



Belfast City Council

Report to:	SP&R Committee
Subject:	EU CIVITAS Forum Network
Date:	15 April 2011
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, ext 6217
Contact Officer:	Sarah Jayne Smith, European Officer, ext 3326

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	CIVITAS - cleaner and better transport in cities - stands for City-VITAlity-Sustainability.
1.2	With the CIVITAS Initiative, the EC aims to generate a decisive breakthrough by supporting and evaluating the implementation of ambitious integrated sustainable urban transport strategies.
1.3	Within CIVITAS I (2002-2006) there are 19 cities clustered in 4 demonstration projects, within CIVITAS II (2005-2009) 17 cities in 4 demonstration projects, whilst within CIVITAS PLUS (2008-2012) 25 cities in 5 demonstration projects are taking part. These demonstration cities all over Europe will be funded by the European Commission.
1.4	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. to promote and implement sustainable, clean and (energy) efficient urban transport measures ii. to implement integrated packages of technology and policy measures in the field of energy and transport in 8 categories of measures iii. to build up critical mass and markets for innovation
1.5	<p>Key elements of CIVITAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. CIVITAS is co-ordinated by cities: it is a programme “of cities for cities” ii. Cities are in the heart of local public private partnerships iii. Political commitment is a basic requirement iv. Cities are living ‘Laboratories’ for learning and evaluating

2	Key Issues
2.1	The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for Belfast to become a member of the European Civitas Forum Network.
	EU Civitas Forum Network
2.2	The CIVITAS Forum Network provides a platform for the exchange of ideas and experiences between all the participating CIVITAS I, CIVITAS II and CIVITAS PLUS demonstration cities, and other cities that are committed to introducing ambitious, clean urban transport strategies.
2.3	Cities participating in the CIVITAS Forum Network will benefit from the shared expertise of Europe's most advanced cities in the field of clean and sustainable urban transport.
2.4	The CIVITAS Forum Network is an active community that currently incorporates over 180 cities. It is pioneering clean urban transport in Europe and is committed to the introduction of ambitious urban transport policies. Through workshops and training events, cities have the opportunity to inspire and aid active exchange of know-how, ideas and experience to facilitate change in the field of transport.
2.5	Members of the CIVITAS Forum Network can participate in the annual CIVITAS Forum Conference. This conference enables similar-minded colleagues from Europe and beyond to engage in dialogue with other cities and European institutions. Political representatives of CIVITAS Forum cities may also participate in the CIVITAS Political Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC is a group of highly motivated politicians that represent (in a personal capacity) all cities within the CIVITAS Forum Network. It provides support to the CIVITAS Initiative in the identification of policy priorities and produces statements addressed to policy makers at the European, national and local level, as well as to the industry, transport operators and other stakeholders.
	Requirements to join the Forum
2.6	The CIVITAS Forum is open to all cities that want to learn more about the usefulness of individual measures that support clean urban transport, and the best ways to combine and integrate them on a large scale. Participating cities have to prove their political and technical commitments to introduce ambitious, integrated urban transport strategies.
2.7	Specifically, this means that the city plans to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="347 1641 1356 1709">i. Achieve a significant change in the modal split, in favour of sustainable transportation modes <li data-bbox="347 1720 1356 1809">ii. Follow an integrated approach, by addressing as many of the categories of CIVITAS instruments and measures as possible in its policy.
2.8	Each city must commit itself to the introduction of an ambitious, sustainable urban transport policy. This commitment must be politically endorsed on the CIVITAS Forum Declaration by the signature of a local politician who has executive power.
2.9	Active participation in the CIVITAS Forum further requires that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="347 2078 1356 2107">i. A representative of your city attends CIVITAS Forum meetings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. You have a constructive and proactive approach to the distribution of information about the CIVITAS Initiative, at local and national levels iii. You provide a paper that gives background information pertaining to your city and its transport policy. This paper should mention the categories of CIVITAS instruments and measures, and specify how they are being implemented and integrated in your city. <p>Objective</p>
2.10	The Civitas Forum Network will allow Belfast City Council a direct input into sustainable transport strategies as well as the funding mechanisms and partnerships that we would need to develop a successful Civitas bid.
2.11	In terms of the council subscribing to the forum, Belfast City Council are mindful of the governance arrangements relating to transport planning. However, the task is set to become easier with the impending transfer of development control functions.
2.12	Belfast City Council has recently published the updated Transport Policy which acknowledges the governance difficulties but still commits BCC to an inclusive and consistent approach to transport development which will allow us to develop the city in a sustainable manner.
2.13	We are starting to move towards more partner working with Department of Regional Development in terms of the rapid transit system, the public cycle hire scheme, the Active Travel forum and the 'Plugged in Places' initiative.
2.14	The Forum would provide Belfast a platform for the exchange of ideas and experiences between all the demonstration cities, and other cities that are committed to introducing ambitious, clean urban transport strategies. The Forum would assist with policy formation, learning and sharing of information, and funding information.
2.15	It would be useful for Belfast to join on a knowledge sharing basis to become better informed in order to more successfully lobby the Department for Regional Development regarding its future direction of travel.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>Joining the Civitas Forum Network is free of charge. It would require a member of staff and/ or a member from DRD to attend the meetings twice a year. The meetings are held in different locations across Europe, therefore estimation of cost will vary. An approximation would be:</p>
3.2	<p>Flight - £300 Accommodation - £ 200 Subsistence at £75 per day max - £150</p> <p>Approximate total: £650.00 x 2 per annum- £1300.00</p> <p>This is on the assumption that a BCC member of staff attends. If it is DRD they will pay for themselves.</p>

3.3	<p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>A European Officer will bring regular reports on the Network and policy and funding updates to Gerry Millar and other relevant BCC officers and COMT. When funding is identified to support BCC corporate plans other officers will be required to assist the development of a robust project.</p>
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4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	N/A

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Endorsing Belfast City Council joining the EU Civitas Forum Network ii. Endorse the financial and human resources implication of the Forum

6	Decision Tracking
Action to be taken by Sarah Jayne Smith – 15 May 2011	

7	Key to Abbreviations
<p>CIVITAS - cleaner and better transport in cities - stands for Clty-VITALity-Sustainability. DRD – Department of Regional Development</p>	

8	Documents Attached
Civitas agreement is attached	