



Report to: Development Committee

Subject: Belfast in Rio

Date: 20 August 2013

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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Belfast City Council has been playing a key role in the development and support of our creative and cultural industries in the City, with internationalisation of these industries playing a key role in this support. Whether it be through our sister cities relationship with Nashville, Tennessee or through our yearly attendance and support at South by Southwest in Austin, Texas, it is vital for the City, our culture and our economic offering to be seen and heard on the world stage.
1.2	The legacy of the MTV European Music Awards and the ongoing success of Belfast Music Week continue to put Belfast in the eyes and ears of the international marketplace, promoting the City's music sector and cultural tourism offering to a worldwide audience.
1.3	Belfast Music Week has enabled NITB and Tourism Ireland to position Belfast's image and perception of the destination and create appeal with a younger audience. Key messaging focuses on why there has never been a better time to go to Belfast and most of all, offering the unique indigenous music proposition which helps to position Belfast as a unique modern short break destination.
1.4	The Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington have also contributed to the international promotion of Belfast's creative and cultural sector, through business support at South by Southwest and the ongoing promotion of the creative industries at events and meetings in both Washington and New York throughout the year. In July 2013, the Bureau made contact with the Council to seek support towards a Belfast event as part of the Rock in Rio music festival that takes place in Brazil each year.
1.5	Over the past nine months, the Northern Ireland Bureau has been developing a business and public diplomacy network in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia. This effort was sparked by the decision of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to focus their international efforts in the coming years on the

	world's largest emerging markets including China, India and Brazil.
1.6	In March 2013, the Bureau organised the first official visit to Brazil by the First and Deputy First Ministers which covered the three cities noted above and a wide range of business areas including sport, tourism, culture, education, regeneration and science and technology. The Bureau is continuing to build on the momentum generated by that visit to identify opportunities to introduce Northern Ireland to Brazil, in many cases for the first time.
1.7	It is expected that by highlighting the positive aspects of NI across many sectors, it will increase tourism numbers from Brazil and create a favourable environment for future trade and investment. For the Bureau, Rock in Rio represents an opportunity to reach approximately 91% of the Brazilian population through both live and digital streaming content.
1.8	Furthermore Belfast City Council is in the process of finalising its draft International Marketing Framework which recognises the need to ensure Belfast has a positive and consistent presence in key global markets for trade and investment, tourism and education purposes.
1.9	The purpose of this report is to seek approval to support the promotion of Belfast, Belfast Music Week and the creative and cultural sector in the City at the Rock in Rio event.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Rock in Rio is an annual music festival that began in Rio de Janeiro 29 years ago to promote established and up and coming bands in Brazil and throughout Latin America. It has evolved into a global music event that hosts the biggest names in the industry and has expanded to Lisbon, Madrid, and next year, to Buenos Aires.
2.2	Rock in Rio is now the most important Brazilian festival and the world's largest in terms of profile and attendance. More than 6 million people have gathered for this festival over the years and it has emerged as a significant presence in digital media. The event runs between the 13-15 and 19-22 September 2013 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil with an expected live audience of 600,000 and streaming live in 200 countries.
2.3	The opportunity for Belfast to be involved is through a new partnership agreement between Visit Britain and the organisers of Rock in Rio as part of the global GREAT Campaign and the legacy of the link between the London Olympics 2012 and Rio Olympics 2016. The key element of this agreement is the creation of Rock Street which will be constructed in the City of Rock on the grounds of the festival.
2.4	Rock Street will be a full size replica of a UK Street complete with buildings and storefronts. This area will be used for stage performances by UK artists, street performers and selling food, drink and UK themed souvenirs.
2.5	The main stage at Rock Street will be used exclusively by performers from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland throughout the entirety of the festival.

2.6	This year's theme for Rock Street, "Great Britain in Ireland," provides a unique opportunity to promote Northern Ireland and its impressive music scene. Visit Britain has already scheduled entertainment at Rock Street that includes traditional Irish dancers and Celtic bands.
2.7	<p>Through conversations between the NI Bureau, Rock in Rio and VisitBritain, Belfast is seen as a key addition to this year's theme and as such were asked to submit a proposal as to how we might have a presence at the event. The following has been proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belfast Rocks event, featuring 2 of the leading bands/artists from Belfast. - Branding and promotion of Belfast with a focus on cultural tourism and music heritage and creative industries. - Promotion of Belfast Music Week 2013. - CD and T-shirt giveaways for Belfast Music. - Competition in partnership with Tourism Ireland and the NI Bureau to give away return airfares and accommodation for 2 people to attend Belfast Music Week 2013.
2.8	The Northern Ireland Bureau have confirmed financial support of up to £6000 to contribute to the artist costs and Tourism Ireland have confirmed the competition prize. Belfast City Council have been asked to contribute £2000 to the event in relation to City promotion and branding, Belfast Music Week 2013 promotion and giveaways.
2.9	<p>The main aims of participating at 'Rock Street' for Belfast are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belfast City Council will be on a global platform showcasing the wealth of talent and creativity in the city - Promotion of Belfast in relation to tourism, business development, inward investment and creativity with a focus on Belfast Music Week. - To appreciate, value and celebrate Belfast's creative sector. - To profile Belfast City Council's work in the creative sector. - Increase the profile of Belfast in the international marketplace. - Increase the number of Belfast musicians doing business international

3	Resource Implications
3.1	To support a Belfast presence at the Rock in Rio event in partnership with the Northern Ireland Bureau up to a maximum of £2000.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no specific 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 contents of the report - Approve the financial support of up to £2000