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| Subject: | Committee Plan Progress Report |
| Date: | 12 October 2016 |
| Reporting Officer: | Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive |
| Contact Officer: | Donal Durkan, Director of Development Nuala Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development |

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| Is this report restricted? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the decision eligible for Call-in? | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues |
| 1.1 | The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress against the key actions contained in the City Growth & Regeneration Committee Plan, as agreed by Committee in October 2015. This will provide Committee with a baseline on which to discuss and agree priority action areas at the upcoming Committee Planning workshop. |
| 2.0 | Recommendations |
| 2.1 | The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the progress to date against the agreed actions within the Committee Plan and• Agree that Officers continue to progress, subject to further consideration at the Committee Planning workshop. |
| 3.0 | Main report |
| 3.1 | <u>Key Issues</u> The 2015 plan was developed in line with the Council's existing Corporate Plan and the emerging Belfast Agenda, the community plan for Belfast. The Belfast Agenda has at its core a commitment to inclusive growth and the importance of growing the local economy to |

improve the quality of life. The Agenda has four main pillars, which summarise the city priorities (see below). The pillars for 'Business and the Economy' (Growing the Economy) and 'City Development' are the focus of this Committee. Thus the Committee continues to take the lead in ensuring that the narrative of the agenda balances the need for economic growth with the purpose of this growth – to connect people to opportunity and reduce inequality.



3.2 The 2015 plan and ongoing work also aligns with and complements the works of our key partners. In this way we expect to achieve the greatest impact in terms of jobs and opportunities for the people of Belfast. Key documents include the Programme for Government and particularly priority '1: growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future' and priority '2: creating opportunities, tackling disadvantage and investing in the future'; and the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy and associated Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland.

3.3 Last month Members noted some of the additional projects and programmes that have developed from the work of the Committee over the last year, in line with the Belfast Agenda. In particular, under the Growing the Economy theme, initiatives such as a clear city proposition, a concierge service for investors, a city Economic Forum, and the recently agreed wider 10-year Employability and Skills Framework. The upcoming Committee Planning workshop will provide an opportunity to test and shape the emerging thinking on these issues in the context of the economic briefing provided by Professor Neil Gibson (at this Committee meeting), emerging priorities within the Belfast Agenda, and the progress with the current Committee Plan. The workshop will then shape the ongoing work and agenda of the Committee, the new Corporate Plan and the budget setting process for 2017/18. The date for this workshop is still to be confirmed but is likely to be in early

November.

3.4

The City Growth and Regeneration Committee is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed towards regeneration and growth of the city in the context of outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy decisions. The Committee also has oversight of the Council functions in relation to economic development, urban development, tourism, culture & arts, European and international relations, car parks, city markets, city events, Belfast Castle, Malone House and Belfast Zoo.

3.5

The Committee is currently working to an ambitious Committee Plan, aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan and emerging Belfast Agenda. The current plan was created after discussion with Members about the role of the Committee and its priorities for the City. The following priorities were agreed by Members in November 2015:

- Place positioning and maximising the opportunities for investment, tourism and regeneration;
- The Employability & Skills Framework (& Year 1 Action Plan);
- Integrated Tourism Strategy;
- City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy;
- Investigate the feasibility of a City Deal for Belfast;
- Develop a car parking strategy;
- Ensure the above strategies give consideration to connecting neighbourhoods to the city centre, ensuring that the whole city enjoys the benefits.

3.6

An update on the progress with the key actions contained in the plan is attached as Appendix One. Members are also aware that a number of detailed reports on key work streams for Growing the Economy have recently been considered and will continue to feature regularly on the Committee agenda.

3.7

A separate item on the Committee agenda provides an Economic Briefing from Professor Neil Gibson. This provides an opportunity for Committee to contextualise the planning and priority setting for the ambition to Grow the Economy as part of the Belfast Agenda and the work of the Committee.

Members are also aware that the factors that influence economic growth do not solely lie within local government's control therefore strengthening business relationships and local-

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| 3.8 | <p>central government relationships is a central tenant of the Belfast Agenda and the city's ambitions to Grow the Economy.</p> |
| 3.9 | <p>A key element of the Committee's role is therefore to shape and influence the major strategies and developments of our partners in the city to ensure that the benefits of city-region growth are maximised. As such, the Committee has received presentations and deputations over the year, from the Department for Infrastructure, the Titanic Signature Project, Central Library, and Transport NI, amongst others, to agree how better to align improvement activities for maximum economic growth.</p> |
| | <p><u>Overview of Progress</u></p> |
| 3.10 | <p>As previously noted by Committee, Members have played a leading role in shaping the Belfast Agenda, the community plan for Belfast. The Belfast Agenda has at its core a commitment to inclusive growth. The Committee has played a key role in ensuring that the narrative of the agenda balances the need for economic growth with the purpose of this growth – to connect people to opportunity and reduce inequality. For this reason, the key actions within the Committee Plan are aligned to the delivery of the key themes that have emerged from the Belfast Agenda. The following provides a snapshot of some of the highlights and challenges over the period of the Committee Plan to date within the context of Growing the Economy.</p> |
| | <p><u>Fostering Business Growth and Strengthening Business Relationships</u></p> |
| 3.11 | <p>Members will be aware that, on 1 April 2015, Council assumed statutory responsibility for a range of business start-up and growth functions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our activities helped to support almost 550 new jobs during 2015/16. These activities included a suite of support for businesses from pre-start, to start, and then growth in addition to programmes to help people into work. Attendance at these various programmes for the year 2015/16 was 2,200. - Ongoing efforts to increase local procurement opportunities including delivery of the Smarter Procurement programme and information sessions. Council have agreed the 2015 local multiplier baseline figures - for every £1 of Council expenditure, 70pence is spent or re-spent in the Belfast economy which increases to £1.34 across the regional economy. - Establishment of two Business Improvement Districts in the city centre – BID One and Destination CQ. The Belfast One bid is expected to deliver more than £5 million pounds of additional investment over the next five years. Destination CQ expects to |

