



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Requests for support for BIDs
Date:	20 January 2015
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, ext 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that, at the December 2014 meeting of the Development Committee, a request for support from those working on the Business Improvement District (BID) applications for the Cathedral Quarter and Lisburn Road areas was presented to the committee for consideration.
1.2	Members will also recall that the committee previously 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 (DSD), with the funding to be allocated over an 18 month period.
1.3	BCCM, Cathedral Quarter Trust and Lisburn Road Business Association (LRBA) were the three Belfast-based organisations selected to become pilots as part of a "BIDs Academy". This was an initiative by DSD 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.
1.4	After discussion at the December 2014 meeting, Members asked that engagement take place between council officers and representatives from BCCM to see whether they had any capacity or resources available to provide support to CQT and LRBA to help them undertake the necessary preparatory work on their BID submissions. They also asked that maps of the BID areas in the city centre and Cathedral Quarter be provided for their information.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Cathedral Quarter Trust requested a contribution from the council of up to £37,000 towards a resource to carry out the BIDs preparatory work. They have already carried out a significant volume of work in analysing the database provided by Land and Property Services (LPS) and now need to spend time on additional promotion of the BID and securing support for the submission from local businesses. This work is currently being done within their own resources (both staff and financial resources) but they consider that it will require a full-time staff resource along with some administrative support and some overhead costs associated with promotional activities. They expect the overall costs to be in the region of £70-£80,000 and are seeking match funding from NITB and DSD.
2.2	Lisburn Road Business Association (LRBA) have carried out some preliminary work on the BID to date including defining the area, getting the database from LPS and undertaking some planning and preparatory works to set out the programme of activity for the coming year. The next stages for the group are to create a BIDs website and develop a regular newsletter, undertake a survey of the 300+ businesses in the BID area and carry out a review of services/agreements currently in place within the BID area to clarify the baseline. Following that, they will develop a communications plan, develop the business plan and implement the campaign in the run up to the decision date in late Autumn 2015. LRBA currently has £12,000 that it has secured from Area Working Group monies and is using this to undertake the preliminary work. It estimates that it will need one full-time resource (costing around £35,000 p.a.) plus some overhead costs (indicative costs around £15,000) to carry out the required development activity.
2.3	The Development Committee was previously advised that there was no budget available with the Development Department to finance either of these requests in the draft budgets for 2015/16 or in the current financial year.
2.4	Officers from the Development Department also engaged with BCCM to identify whether they had any resources or capacity that they could allocate to support the development of the BIDs in Cathedral Quarter and Lisburn Road areas. At this point, BCCM have advised that their BIDs Manager has a full programme of work to meet the requirements set out in the BCCM BIDs submission. As such, she would not be able to provide any substantial support to either Cathedral Quarter Trust or Lisburn Road Business Association (LRBA).

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 requested funding in the region of £50,000 to support this activity. This represents a combined financial request of around £87,000. As highlighted above there are no resources currently available to meet these costs.

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 - Note the advice from BCCM that they are not in a position to provide any substantial support to either Cathedral Quarter Trust or Lisburn Road Business Association

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Advise on how the requests for support from Cathedral Quarter Trust and Lisburn Road Business Association should be considered in the absence of any financial resources at this point in time.
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6	Key to Abbreviations
BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management BID – Business Improvement District CQT – Cathedral Quarter Trust LPS – Land and Property Services LRBA – Lisburn Road Business Association DSD - Department for Social Development	

7	Appendices
Appendix 1 – map of Cathedral Quarter area BID Appendix 2 – map of Belfast City Centre area BID	