



Subject:	Solar Powered charging points in the City Hall Grounds
Date:	21 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources
Contact Officer:	Paul Gribben, Head of Digital Services

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"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	Following the implementation of Belfast Wi-Fi in the City Hall and with the impending extension of the Belfast Wi-Fi service into the grounds of the City Hall and throughout the city centre, the number of mobile devices being used in and around the City Hall is growing rapidly. In its first year the City Hall was the most popular of our Belfast Wi-Fi sites with approximately 240,000 unique users connecting to the free Wi-Fi service and these figures are continuing to grow.
1.2	There is a growing trend, particularly in the United States, to locate mobile device charging stations in areas where the use of public Wi-Fi is very popular.
1.3	Belfast City Council has been approached by a company called 'Environmental Street Furniture' (ESF), in partnership with the media advertising company 'Bravo', with a proposal to locate solar powered charging stations as a pilot in the grounds of the City Hall. The pilot will allow the Council to review the popularity of the 'Charging Stations' and the added value they will bring for visitors to the City Hall .
1.4	This report provides a high level overview of the technology that is being proposed.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to agree to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install 2 solar powered charging stations in the grounds of the City Hall as a pilot for 6 months to determine their suitability and popularity. • Authorise investigation of longer-term funding for the roll-out of charging stations across the city through sponsorship opportunities should the pilot prove to be successful.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Technology Overview</p> <p>The proposed Solar powered charging station utilises the latest in solar and battery technology to stay powered up. During the day, three 20 watt solar panels collect energy to charge up powerful internal batteries enabling Street Charge to power up phones, tablets and other devices, even when the sun isn't shining. Street Charge will charge a device as fast as a wall socket, usually about two hours from empty to full.</p> <div data-bbox="316 1032 1136 1384" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>3.2 The charging stations consist of an aluminium facade with a steel core. At roughly standing height, small wooden-topped shelf tables are positioned to comfortably allow access to the charging ports. The units contain USB and micro USB cables, along with charging tips for Apple, Android and Windows devices.</p> <p>Dimensions: 63 x54 x150in (160 x 137 x 381 cm)</p>



3.3

Supply and Installation of the Units

If the pilot is approved the units will be installed using a temporary (heavy weighted) base for short term deployment. This will allow them to be moved either to a more suitable location or to accommodate activities that may be taking place in the grounds of the City Hall. The units will be situated on the either side of the walkway at the front of the City Hall. See Appendix One for exact location. This location has been chosen as it falls under the direct control of Belfast City Council which avoids prolonged negotiations with other external bodies to get necessary permissions. **No planning permission is required.**

3.4

Based on previous experience damage to the units by members of the public is very rare. ESF will carry out a weekly visual inspection of the units and cables to ensure all aspects of the charging station remains operational. Any damaged cables can be replaced easily in a few minutes.

Sponsorship of the units

3.7

During the pilot phase Bravo will seek a sponsor for the units. They already have a number of prestigious local companies who have sponsored units previously, and these companies are very keen to have their brand associated with this technology and the use of sustainable solar energy. Bravo will liaise with the Council's Advertising Manager to ensure the appropriateness of potential sponsors. This would offer the long-term operation of the units at no cost to the Council.

3.8	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The 2 units will cost £2,000 to install and this will be covered from existing Smart City revenue budget.</p> <p>The Street charge units usually cost £7,500 each to purchase. There will be no cost to the Council during the 6-month pilot period.</p> <p>If the pilot is successful it is proposed that the custom signage that comes with the station be used for sponsorship to pay for the capital costs of the charging stations.</p> <p>Once the capital costs have been paid off the council will receive a share of the on-going sponsorship revenues (to be determined).</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1: Proposed locations of Charging Stations