generate £1.7 million over the five years. Work is also underway to support the creation of the Linen Quarter BID. BIDS enable businesses within their area to work together and prioritise initiatives such as marketing, additional cleaning and public realm improvement. These are led by the BID for the businesses and help them to increase their competitiveness and grow their customer base.

- Enhancing the city's economic infrastructure, with the development and opening of the Innovation Factory. This is a 55,284 sq ft building, in a deprived area of the city, with Grade A accommodation innovation space aimed at accelerating business growth through collaboration and networking. It will support up to 400 jobs. The Innovation Factory also includes social and community regeneration opportunities and this model is being considered for other developments. A separate report on the Committee's agenda provides more detail on this.
- Engagement with public, private and skills sectors to identify creative sector growth opportunities for the local Belfast economy. This has helped to identify the need to provide appropriate work/office space for the sector. This will help to support growth and job creation in animation, app/mobile development, games development, music and children's television production.

Attracting Investment and Positioning the City to Compete

In an increasingly competitive global environment, Belfast must emphasise its distinct competitive advantage if it is to continue to compete and successfully attract FDI, tourists, and business to the city.

3.12

- The launch and opening of the Belfast Waterfront in April 2016 as an international conference and convention centre and the establishment of the Council Owned Company and appropriate governance arrangements. This £29.5m investment will enhance Belfast's position in attracting business tourists to the city. It will generate £100 million for Belfast and create 1,500 new jobs by attracting 50,000 conference delegate days each year by 2020.
- The city hosted the successful Tall Ships 2015 event, which generating an estimated £16 million for the local economy through the 520,000 visitors to Belfast Harbour over the four days and 130,000 to the Tall Ships Parade. The annual programme of city events (comprising St Patrick's Day, Lord Mayor's Event, Marathon, Autumn Fair, Monster Mash and Christmas Lights Switch On) has to date attracted a further 94,450 attendees to the city.
- Delivering the Belfast Year of Food 2016, which included the Focus on Food conference and running a second successful Twilight Market at St Georges Market in

May 2016 The latter boosted the footfall in St George's Market to 248,599 (target 205,000) for the first quarter of the year. This makes St George's one of the top attractions in the region and helps to directly support over 350 jobs.

- Developed a hotel prospectus for the city. The Council has now approved 11 planning applications for hotel developments in the city.
- Showcased Belfast at MIPIM in March 2016, promoting the city as a compelling location for investment and growth. Fifteen follow up visits to the city by significant investors are being followed up relating to Grade A office space, retail, hotel and residential developments.

City Centre Regeneration and Maximising the Opportunities for Growth & Regeneration

As the capital city and gateway to the region, many of the key growth issues, such as the need for effective infrastructure that supports growth also need to be considered and feature strongly in the Committee's plan.

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- The City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy was approved by Council in September 2015 and adopted by Department for Social Development (now Department for Communities) as the policy framework for the development of the city centre in 2016.
 - Agreed a Vision for the Linen Quarter, aligned to the plans for the development of the Transport Hub at Great Victoria Street. Work is underway to develop proposals for the Western Quarter and Oxford Street/East Bank Special Action Areas, as identified in the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy.
 - Developed a city car parking strategy which is currently being consulted upon. Members are asked to note that a public consultation event was held on 4 October in City Hall and the consultation will close on 21 November 2016.
 - Successfully launching the Belfast Bike Share scheme in April 2015. This has accounted for more than a quarter of a million healthy and environmentally friendly cycle journeys being undertaken around the city. There are more than 4,000 annual subscribers. The scheme was awarded the Best Integrated Community Hub or Cycle Scheme at the annual Cycle Planning Awards. Work is currently underway to identify options for future expansion and to review the pricing structure.
 - The Employability & Skills Framework, as approved by Council in June 2016. This aims to help an estimated 14,200 Belfast residents into work by 2025. It will become a vital workstream to enhance opportunities for communities and the growth of the city. With approval to develop a Council led employability model for the city, combined with the Council's role as the planning authority which provides greater opportunity to plan

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| | <p>effective and integrated interventions around employability, there is a need to ensure a long term strategic approach to delivering the Framework. Therefore, this is likely to feature prominently in the Committee’s agenda moving forward.</p> <p>This Committee has a central role in building and influencing external partnerships with key city stakeholders and transforming the city to secure future success, therefore it is important that the work of the Committee and the Committee Plan evolves on an ongoing basis to take account of developing and new opportunities for Growing the Economy within the city.</p> <p>3.14 <u>Finance & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The Committee Plan has been developed in the context of the resources available to Committee.</p> <p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>3.15 Programmes and actions within the Committee Plan are developed and delivered in consultation with the Council’s Equality & Diversity Officers.</p> <p>3.16</p> |
| 4.0 | Appendices – Documents Attached |
| 4.1 | Appendix 1: Report on Progress against the CGR Key Actions |