



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Belfast City Coach Sightseeing Provision
Date:	15 April 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Brian Johnston, Tourism, Culture, Heritage & Arts Manager ext 5732

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Over the past number of years there have been three businesses operating city sightseeing activity in Belfast. Early in 2014, one of these ceased its operation in the city centre.
1.2	In recent years, a number of problems in respect of the provision of city sightseeing coach tours have arisen. This has resulted in a multi agency approach to try and remedy issues, particularly at times of cruise ship visits to Belfast and around the summer period.
1.3	65 offences were investigated in 2012/13.
1.4	At a recent meeting hosted by DVA, a multi-agency group came together to discuss trying to find a resolution to ongoing tensions. This was attended by representatives from Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA), Department for Regional Development (DRD), Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM), BCC, PSNI and the coach operators currently operating the service.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Legislation currently allows for three coach operator licences in the city centre.
2.2	There are currently two coach tour companies operating in the city centre - City Sightseeing and Titanic Tours.
2.3	At the multi-agency meeting on 28 February, one of the outcomes requested was for an independent piece of work to be undertaken to explore whether two or three city sightseeing coach operators was most economically viable.

2.4	It was suggested also that this report could recommend a best practice model for delivery of city sightseeing coach tour services for consideration by the DVA and other relevant agencies.
2.5	It was deemed that Belfast City Council was best placed to commission this report.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	A maximum allocation of £4000 towards the commissioning of a report.

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

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to approve the commissioning of a report to look at providing a long term sustainable, quality controlled provision of coach sightseeing tours for visitors.

6	Decision Tracking
There is no decision tracking attached to this report.	

7	Key to Abbreviations
DVA – Driver and Vehicle Licensing DRD – Department for Regional Development BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management PSNI- Police Service of Northern Ireland	