



**Report to:** Development Committee

**Subject:** Joint Bid to host EUROCITIES Culture Forum 2014

**Date:** 19 November 2013

**Reporting Officer:** Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Relations, ext 3459

**Contact Officers:** Laura Leonard, European Manager, ext 3577

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	<p>Members will be aware that Council is engaged in a number of EUROCITIES fora and that this has provided a range of tangible outputs.</p> <p>Continued and proactive engagement in the Eurocities network is crucial for Council in order to position itself to maximise the opportunities that the new round of EU funding will bring. This is also imperative activity in order to deliver the Investment Plan objective of securing European funding.</p>
1.2	At Development Committee meeting of 21 May 2013, Members agreed to the submission of a joint bid with Derry City Council to host a EUROCITIES Culture Forum meeting in 2014.
1.3	CAF is one of the bigger fora in the network and the bid was a competitive process. It is noted that hosting CAF will build on Belfast's capital city status and reputation within the forum and also the position of Derry-Londonderry as the first UK Capital of Culture. The CAF will bring approximately 80 attendees and past experience of acting as host city has led to significant press coverage as well as exposure of indigenous industry to representatives of over 70 European cities.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	A joint bid was submitted for consideration to Eurocities in June 2013.
2.2	A positive outcome of the bid was announced at the October 2013 meeting of CAF which took place in Gdansk. Dates were provisionally agreed for 26 – 29 March 2014.
2.3	A project steering group will be set up to include officers from both Councils, Eurocities officials, as well as representatives of the culture and arts sector, to develop the finer detail of the work programme.

2.4	<p>The Policy Officer from Eurocities is taking part in a site visit to Belfast and Derry / Londonderry in early December 2013.</p> <p>The working theme of the bid is "Culture: Connecting Cities". The development of the content by the steering group will take place over the coming weeks and will be in line with Eurocities work plan, as well as offering an opportunity to showcase the city's cultural product and also highlight the priorities of the Cultural Framework and the Investment Programme.</p>
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<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	Members have already agreed a budget of up to £5,000 to host the Culture Forum. Derry / Londonderry have agreed to contribute the same level of support.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
	There are no Equality and Good Relations considerations attached to this report.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Members are requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note the contents of this report</li> </ul>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	There is no decision tracking attached to this report.  Reporting Officer: Brian Johnston

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	CAF- Culture Forum

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None