



Report to: Development Committee

Subject: International Marketing Framework for Belfast

Date: 21 May 2013

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

Contact Officers: Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3577

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that one of the key commitments in the Council's Investment Programme 2012- 2015 is to market Belfast internationally. Belfast City Council (BCC) has committed to working with city partners to market Belfast proactively on the international stage to attract investment, increase tourism and build the networks necessary to support growth.
1.2	BCC is one of many city stakeholders with established connections to the world through a range of channels and relationships. In order to win new investment, attract talent and visitors, push forward our indigenous businesses and connect our communities to the world, Belfast must present a united proposition that enables all stakeholders to fulfil their own goals - in short, city stakeholders must speak to the world as one city, with one voice.
1.3	There is a great potential to capitalise and build on existing networks and relationships, building on Belfast's reputation as a world class city. These include; <ul style="list-style-type: none">- BCC has a long established sister city relationship with Hefei and Nashville- Belfast Metropolitan College have recently opened a New Delhi office- The University of Ulster's recently opened Confucius Institute with Hangzhou, which will facilitate student and staff exchanges with China- Queen's University's recent mission to Nashville Vanderbilt University- Invest Northern Ireland's annual international trade mission programme, seeks business investment and research opportunities in world markets including China- NI Connections network links Belfast directly to world- wide Diaspora

2	Key Issues
2.1	During the last year significant consultation with key stakeholders has been undertaken to recognise the various international relationships that city stakeholders are already engaged in to generate a common understanding of what Belfast has to offer the international market and to identify opportunities to build on existing relationships.
2.2	Following consultation with over 20 city stakeholders, including the anchor institutes, a draft international marketing framework has been produced to ensure that Belfast is positioned as a strong, attractive and competitive destination of choice for those who trade, invest, visit and study.
2.3	<p>The proposed aims of this framework are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To maximise economic return of development for Belfast - To increase the economic benefits of marketing Belfast internationally
2.4	<p>The following objectives are proposed to help increase the economic benefits of developing a city-wide approach to proactively marketing Belfast internationally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver increased economic return to Belfast through collaborative international marketing - Develop meaningful international partnerships and civic relationships to support Belfast's growth - Promote the global attractiveness of the city for business, education and tourism - Create the optimum mechanisms for international marketing for Belfast
2.5	<p>The draft framework (Appendix 1) outlines the benefits of a co-ordinated city wide approach to international marketing and provides the basis for further engagement and partnership with key city stakeholders to maximise the positive impact for the city. It outlines that it is essential that all stakeholders are committed to work together on three core element of the framework, namely;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belfast infrastructure and product – determining what Belfast can offer, in terms of amenity, housing, connectivity, cultural experience and shared spaces - Belfast Marketing – agreeing our proposition and audience through its brand, key messages, city narratives and the most effective marketing structures - International City Links – building Belfast's global reputation and relationships through research, connections, missions and sister cities, to ensure that Belfast product and marketing are fully utilised
2.6	<p>In developing the framework, an outline action plan has been proposed for the period 2013 – 2015, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline work – this has already been completed through extensive stakeholder engagement, data capture and analysis and collaborative discussions - Developing marketing tools – underway including new International Belfast branding and city narratives - Delivering products and city links underway with delivery of the Chinese new year celebrations, the planning of the Global India Business Meeting and wide India in Belfast Week as well as plans for exploratory missions to North America
2.7	The International Marketing Framework was formed around 3 primary market

	<p>segments namely: business, leisure and tourism, education & learning, and trade & investment. There are 5 geographical target areas, namely China, the Far East, Europe, India, North America while maintaining a broad focus on the rest of the world, particularly in terms of the emerging economies e.g. Brazil</p>
2.8	<p>Proposed outcomes and annual targets for BCC are outlined in section 8 of the report. As the regional driver, Belfast has a key role to play in helping to deliver a number of regional targets; however, it is important to recognise the targets need to be agreed with city stakeholders as they can only be achieved in partnership and by supporting the work and targets of other city stakeholders such as Invest NI, Belfast Metropolitan College, the universities etc. Commitment to agreed targets will be critical for the success of the international marketing of Belfast and in building strong partnerships across the city.</p>
2.9	<p>Members are asked to agree the draft International Framework and within it to specifically agree the following next steps which have been identified to enhance the existing place based relationships that city stakeholders are developing to take forward an agreed International Marketing Framework for Belfast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree the framework including future governance and measures of success with key stakeholders - Commission and develop a set of city propositions/narratives – different groups will have different needs and will require different information, thus we propose the following set of city narratives targeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investors (partially covered and aligned to the emerging Integrated Economic Strategy) - Tourists (aligned to the Integrated Tourism Framework) - Students (aligned to the developing student housing strategy/framework for Belfast) - Refresh the Belfast Brand - Research the most effective international integrated marketing mechanisms and agree the best option for Belfast - Explore new links and markets and assess the viability of building collaborative city relationships - Continue to deliver products and assess/monitor their effectiveness which will inform future planning and delivery (for example, Chinese New Year, Global India Week and South by South West).

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Members have agreed a short-term budget of £80,000 for international relations, as well as a £150,000 budget specifically for the Global India Business Meeting.
3.2	Currently international relations work is being undertaken by re-deploying the work of the European Unit. This will be revisited after 12 months and a detailed resource case will be presented to members to establish a realistic International budget for future years.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members approve the International Marketing Framework for Belfast and agree to continued engagement with key city stakeholders.

6	Decision Tracking
There is no decision tracking attached to this report. Timeline: Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay	