



Belfast City Council

Report to: Development Committee

Subject: Update on Integrated Economic Strategy

Date: 20 June 2013

Reporting Officer: John McGrillen, Director of Development ext 3470

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

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will recall that a proposal to develop an Integrated Economic Strategy (IES) was approved by the Development Committee on 18 September 2012.
1.2	The IES has been designed to respond to the identified need for a cohesive and integrated strategy for developing the economy of Belfast and to connect the policies and actions of the key players.
1.3	<p>The work is being undertaken in a three stage process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stage 1 – Context setting and analysis – this stage will provide a comprehensive socio-economic analysis, establish city growth projections and scenarios, benchmark Belfast against the UK core cities and 5 wider European cities (including Dublin) and outline the strategic context for the development of the IES; - Stage 2 – Identification of priorities and analysis of opportunities – this section will look at key sectoral, legislative and financial developments and opportunities for Belfast including opportunities for greater integration and collaboration under the Local Government Reform Programme, the next round of EU Funds, identification of sectoral and skills based strengths and priorities and key infrastructural opportunities as well as an assessment of our foreign direct investment proposition and articulation of a city narrative; - Stage 3 – Key recommendations, action planning, funding identification and progress monitoring – this section will lead to the articulation of the IES to a wide audience of stakeholders as well as identifying key targets and deliverables through the development of a comprehensive action plan and the development of a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure that the targets and deliverables are being met and to assess their impact locally.

	The development of the IES will be informed by an extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation process which will ensure that all relevant stakeholders have the opportunity to engage with and input into the new Strategy.
--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The majority of the first stage of the work encompassing the development of an up to date socio-economic profile has now been complete and an analysis of the existing and emerging policy context has been undertaken. Key issues identified at this stage of the work include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills and qualifications are emerging as two of the most significant issues affecting the future of the economy locally. It is worth noting that post Local Government Reform, the new Belfast boundary will take in an additional 15,000 with level 4 qualifications and above while conversely, an additional 14,930 people with no formal qualifications will fall under the city boundary post 2015; - Foreign Direct Investment is largely concentrated in Belfast with over 50% of Northern Ireland's FDI locating in the City. This has accounted for over 220 new investments creating over 20,000 new jobs across the period 2006-2011 with 65% of first time investors reinvesting; and - 37% of the existing jobs in Belfast are within the public administration sector although a gradual trend towards rebalancing this in favour of the Private sector has been determined.
2.2	To inform the development and implementation of the IES, an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement and consultation has been undertaken incorporating a series of consultation workshops and direct consultations with key stakeholders. This engagement and consultation process will continue throughout June and early July 2013.
2.3	It is anticipated that the draft IES will subsequently be developed over the remainder of July and August 2013 and that a draft version of the Strategy will be presented to Development Committee at the August 2013 meeting.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The final budget for the work has been confirmed as £55,000 with the Council contribution to this being £30,000 and Invest NI contributing £25,000.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality and good relations considerations.

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note the contents of the update report II. Nominate a representative from each of the remaining parties on the Council to be represented on the project steering group along with the Chair and Deputy Chair; and

6	Decision Tracking
	An update on progress will be brought back to Committee in August 2013

