



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	HMS Duncan Affiliation to Belfast
Date:	20 August 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>In August 2008, Belfast City Council was invited by the Royal Naval Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland to become affiliated to HMS Duncan, the Royal Navy's newest Type 45 Destroyer which was currently under construction. A similar invite was extended to the city of Dundee. This followed a common practice by the Royal Navy whereby a number of towns and cities are affiliated to naval vessels for marketing and promotional purposes. Council agreed to become affiliated to HMS Duncan in Sept 2008 along with Dundee who also accepted the invitation.</p>
1.2	<p>The launch and naming ceremony for the ship took place in Govan shipyard in Glasgow in October 2010 and was attended by the then Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and an officer. Further correspondence has been received in recent months updating Council on the progress of the ship's construction along with suggestions as to how Belfast can best capitalise on its affiliation for international marketing purposes and for local economic impact.</p>
1.3	<p>The benefits considered to result from such an affiliation are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- this would form the first formal relationship with a Naval vessel since the HMS Belfast;- there will be opportunities for Belfast to be promoted internationally as the vessel tours the world;- the ship and its crew will make infrequent but regular visits to Belfast delivering economic impact and the opportunity for on board receptions or events for marketing purposes;- Belfast will have the opportunity to further develop its historical maritime connections, including links to other countries with operational naval vessels such as the Irish Naval Service.

2	Key Issues
2.1	HMS Duncan has now completed its construction and fitting out phase. Sea trials have taken place and preparations are now being made for the formal handover of the ship to the Navy from its builders as it is now operational. A handover ceremony is planned for 26 September 2013 in Portsmouth and Belfast City Council along with Dundee Council whom share the affiliation are both invited to attend and participate in the event. Whilst the formal invites have yet to be issued it is anticipated that up to 4 invites are being sent to Council. The ship's affiliated cities will be acknowledged and included in the publicity surrounding the launch of the ship.
2.2	Council is also invited to provide some marketing materials and local cultural products for use on board the ship to showcase Belfast. These will be displayed prominently during the handover ceremony and first on board event as well as being used thereafter as the ship calls into ports around the world when not on formal duty. Such ships usually undertake stays in ports for up to 4 days and a variety of events can be organised including local civic receptions, business and corporate events and public access on board. During such times the ship's company has the opportunity to speak about its affiliation and can highlight local products as appropriate to international visitors.
2.3	Staff have undertaken research to identify the most suitable and cost effective products which could best showcase Belfast within the space, size and budget restraints. The optimum choice proposed for Members consideration is for the presentation of a carriage clock or similar craft object designed by a local artist along with a set of Irish Linen napkins and a copy of the Belfast 400 book. If time permits it may be possible for the Belfast crest to be incorporated alongside the HMS Duncan crest should this be considered appropriate.
2.4	It has also been identified that special consideration will be given to promoting local companies food and drinks products on board such as flour/bread and tea or whiskey. Contact has been made with a limited number of companies to identify if they wish to be avail of this opportunity to provide some samples and or engage in potential sales of products in future. Some local foods and drinks may be incorporated into the formal Handover ceremony as part of the hospitality arrangements. A financial contribution may be required from Council to assist with this option.
2.5	In conjunction with Dundee it has also been agreed that each city can provide one promotional banner/pop up stand for use as part of the handover ceremony and at future international civic or corporate events held on the ship at locations around the world to highlight its link with both cities. It is proposed that a new pop up stand based on the International Belfast brand as used for Global India Business Meeting initially is produced for appropriate use.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Up to £1500 maximum for the purchase of appropriate corporate products showcasing Belfast as outlined above, a pop up stand, inclusion of some Belfast food/drink products
3.2	Up to £250 per person for travel and subsistence for attendees at the Handover event in Portsmouth on 26 September 2013.

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

5	Recommendations
	<p>It is recommended that Members;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the report and agree to provide Belfast gifts for use on the ship as outlined above up to a maximum of £1500. - Agree that the Lord Mayor, the Chair of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, the Chief Executive or their nominees attend the Handover event along with one additional officer.

6	Decision Tracking
A follow-up report will be brought back to Committee after the event.	
Timeframe: post September 2013	Reporting Officer: Shirley Mc Cay