



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Lord Mayor visit to Boston: delegation update
Date:	19 August 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development, ext 3427

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that, at the Development Committee meeting of 17 June 2014, a budget of £10,000 was approved for a visit to Boston by the Lord Mayor along with the Chair and Deputy Chair of Development Committee or nominees, plus one officer.
1.2	The focus of the visit was intended to be the EU/US e-health marketplace and conference which takes place in the city on 21-22 October. A number of local businesses will be taking part in the event and there are likely to be opportunities for both civic and business engagements.
1.3	The wider visit programme is currently being developed and there is an opportunity to incorporate a number of additional programme elements and to build on the Belfast delegation.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The Belfast–Boston Sister Cities agreement approved by the Development Committee in April 2014 provides a framework for action focusing on a number of key themes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Economic development, trade and investment- Tourism- Cultural exchange- Faith based exchange and educational linkages.
2.2	Early engagement with the Mayor’s Office in Boston has identified the opportunity for a number of community-based visits which may lead to longer term reciprocal exchanges. In Boston, much of this work is led by faith leaders and it is therefore considered that there is an opportunity for a number of the

	Lord Mayor's chaplains to accompany her on this visit and to develop the linkages directly.
2.3	Given the resource challenges, it is proposed that up to four chaplains be invited to participate in the visit and that Belfast City Council agrees to cover up to 50% towards their participation costs. These costs would be met within the budget previously agreed at the June Development Committee, i.e. £10,000.
2.4	The visit to Belfast in September 2014 of the Mayor of Boston and some of his key staff will allow officers to plan the visit programme directly with the Mayor and his team in order to maximise the value of the chaplains' participation, if approved.
3	Resource Implications
3.1	A budget of £10,000 was approved at the 17 June 2014 meeting of the Development Committee. The contribution towards the chaplains' costs will be met from within this budget.

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

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members agree to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite up to four of the Lord Mayor's chaplains to accompany her on the October 2014 visit to Boston - Provide up to 50% of the travel and subsistence costs for the chaplains to take part in this visit, up to a maximum of £2,500 in total. The costs will be met within the budget previously agreed by the Development Committee in June 2014.

6	Decision Tracking
Feedback from the visit will be presented to the Development Committee in December 2014.	
Timeframe: December 2014	Reporting Officer: Lisa Toland