contributions from each participating restaurant - £100 in 2012

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality and good relations considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are asked to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree and approve a budget of £40,000 identified from Department Budget. 2. Approve Officers seeking funding and sponsorship to support BCC investment. 3. Approve an industry launch during May 2013. 4. The Chair of Development agrees to host the Industry Launch in May and take part in the consumer launch in August 2013. 5. Approve officers exploring other opportunities and links with other food events taking place throughout the month. 6. Approve calls to procure to secure services linked to delivering Belfast Restaurant Week 2013.

6	Decision Tracking
	An update will be shared with Committee in advance of the consumer launch.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>BRW – Belfast Restaurant Week BCC – Belfast City Council BVCB – Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board TI – Tourism Ireland DARD – Department of Agriculture and Regional Development</p>

8	Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Belfast Restaurant Week 2012 presentation Appendix 2 – Belfast Restaurant Week 2012 with recommendations for BRW2013</p>

Notes from Belfast Restaurant Week Workshop Held on 6 February 2013 at City Hall Belfast

In Attendance:

Belfast City Council, Stakeholder Organisations and Restaurateurs.

Review of BRW 2012

The workshop participants offered their views on what worked well (Plus) and what they would like to see done differently or better (Delta).

Plus	Delta
<p>Increase in turnover and footfall</p> <p>Special menus (worked) – flexible</p> <p>One brand/voice for BRW and one agreed date</p> <p>Collaboration across the sector</p> <p>Events worked well</p> <p>Events</p> <p>PR</p> <p>It was something different for customers</p> <p>Good start in 2012, to be built on</p> <p>Celebration of the great restaurants on offer</p> <p>Focus on restaurants – increasing footfall</p> <p>Branding</p> <p>Marketing book was good</p> <p>Partnership – support from rest, NITB, BVCB Tourism Ireland, NIHT, FOCDNI</p> <p>Kept quality high</p> <p>Social media buzz and sharing (FB, Twitter)</p> <p>Ability to connect to some new diners</p> <p>Menus – showcase chef's talents</p>	<p>Start PR earlier – more events and more PR</p> <p>Lead in time too short</p> <p>Better briefing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal/external 2. GPS marketing 3. NITB 4. Masterclass <p>One big event</p> <p>More specific events</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Late night art tour 6. Replicate Kinsale <p>More producers</p> <p>More budget</p> <p>Food critic/chief/interactive for public</p> <p>Citypass/wraparound deals</p> <p>Friday</p> <p>Microsite (mobile)</p> <p>Set menus</p> <p>Family friendly</p> <p>Kids involvement</p> <p>Not innovative enough</p> <p>Social media not interactive</p> <p>Better centralised social media enough</p> <p>Hard to motivate some restaurants</p>

Plus	Delta
	Needs to be city wide Building excitement Packaging – hooking up with hotels/extending the PLUS points Poor brochure needs proofed Too price led – concerns Too much reliance on discounted prices Same venues charged fee multiple times Transport

Top Eight Things to Do (1)

1. Wider PR/marketing – All of NI/ROI
2. Create a festival – Food and wine
3. Change name?
4. Have a team with relevant past experience (established events)
5. Social media focus – Apps, bloggers, etc.
6. Get the date right – incl. long lead in
7. Focus on key aim – drive footfall
8. Better communication – listen to restaurants

Top Ten Things to Do (2)

1. Getting indie restaurants on board
2. Big wow events
 - a. Facilitate creative sessions – ideas
 - b. Special events for groups/BVCB – tour groups
3. BRW steering groups for different quarters of city
4. Stronger communications – earlier lead in
5. Good time tabling – prevent clashes
6. Up the international dimension
7. Good transport planning
8. Briefings
9. Marketing/other workshops
10. Invite ROI chefs.

Top Three Things to Do (3)

1. Motivate/commit/participate
 - a. Cap on participation
 - b. KPIs

- c. One big event launch
- 2. Core planning group, focus group, industry
 - a. More tourist-centric – ROI/GB
 - b. Greater collaboration
 - c. Replicate Kinsale events
 - d. Tie in with art/culture
- 3. One brief/produce
 - a. Date ok (6-13 October 2013)
 - b. Communications strategy
 - c. Mobile website
 - d. Have price points – not discount led
 - e. Events not to clash or overlap.

Next Steps and Time Line

It was agreed that the industry will play a full and leading role in making BRW 2013 even better and the Council agreed to convene an industry steering group to help plan and implement BRW in October 2013.

Launch to the Industry and call to register	May 2013
Sign up for industry and programme development	April to June
Consumer Launch	August
Marketing campaign	August to October
Belfast Restaurant Week	5 to 13 October 2013