



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Requests for support for BIDs
Date:	16 December 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development, ext 3427

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that, at the June 2014 Development Committee meeting, the committee agreed to provide £45,000 to Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) to support the recruitment of a member of staff to carry out preparatory work on a Business Improvement District (BID) for a defined area within the city core. The council's funding was matched with a similar amount from Department for Social Development, with the funding to be allocated over an 18 month period.
1.2	BCCM – along with Cathedral Quarter Trust and Lisburn Road Business Association (LRBA) – made a submission to DSD in late 2013 to become a pilot as part of a “BIDs Academy”. This was an initiative to identify areas that had the potential and interest in becoming a BID area and to provide them with support to strengthen their initiative and make them better prepared once the BIDs legislation was in place and organisations were formally invited to apply to become a BID.
1.3	BCCM was one of the six successful projects selected to become a BID pilot. The other two Belfast areas – namely Lisburn Road and Cathedral Quarter – were also successful in their applications.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	One of the stipulations for those areas taking part in the BIDs Academy is that they provide a budget for a bespoke marketing campaign as well a dedicated person working on the development process on a full-time basis. The BIDs Manager for Belfast – who started work in early November 2014, has spent the majority of her time analysing and verifying the information presented by Land and Property Services (LPS) as well as establishing a working group of city centre businesses and representatives to lead and direct the BIDs process.
2.2	Cathedral Quarter Trust – who are co-ordinating the BID for the Cathedral Quarter area – have now written to the council to ask for a contribution of up to £37,000 towards a resource to carry out the BIDs preparatory work. Lisburn Road Business Association (LRBA) – who

	are coordinating the Lisburn Road BIDs application process – have also made contact with the council to ask whether any resources may be available to help them carry out the preparatory work. They have been successful in attracting £12,000 through Area Working Group funding but they consider that they will require additional resources to enable them to carry out the required preparatory work.
2.3	There is no available to budget to finance either of these requests. Members have already agreed to ring fence any available funding at the year end to cover the non-recurrent costs associated with local government reform. Therefore, Members would need to consider such funding as part of the rate setting process. The department estimates will be considered by the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 16 January 2015.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	CQT have requested funding of £37,000 towards the cost of a BIDs Manager as well as some overheads. LRBA have not confirmed the scale of the financial request at this point. No provision has been made in current departmental estimates for either amount and members have already agreed to ring fence any available funding at the year end to cover the non-recurrent costs associated with local government reform.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no specific equality and good relations implications.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the requests for financial support towards the BID development process from CQT and LRBA – Consider how these should be addressed, given that no provision has been made in current departmental estimates for either amount and that members have already agreed to ring fence any available funding at the year end to cover the non-recurrent costs associated with local government reform

6	Key to Abbreviations
CQT – Cathedral Quarter Trust LPS – Land and Property Services LRBA – Lisburn Road Business Association.	