



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Belfast City Centre Management – request for funding
Date:	14 January 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development ext 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that the Development Committee has previously agreed to a presentation by Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) on their proposed business plan for the coming year (2014-2015).

2	Key Issues
2.1	BCCM have developed a draft action plan for the coming financial year and this is attached as Appendix 1. The action plan sets out the range of activities to be undertaken in the course of the year, along with the associated budget for the delivery of this programme of work.
2.2	<p>The work of BCCM covers three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Delivering BCCM city centre services</u> BCCM delivers its own services which add value to the city centre. These include management of the city's festive lighting, Café Culture operating agreements, City Centre Beat policing, Radio link, City Safe Crimewatch scheme, dressing of vacant shop windows, city banner dressing in the core retail area, and providing an education programme to businesses on Business Improvement Districts. - <u>Facilitating and assisting in the delivery of funders' City Centre Initiatives</u> BCCM assists Belfast City Council and other funders with initiatives such as City Centre Performance Measurement, Belfast in Bloom, Waste Management, Streets Ahead and the re:Store initiative. - <u>Direct liaison with city centre businesses</u> BCCM provides a channel for communication between the private sector businesses in the city centre and central and local government.

2.3	The work of the organisation crosses a number of council departments and services, principally within the Development and Health and Environmental Services Departments. The Director of Environmental Health chairs the Public Space Management group while the Director of Development and Head of Economic Initiatives – along with elected members – are represented on the board. Other officers across the council are also represented on other working groups.
2.4	The proposed budget for the year totals around £715,000. The budget assumes a financial contribution of £190,000 from Belfast City Council. The budget also assumes additional income from other public and private partners, principally Department for Social Development (DSD) - £157,000 and private sector contributions (directly and through Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (BCTC) - £108,000.
2.5	<p><u>April 2013 to March 2014</u></p> <p>The BCCM Board wish to indicate to the Committee their appreciation of Council's funding of £190,000 during the present financial year. BCCM provides quarterly performance reports to BCC which demonstrate that this has been a successful year, with the company's business plans being delivered in full, save only a few projects which are delayed due to circumstances beyond the control of BCCM.</p>
2.6	Despite a very difficult economy for the private sector in the city, BCCM has been able to use its core funding from BCC and DSD to leverage £315,700.00 of private sector funding for City Centre projects during 2013/14.
2.7	BCCM has attracted £155,000.00 of DSD core funding the present financial year, and has an application lodged with DSD for core funding of £157,000.00 in the 2014/2015 year. Members should note that DSD provide further project funding to BCCM, including £67,000.00 in the present year for an Environmental Improvement scheme in College Square East
2.8	<p>During 2013/14 BCCM has engaged with issues which were not originally tabled in their business plans, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dressing double the number of vacant retail units than planned and originally budgeted for. – Delivering a new 'Text Alert' system capable of sending urgent 'public messages' to over 700 business managers in the City Centre. – Introducing a new 'Prolific Offenders' programme into Retail Crimewatch which, working with the PSNI, is targeting the 20 most prolific retail criminals in the City – Delivery of a Youth Engagement programme, funded by South Belfast DPCSP, which is engaging with the hundreds of youths gathering in Arthur Square on Saturdays, which has been having a detrimental impact on Saturday retail in the area. – Delivering increased levels of research, including surveying shoppers in satellite towns around Belfast regarding their use of Belfast City Centre.
2.9	Appendix 1 contains BCCM's Business Plan, which includes detailed action

	plans. The BCCM Board would be pleased to consider any recommendations or requests from the Development Committee with regard to this Business Plan.
2.10	The BCCM Board recognise, and state within the Business Plan, that the plan may need to be reviewed with core funders after the implementation of the Review of Public Administration.
2.11	The Business Plan sets specific performance targets for each of BCCM's 'Activity Groups' of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Space Management 2. Safer City 3. Economic Performance
2.12	The Business Plan includes financial projections, and the BCCM Board is not seeking any rise in funding from Council.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	BCCM are seeking a financial contribution of £190,000 towards their total running costs of £715,000 for the financial year 2014/2015.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no specific equality or good relations implications attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the BCCM action plan and annual budget forecast 2014-2015, attached - Note and approve the funding request for £190,000 core funding in the coming year - Agree that, if the funding is approved, officers should work with the management team at BCCM to further refine the work of the organisation, to ensure compliance with wider council policies and to support the delivery of council objectives.

6	Decision Tracking
	Update on progress before year end: January 2015

7	Key to Abbreviations
	BCTC – Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management DSD – Department for Social Development

8	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – BCCM action plan and annual budget forecast: 2014-2015

