



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Titanic Signature Project Update
Date:	5 th March 2010
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
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1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Members will recall that on 19th February 2010 the Committee agreed that a Special Meeting would be held, with Members of the Development Committee in attendance, to receive a progress update on the Titanic Signature Project and the Memorandum of Understanding with Titanic Quarter Limited. The key issues to be covered include:

- i) to receive an update on the Titanic Signature Project construction process;
- ii) to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding and associated governance arrangements; and
- iii) to receive an update on the emerging proposals with regard to marketing and tourism activities in 2012 around the Titanic Signature Project.

1.2 Members have previously noted that for legal and tax reasons, a charitable company known as Titanic Foundation Limited (TFL) has been formed to oversee the building and operation of the Titanic Signature Project. The TFL Board consists of seven independent trustees. The present Chairman of the board is Jonathan Hegan, a past chairman of RPS Consulting Engineers. The acting Chief Executive of TFL is Brian Gregory and he will attend the Committee meeting to update the Committee on progress. Titanic Foundation Limited is required by the legal agreements to regularly keep the funders updated on progress and TFL has confirmed it will be happy to address the Committee on a regular basis to keep the Council apprised of the progress of the project.

1.3 Titanic Quarter Limited (TQL) is the company taking forward the development of the Titanic Quarter in a joint venture with the owners of the land, Belfast Harbour Commissioners. As a condition of the legal agreements, TQL entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council, which sets out its commitment to actively work with the council, key government departments and the community to optimize the city and community benefits of the development of the Titanic Quarter. Mike Smith, the Chief Executive of TQL, will be present at the meeting to update Members on the work of TQL on engaging with the community.

2.0 KEY ISSUES**CONSTRUCTION UPDATE (Design & Build)**

- 2.1
- Work on the Titanic Signature Project commenced on site on 28th May 2009 at risk by Titanic Quarter Limited and Harcourt Construction.
 - Financial commitments from funders secured, legal agreements and construction contracts signed on 27th November to enable the TSP to go live.
 - Work is progressing well and construction is now emerging above ground level.
 - There is a rigorous project management regime in place, and the project is on

	<p>programme for delivery by 31st March 2012 in time for RMS Titanic's centenary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Director of the Council's Property and Projects is represented on the TSP Project Board which is overseeing the design and build construction contract. The Committee will be kept fully informed of project progress and costs. ▪ Harcourt Construction has been proactive in implementing the social benefit clauses in accordance with the contract requirements. ▪ Six out of the seven work packages let relating to the TSP have been placed with local companies. ▪ The focus is now on the content of the build and main exhibition. A Storyline and Content Working Group has been established, which includes representation from the Council (i.e. Tourism, Culture and Arts). ▪ A specialist advisor on the operation of major visitor attractions has been appointed to review the operational aspects of the design and to assist in the appointment of an operator. ▪ The procurement process for the appointment of an operator will be two stages, namely 1. Pre-qualification; and 2. Tender. The anticipated timescales are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Publication of OJEU Notice - early March 2010 ○ Pre-qualifications returns - April 2010 ○ Short-listing and invitation to tender - April/May 2010 ○ Operator appointment - October/November 2010 ▪ A specialist branding/communications company has been appointed by Titanic Foundation Limited (TFL) to develop its brand and positioning of the TSP.
2.2	Brian Gregory, the Chief Executive of Titanic foundation Limited, will be in attendance at the Committee to present to Members a detailed update.
	MARKETING AND TOURISM UPDATE
2.3	The Northern Ireland Tourism Board (NITB) has established a Working Group to develop and agree a Marketing and Communications Plan for Titanic in 2012. The group representatives from Belfast City Council (Tourism, Culture and Arts as well as Events Units), Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau, National Museums Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland Limited and Titanic Foundation Limited.
2.4	An initial meeting took place in January 2010 and a draft Marketing and Communications Plan is currently being finalised. A further meeting is scheduled for 5 th March 2010. Once agreed the Plan will run from now until (and throughout) 2012 as part of the Integrated Tourism Plan for the City.
2.5	Additionally, Belfast City Council, NITB and DSD are discussing the development of a Maritime Heritage Plan for Belfast as part of the Integrated Tourism Plan for the City to ensure that the Titanic Signature Project connects to the wider Maritime Heritage assets across the City. The aim is to complete this work by end of June 2010.
2.6	As referred to above, a Storyline Working Group has been established (including representation from Belfast City Council) to input into the development of interpretation within the TSP. These meetings will be scheduled every 6 weeks up to the end of October 2010 and will look at the overall storylines within each of the galleries and how this is communicated to the visitor.

