



Subject:	Belfast Delegation to MIPIM 2017
Date:	12 April 2017
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
<i>After Committee Decision</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>After Council Decision</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Some time in the future</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Never</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To report the outcome of Belfast's delegation to the MIPIM international property exhibition in March 2017, and to set out key recommendations to support future delivery.
2.0	Overview and Recommendations
2.1	The 2017 delegation built on the success of 2016, with a larger and more cohesive city partnership, and a stronger investment proposition. Belfast is now firmly on the radar of investors and developers who had not previously considered the city as a location for doing business.
2.2	The Belfast Agenda highlights the Council's ambition to attract 1 billion of investment into the city, along with medium term goals to develop 1.5m sq of Grade A Offices, and 2,500 hotel

	<p>bed spaces by 2021. Delivering this ambitious agenda will require a further step change in how we position and promote the city. Committee are therefore asked to consider the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Authorise officers to scope out options for re-positioning the Belfast stand at MIPIM 2018 to an area of higher footfall. II. Approve in principle that the existing £60,000 investment be enhanced, subject to officers presenting more detailed proposals at later Committee. III. Authorise officers to commence procurement for consultancy support for programming, event management, communications, and design.
3.0	Main Report
	<p>Key Outcomes</p> <p>3.1 In February 2017 Belfast secured its first major success from last year’s delegation, with an announcement from Signature Living to bring forward 5 new hotels in the city, including a George Best themed hotel. This was quickly followed through with the purchase of the Crumlin Road Court House, which Signature intends to develop as a four star hotel.</p> <p>3.2 Council are still progressing conversations with investors and developers first engaged in 2016. However, this has now been supplemented by meetings with an additional 20 financial institutions and investors that we engaged last month, along with 350 contacts collated overall. Of particular note are meetings with potential investors into the new Transport Hub, including those who would have the scale, track record and expertise to consider investment into the adjacent 12-acre regeneration site, Weaver’s Cross.</p> <p>City Delegation & Events Programme</p> <p>3.3 A total of 79 people attended MIPIM as part of the Belfast delegation (up from 53 in 2016) with 38 organisational sponsors contributing £240,350 of private finance (up from 23 sponsors contributing £163,000 in 2016). This represents a 50% increase in one year and highlights the success of the strong public-private partnership that has been created across the city. It is worth noting that the Council contribution of £60,000, whilst vital for leveraging wider support, was only 20% of the combined budget, thus providing excellent value for money for the rate payer.</p> <p>3.4 The enhanced delegation now includes a wide cross-section of interests, including developers, investors, banks, property agents, professional services, universities and</p>

	<p>government bodies. The collaborative approach adopted by Council has opened up more opportunities to meet investors and developers through partnership networks.</p>
3.5	<p>Belfast's pitch for 2017 was focused around seven key pillars: talent, tax, technology, location, high growth clusters, track record and quality of life. These were woven into a narrative involving 20 presentations on stand including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Home of Thrones</i>: to highlight the unique success and strength of our creative industries. • <i>City of Millennials</i>: focusing on young people, and the opportunities to study, work and live in the city. • <i>Connected City</i>: highlighting the success of FDI, in particular technology investment. • <i>Ready for the World</i>: showcasing international events held in Belfast, with particular focus on the joint bid to host the 2023 Rugby World Cup. • <i>The Business of Tourism</i>: outlining the outstanding success of this growing sector, and the investment opportunities going forward.
3.6	<p>Belfast City Council also had the opportunity to attend a number of wider conference events. These included an International Waterfront City Summit; the Estates Gazette City Vision Panel; the Department for Trade Regional Cities event. Members took part in high profile roundtable discussions, and the Chief Executive delivered a key note presentation highlighting anticipated opportunities in Belfast following Brexit.</p>
3.7	<p>A series of eye-catching events helped animate the stand and attracted significant external interest; including the use of the Throne from Game of Thrones which attracted over 2,000 delegates. This success reinforces the need to create high profile marketing initiatives for future years.</p>
3.8	<p>Feedback from the delegation was extremely positive. Participants were impressed by the leadership and organization provided by Council, and the quality of speakers and events. They confirmed that having the structure of the stand and organisation allowed them to get on with "doing business" out at MIPIM, which helped leverage the impact that Belfast was able to make.</p>
3.9	<p>A comprehensive survey will be conducted as part of the contract of the existing appointed consultants in early April, to collate and consider delegate feedback in more detail. However, the overarching feedback from the delegation was that 2017 was more successful than</p>

2016; and that we must keep pushing our city forward to international audiences as a collaborative group.

