



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Belfast Business Awards – request for sponsorship
Date:	18 March 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has previously been a key partner in funding and delivering the Belfast Business Awards.
1.2	The Awards have been running since 2004 – initially as a project led by Belfast City Centre Management Company (BCCM) in conjunction with Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (BCTC). From 2010 to 2012, Belfast City Council was been the lead delivery agent for the awards, supported by BCCM as organising partner. BCCM was paid a fixed sum for its role in this work, in addition to the core funding that it receives from Council each year.
1.3	In April 2013, the Development Committee considered a number of options presented to them regarding the future of the awards and took a decision not to support the awards in that year. Given the lack of council support, the Belfast Business Awards did not take place in 2013.
1.4	Belfast City Council has now received a request for sponsorship of the awards in 2014 from Belfast City Centre Management. BCCM have confirmed that their board took the decision to proceed with the 2014 event and considered that an approach should be presented to the council to ask for sponsorship of the event.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The 2012 Belfast Business Awards – the last Belfast Business Awards that took place – received over 120 entries from businesses throughout the council area, for the 11 award categories available, with some categories more heavily subscribed than others. The awards process concluded with a Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony held in City Hall on 8 November 2012 attended by 330 individuals, all of whom paid for participation at the event.
2.2	In previous years, the costs associated with the event have been met from

	<p>funding by the council, supplemented by income from a range of principal and category sponsors as well as revenue generated from ticket sales from those attending the Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony. In 2011 and 2012, the cost for Council of delivering the awards was £20,000 with an additional £9,000 budget for BCCM's management fee. In 2012 a principal sponsor for the awards could not be secured however sponsorship was obtained for each of the eleven award categories.</p>
2.3	<p>When Belfast City Council took on the role of lead partner, the organisation of the event involved a significant volume of work for Council team including the marketing and promotion of the awards, the creation and management of the online entry process and overseeing the event management process.</p>
2.4	<p>In 2014, Belfast City Centre Management are proposing that they will be the lead delivery partner for the event and have approached the council to act as a principal sponsor. In return for a sponsorship contribution of £10,000, the council will receive the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 tables at the gala ceremony for council guests - Council logo included on all marketing material including presentation at the launch and gala ceremony - Speaking slot at launch and gala ceremony - Position on the judging panel - Seat on the Belfast Business Awards Strategy Committee. <p>No date has yet been set for the 2014 event.</p>
2.5	<p>The event is successful in generating a significant volume of positive news coverage and many award winners use the Belfast Business Awards recognition as part of their own promotional material.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	If the sponsorship request is approved, a financial contribution of £10,000 is being sought from Belfast City Council towards the event.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality of good relations considerations.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to consider the request from Belfast City Centre Management to be a principal sponsor of the Belfast Business Awards at a cost of £10,000.

6	Decision Tracking
If the funding request is approved, a feedback report on the event will be provided for the committee.	
Timeline: December 2014	
Reporting Officer: Lisa Toland	

7	Key to Abbreviations
BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management	
BCTC – Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce	