



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Women in Business Awards 2013
Date:	20 August 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives & International Development, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware at the 18 September 2012 meeting of the Development Committee approval was given for Belfast City Council to sponsor the award for Best Small Business at the Women in Business Awards 2012.
1.2	The Women in Business Awards is an annual awards ceremony which celebrates the contribution business women make to the economy. Open to female entrepreneurs, those in senior management positions, innovators and entrepreneurs these awards recognise the contribution of women across the business community.
1.3	Now in its third year, the 2013 Women in Business Awards are scheduled to take place on 21 November 2013 in the Culloden Estate and Spa. Event organisers are aiming to build upon the success of the 2012 event which concluded with the annual awards ceremony with over 470 business women in attendance.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Council have been presented with the opportunity to sponsor the award for "Best Small Business" at the Women in Business Awards 2013. This award will recognise the outstanding achievement of small businesses who can clearly demonstrate their business achievements to date, their plans for future success and how innovation has been integrated into their business. Eligible entrants for this award are small private sector businesses, including sole traders, partnerships, private sector companies or social enterprises, with a maximum of 20 employees.

2.2	Other sponsors already secured for the event include Invest Northern Ireland, Department of Employment and Learning, Equality Commission, Asda, JC Decaux and Irish News. Applications for each for the 11 award categories are open until 4 October 2013.
2.3	The awards have grown significantly with a 25% increase in attendance since the inaugural awards in 2011. Last year over 150 entries were received across the award categories, significant media coverage was also secured with a total equivalent advertising value of £168,115 and an audience reach of 5,168,064. Similar to the 2012 awards, The Irish News have been appointed as media partner for this event, sponsors will be featured in the regular coverage of the awards in the run up to the event.
2.4	Alignment with the small business category complements the existing work of the Council's economic development unit whose delivery of enterprise and business development programme are encouraging small business growth in the city.
2.5	The cost of sponsorship of this category is £3000. Sponsorship benefits include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of Council logo on all event materials to include; awards application brochure, billboard advertisements, stage back drop at the awards ceremony etc. - PR and publicity opportunities pre and post event - Full page advertisement in the event programme - Presentation of category award on the evening - A table at the awards ceremony
2.6	The sponsorship package offered to Council includes a table for up to 10 guests at the awards ceremony. Subject to approval it is recommended that invitations to the awards ceremony be extended to the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Committee (or nominees); Councillor Bernie Kelly (the Council's woman's champion); a representative from the political parties not already represented and relevant senior officers from the Council's Women's Steering Group.

3.	Resource implications
3.1	The category sponsorship cost is £2,500.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	These events are intended to acknowledge, celebrate and reward the achievements of women in business.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the opportunity to sponsor the "Best Small Business" category at the third annual Women in Business Awards on 21 November 2013. - Approve the financial allocation of £3,000 towards the sponsorship costs. - Note the allocation of a table for up to 10 guests as part of the sponsorship

	<p>package</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Subject to approval, agree the attendance at the event of the named representatives, to nominate a representative from the political parties not represented and relevant senior officers of the Council's Women's Steering Group.
--	---

6	Decision Tracking
There is no Decision Tracking attached to this report.	