Media Strategy

- 3.10 Over 90 press articles about Belfast have been published (up from 29 last year), and this is likely to increase with anticipated features in trade and business press. We also issued 1,194 tweets and retweets in 10 days around the event, with 2.38m impressions achieved (almost 10 times higher than 2016). The overall financial and reputational value is currently being researched to quantify the media coverage achieved.
 - 3.11 Five principal releases were made during the event: relocation of HMRC, Citi expansion, Signature Living hotel Investment, support for Belfast co-hosting Rugby World Cup and the DoF Investment Fund Announcement. These were a significant driver in generating interest in Belfast from print, broadcast, trade and online media.
 - 3.12 Delegate communications were supported by a specially developed Belfast App, which highlighted key events and contact information. This was accessed by the majority of delegates and generated peak traffic of over 400 views per day. In addition the Belfast proposition was featured in a comprehensive brochure, which profiled every sponsor in the delegation.
 - 3.13 The build up to MIPIM 2017 also enjoyed significant impact. Two key note events were held, a marketing event at the former Belfast Telegraph building in December 2016 that attracted almost 100 potential delegates; and promotion of the Council's wider Go To Market Strategy at the Belfast Waterfront in February 2017. This attracted over 150 people and generated a number of positive broadcast features about investment in Belfast, and the physical development of the city.
 - 3.14 The positive messaging about the city, which is permeating the MIPIM audience more deeply year on year, is changing both indigenous perceptions about Belfast and encouraging an international audience to start looking at the city for investment opportunities.
- Context – Other Cities**
- 3.15 It was noted that at MIPIM 2017 many of the regional cities from the UK significantly improved and increased the size of their stand, substantially raising their profile. This looks set to continue and emphasises our need to continue to build on the success of

	<p>MIPIM 16/17 and seek to continually improve and raise our profile. Officers have also been informed that Dublin are likely to attend MIPIM in 2018 after an absence for a number of years.</p>
3.16	<p>Future Focus</p> <p>In the immediate future officers will be following up expressions of interest from investors to arrange a schedule of visits to the city, and to translate this pipeline into tangible investments. We will continue to integrate city centre investment activity with our existing international marketing strategy; and to develop shared messaging alongside strategic partners in both the public and private sector.</p>
3.17	<p>The strong public-private partnership of the City Delegation is the cornerstone on which our success is based. The 50% growth in delegates and private funding between 2016 and 2017 highlights the growing credibility and cohesion that City Leadership has brought. Council need to nurture and develop this relationship on a continuous basis, creating an enduring city partnership that goes above and beyond the immediate needs of the delegation to MIPIM.</p>
3.18	<p>With the 50% growth of the Belfast delegation, and the growth of Council ambitions for the City, serious consideration should be given to the size and location of the Belfast stand. The 2017 was twice the size of the year before, but was still limited in its ability to host larger groups and discussions and provided limited facilities for individual networking. In addition, while the Belfast programme successfully animated the stand, the location could be more prominent to obtain an increase in passing footfall and the opportunity for additional engagement.</p>
3.19	<p>The growing ambitions for 2018 underpins the requirement to start planning as soon as possible to ensure we can continue to deliver effectively, going above and beyond to ensure the best profile for our city and business opportunities for our Belfast delegation.</p>
3.20	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> Finance: Members are asked to note that a balanced budget is projected for the 2017 MIPIM fund of £300,000 (80% of which was raised from the private sector). Although excellent value for money, both in terms of partnership support and investment outcomes, the overall spend illustrates the high level of funding required to effectively market the city on the international stage.</p>

3.21	<p>Resources: To help resource the step change in our investment focus, the city centre team has recruited a senior marketing manager to co-ordinate MIPIM and all investment related marketing activity on a permanent basis. Members are asked to note that significant external resource is still required: including design and construction of the stand; PR & marketing; and the cost of preparatory events. Subject to approval from Members, these will be funded through the public-private budget outlined above.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations</u></p> <p>None</p>
3.22	
4.0	<p>Appendices - Documents Attached</p> <p>None</p>