



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	CS Lewis Anniversary
Date:	21 May 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that at a meeting of the Development Committee on 23 April 2013, a Notice of Motion was approved to mark the 50 th anniversary of the death of C.S. Lewis and it was agreed that 'elected representatives of the City in which he was born, should not allow the landmark 50th anniversary of his death to pass without marking it in a fitting way'.
1.2	Clive Staples Lewis (1898–1963) was one of the intellectual giants of the 20th century and arguably the most influential Christian writer of his day. His major contributions in literary criticism, children's literature, fantasy literature, and popular theology brought him international renown and acclaim. He wrote more than thirty books, allowing him to reach a vast audience, and his works continue to attract thousands of new readers every year. His most distinguished and popular accomplishments include The Chronicles of Narnia, Out of the Silent Planet, The Four Loves, The Screwtape Letters, and Mere Christianity.
1.3	He was born in east Belfast and grew up in family homes on both Dundela Avenue and Circular Road, east Belfast. He was a Campbell College and Oxford alumni and a veteran of the First World War. He was appointed Fellow and Tutor in English Literature at Oxford University where he served for twenty-nine years until 1954 before his death in 1963.
1.4	Lewis' early years in Belfast were influential in his writing. He wrote his first words in Belfast and his first published work was also written here. Influences from his Belfast and Northern Ireland upbringing can be found in his works with particular influence from St Mark's Church Rectory, 'Little Lea' and the Northern Ireland landscape.
1.5	Members will also be aware that Literary Tourism has been identified as a priority area in the Belfast Tourism Framework 2012-15, and a number of

	products have been developed in this area. Belfast's literary heritage has an important role to play in 'place-making' and is an important dimension in the marketing of Belfast as an international destination. In the year of the 50 th anniversary of his death, it is important to recognise and celebrate C.S Lewis as one of Belfast's finest and most famous sons.
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2	Key Issues
2.1	Upon further investigation of suitable options, officers have learnt that the East Belfast Partnership Board (EBPB) has started to make plans and engaged with interested and relevant stakeholders to compile a draft programme for a festival to recognise C.S. Lewis which would run from 18–23 November 2013.
2.2	A draft programme has been drawn up in conjunction with key stakeholders including: EBPB, St Mark's Church, Belmont Tower, Sandy Smith, The Strand Cinema, Campbell College and The Verbal Arts Centre. The programme will also involve Friends of Belmont Park, the East Belfast Enterprise Park, the East Belfast Community Development Association, Connswater Shopping Centre, Arts and Business and a range of local residents' groups. An organising group has been established which will be made open to any further interested parties.
2.3	The festival includes performances of plays, film screenings, conversations, cross-city book readings, writers' workshops, a lamp parade in the grounds of Campbell College to pay homage to the lamp which is to be refurbished and relit, first seen by Lucy in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.
2.4	Whilst much of the festival content will take place in east Belfast, the childhood home of C.S. Lewis, it will be an accessible and welcoming festival that will have Belfast wide events, catering for a wide range of ages, audiences and interests.
2.5	As east Belfast embarks on the construction of the C.S. Lewis Square and a significant piece of C.S. Lewis Public Art in 2014, as part of the Connswater Community Greenway project, they feel it is important to recognise this significant anniversary and maintain the legacy of C.S. Lewis in Belfast.
2.6	EBPB indicated that the total budget for the Festival is £80,000 (this includes Programme Costs: £50,000, Marketing and PR: £10,000, Festival Co-ordinator: £15,000 and Festival Management, Finance and Administration: £5,000).
2.7	Members will be aware that the mechanisms to support Festivals are via the Culture and Arts Multi-Annual, Community Festivals and Project Funding streams. However, they do not reopen until June and with successful applications being notified in early September, which would not give the appropriate time to organise the Festival. Officers have also examined the Festival via Belfast City Council's Events Unit, however resources are not available at this time.
2.8	Therefore, Committee is being asked to decide if it wishes to directly support the East Belfast Partnership Board to deliver the Festival outside of current funding streams. Up to £10,000 could be made available via Literary Belfast product development within the Tourism, Culture and Arts 2013/14 budget.
2.9	EBPB is also exploring applications to relevant government bodies and

	stakeholders. Officers have also liaised with the NI Tourist Board, Arts Council of NI and Tourism Ireland in relation to a potential partnership.
2.10	ACNI's Lottery Programme is currently closed. EBPB are currently in receipt of a Small Grants award from ACNI for the East Belfast Arts Festival and any applicant can only hold one live one award, so this route is not an option.
2.11	NITB and Tourism Ireland have indicated a willingness to be involved (please see below) and can provide support in relation to marketing, but no commitment to direct funding is yet in place.
2.12	"Literary tourism is an excellent addition to the list of tourism products in Northern Ireland and will give visitors a chance to explore our rich literary heritage and experience our thriving contemporary scene. This initiative would add momentum to the good work that has already been done to highlight Northern Ireland's strong connection with CS Lewis. At a time when visitor numbers continue to grow it is important that we continue to develop authentic experiences such as this, to add depth to Northern Ireland's reputation as a must-see destination." Northern Ireland Tourist Board.
2.13	"Ireland has given the world great plays prose and poetry and for millions around the world our literary heritage is their first connection with the character and characters of Ireland. We love a good story well told and the promotion of literary tourism will engender greater appreciation of Belfast's impressive literary CV." Tourism Ireland.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	£10,000 to be sourced from the current Tourism, Culture and Arts Budget 2013/14.

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

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the contents of this report - Approve the sum of £10,000 to be provided to the East Belfast Partnership Board in order to deliver a CS Lewis Festival - Approve officers working in partnership to profile the Festival via BVCB, NITB, ACNI and Tourism Ireland

6	Decision Tracking
A report on will be brought back to Development Committee in September 2013.	
Time frame: September 2013	Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

7	Key to Abbreviations
ACNI – Arts Council of Northern Ireland NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board BVCB - Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau EBPB – East Belfast Partnership Board	