	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH TQL
2.7	Attached at Appendix 1 is a copy of the briefing on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) provided to Members on 30 October. The MoU, entered into by Titanic Quarter Limited and the Council, sets out a clear commitment from both parties to actively work towards creating the necessary conditions to optimise the city and community benefits of the TQ development.
2.8	<p>The MoU sets out the proposed governance structure and management arrangements for taking this process forward and the associated oversight and scrutiny role of the Council within the process. Whilst the covering MOU agreement between Titanic Quarter and the Council has been endorsed and signed, the thematic action plans attached are indicative at this stage and cover six priority areas of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Employment, Education and Skills (<i>TQ Work</i>) 2) Accessibility and Transport (<i>TQ Access</i>) 3) Housing (<i>TQ Housing</i>) 4) Community outreach (<i>TQ Outreach</i>) 5) Tourism development and promotion (<i>TQ Tourism</i>) 6) Quality Open Space and Public Art (<i>TQ Space</i>)
	<u>Governance Arrangements and oversight role of the Council</u>
2.9	The Memorandum of Understanding sets out a three tier governance structure to take forward the work on the thematic action plans. The purpose of the structure is to try and bind all the key stakeholders who will need to continue to the delivery of the objectives set out in the action plans.
2.10	Essentially this involves a Strategic Advisory Board, a Co-ordinating Steering Group and Thematic Action Groups. Crucially the Council will exercise an oversight role to ensure that the benefits of the Memorandum of Understanding are fully realised. This will involve detailed reports being brought to Committee twice a year setting out progress against the action plan and the contribution being made by the key stakeholders. TQL have indicated that they will be happy to attend Committee on these occasions to discuss progress. Finally, the MOU itself provides for an annual review.
2.11	At the Committee meeting on the 19 February, it was agreed that Party Group Briefings would be offered in relation to the Memorandum of Understanding. In the first instance, we thought it would be helpful to give Members a broad overview of the project and Party briefings will then be arranged during March, so that the matter can be further considered at the Committee's meeting in April. We will also have to discuss the roles of the Development Committee and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in taking the various work streams forward. It is suggested that the Development Committee should take the primary role in relation to the implementation of the MoU, in the key areas of employability, access and transport, arts and tourism. The Strategic Policy and Resources will be required to exercise oversight of the construction and funding elements. Given the significance of the project for the city, it is also suggested that joint meetings of both Committees (to which all Councillors should be invited) should be held twice a year to exercise oversight and influence over all the key stakeholders who will need to work together to ensure that the development of the Titanic Quarter benefits all of the city.
	<u>Resources</u>

2.12	<p>Council officers have been engaged in ongoing discussions with Titanic Quarter Limited, community representatives and relevant Government Departments (e.g. DETI, DEL, DE etc) to firm up the governance and management arrangements for the MOU and to examine the potential to realign mainstream activities/programmes (e.g. access to employment and training initiatives) and resources to support the implementation of the MOU. This has resulted in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondment from the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL): funding has been secured from DEL to employ a full-time fixed term secondee (Roisin Sloan) who is located within the Council’s Economic Development Unit and is proactively working with all relevant stakeholders to support and co-ordinate the developmental work around the employment, education and skills thematic action plan. Exploring and maximising existing and upcoming opportunities (e.g. Premier Inn coming on site in November creating 50/60 Jobs) for long-term unemployed gaining access to employment opportunities. Lisa Toland, the Economic Development Manager, will be at the special meeting and the briefings with Party Groups. ▪ Departmental involvement in the delivery of the MOU: A letter has been issued to all relevant Government Departments seeking their participation in both the Strategic Advisory Board and Thematic Action Groups. The successful implementation of the MOU will be dependant upon the level of engagement and commitment provided by the relevant Central Government Departments in terms of the thematic areas identified for action. ▪ Financial commitment from TQL of £100K: TQL has committed a minimum of £100K per annum, made up of both cash and in-kind support, to assist in enabling the full benefit of the MOU and thematic action plans to be realised. ▪ Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the East Belfast Partnership Board: A SLA has been put in place with the East Belfast Partnership (refer to Appendix 3) to act as a managing agent on behalf of the BAPs, to assist with the overall coordination of the MOU process at an operational level and to facilitate wider city-wide community engagement processes. Titanic Quarter Limited has agreed to fund the total £30K support cost for the SLA with the East Belfast Partnership Board in addition to its other funding commitments as part of the MOU.
	<p><u>City-wide Context</u></p>
2.13	<p>To ensure that the opportunities which emerge as part of the Memorandum of Understanding process and the development of the Titanic Quarter is made fully accessible to all parts of the city, as requested by Elected Members as a condition of any Council funding committed to the TSP project, the East Belfast Partnership Board has put in place an agreed protocol of engagement with the other Area Partnership Boards.</p>
2.14	<p>This protocol provides for an effective mechanism to ensure that relevant stakeholder groups (including neighbourhood partnership boards) across the city are kept fully engaged in the process and that emerging opportunities are considered within an overall city-wide context.</p>
2.15	<p>The BAPs (as a collective forum) have nominated a lead Partnership Board, to participate, on behalf of all the Partnership Boards, on each of the Thematic Groups i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employability - North Belfast Partnership Board ○ Access and Transport - West Belfast Partnership Board ○ Housing -East Belfast Partnership Board

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tourism - South Belfast Partnership Board ○ Art and Open Space - Greater Shankill Partnership Board
2.16	The lead Partnership Board will be responsible for ensuring that the key issues emerging from the local discussions /engagement undertaken by each of the Partnership Boards across the city inform the discussions within the Thematic Groups and that the emerging decisions and opportunities are communicated.
2.17	This approach provides the opportunity to effectively engage, disseminate information and seek local views on the Memorandum of Understanding and wider Titanic Quarter development; optimising already established structures and avoiding the need to create anything new.
3.0	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial and Human Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There will clearly be resource implications in terms of the Council committing both officer and member time in engaging and overseeing the established governance arrangements for both the TSP and MOU. This resource would be secured through the realignment of existing activities.
4.0	Recommendations
4.1	The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report. Further note that Party Group Briefings on the operation of the Memorandum of Understanding will be conducted during March and that a further report will be brought back to Committee in April.
5.0	Appendices
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Briefing on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) provided to Members on 30 October 2) Signed Memorandum of Understanding 3) SLA with East Belfast Partnership Board