

# City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 11th October, 2017

## MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor O'Donnell (Chairperson);  
The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire);  
Aldermen Kingston, McGimpsey and L. Patterson; and  
Councillors Beattie, Boyle, Dorrian,  
Dudgeon, Hargey, Howard, Johnston,  
Kyle, Magee, McAteer, McDonough-Brown,  
Mullan, O'Hara and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. D. Durkan, Director of Development;  
Ms. N. Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Graham.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 13th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 2nd October.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor O'Hara declared an interest in Item 8a, Rural Development Programme – Basic Services Measure, in that she was a Council nominee on the Local Action Group for Hannahstown, which drew down funding for regeneration projects. Councillor O'Hara left the room for the duration of the Item.

### **Request to film proceedings**

(Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer, attended in connection with this Item)

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the BBC to film part of the proceedings of the meeting, in relation to Item 6d, St. Patrick's Day.

The City Solicitor advised the Members that the usual convention was to permit filming at the Council meetings, but not Committee meetings. He advised the Members that, while Committee meetings were now open to the public and audio recorded, they provided a forum which allowed Members to have open and informed discussion and he advised that the Committee decline the request.

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Moved by Councillor Walsh,  
Seconded by Councillor O'Hara and

Resolved - That the Committee rejects the request from the BBC to film part of the proceedings of the meeting.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to allow the BBC to film the meeting for a short period before it commenced to use as a background shot for a news item.

**Matters referred back from Council**

**Notice of Motion – Traffic in the City Centre**

(Ms. A. Doherty, Planning and Transport Officer, attended in connection with this item)

The Committee was reminded that the Council on 2nd October had referred the following notice of motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Dudgeon and seconded by Alderman Johnston, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council has grave concerns about traffic congestion in the City centre, particularly at the back of City Hall, resulting from recent new arrangements. A major source of the problem at peak times is the prohibition on vehicles (except buses and emergency services) going from Donegall Square East into Adelaide Street from 7.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.

This means that cars must either go into Chichester Street, turn right into Montgomery Street, then right into May Street and left into Adelaide Street, or use Donegall Square East, then Donegall Square South and Bedford Street to go in an eastern or south-eastern direction. There is no other reasonable way for vehicles to go from the west or south west of the City to the south and east, despite the description of the route as a rat run.

Cars accessing Adelaide Street between June, 2015 and August, 2016 were caught by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) camera in Donegall Square East on 18,000 occasions, resulting in £1 million of fines. This proves the difficulty faced by drivers and especially visitors to the City.

The Council, therefore, calls on DfI, working in conjunction with Translink, to end the prohibition on traffic entering Adelaide Street from Donegall Square East. This would also enable the removal of the large and unsightly electronic warning sign in Donegall Square East and free up the traffic island on which it sits.”

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After discussion, the Committee:

1. endorsed the wording of the Motion and agreed that a letter be sent to the Department for Infrastructure requesting that the proposals therein be put into effect; and
2. agreed that the letter would extend an invitation to representatives from the Department for Infrastructure to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the issues with traffic in the city centre and to clarify the Department's reasons for the current traffic arrangements.

**Presentations**

**EastSide Arts**

The Director of Development reminded the Committee that it had agreed, at its meeting on 9th August, to invite EastSide Arts and Féile an Phobail to present to a future meeting.

The Chairperson advised the Members that Mr. M. Kinkead, Chief Executive of EastSide Partnership, and Ms. R. Kennedy, EastSide Arts Manager, were in attendance to provide an overview of the EastSide Arts festival and they were admitted to the meeting.

Mr Kinkead provided the Committee with an overview of EastSide Arts, which, he explained, was an integral part of EastSide Partnership, and he outlined a number of the activities which it had been involved in since it was established in 2012, including:

- the delivery of six annual arts festivals;
- the delivery of five C. S. Lewis festivals;
- five Woodstock R&B Festivals and dozens of emerging artists;
- seven Van Morrison shows; and
- over 100 year-round arts events.

He explained to the Committee that, since 2012, the work of the organisation had been carried out without any organisational financial support from the Council. He clarified that, while EastSide Arts had received programme support from the Council, and additional non-recurrent support in 2015, this financial assistance did not permit it to plan a structure to deliver or organise the programmes, and that this was challenging.

However, he advised the Committee that the Council was an important partner to EastSide Arts and that he hoped that in the future they could better work together.

The Members were advised that EastSide Arts had a six-year plan for 2018-2023, with key areas for development. He outlined that this included the growth of the C. S. Lewis Festival and the development of the Woodstock R&B Festival, to ensure their international relevance, and the development of the EastSide Arts Festival and the public hub of C.S. Lewis Square in conjunction with the Council.

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During discussion, a number of Members commended the work of EastSide Arts and of the EastSide Partnership, particularly in relation to the success of the C.S. Lewis Square, which had become a vibrant, shared space for all age groups and social backgrounds to socialise in the inner east of the city.

In relation to the engagement which had taken place with local schools, the Arts Manager confirmed to the Committee that competitions were run, as part of the C. S. Lewis Festival, and that continued partnership with EastSide Learning was an important part of community engagement.

In response to a Member's question regarding the potential of organising diversionary activities for young people during the first two weeks of July, Mr. Kinhead acknowledged that it was difficult with only 2 full time staff members but that it had remained focussed in its belief that the arts were for everyone and were, in his opinion, the most important driver for the city.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and they retired from the meeting.

**Féile an Phobail 2018**

The Chairperson advised the Members that Mr. K. Gamble, Director of Féile an Phobail, and Mr. H. Connolly, Fáilte Feirste Thiar, were in attendance to provide an overview of the plans for the festival in 2018 and they were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. Gamble explained to the Members that 2018 would mark the 30th anniversary of Féile an Phobail. The Committee was advised that the festival had been established in 1988 in response to the conflict, in order to celebrate the rich culture and community of West Belfast and its love for the arts, sport and language. He explained that it was now Ireland's biggest community arts festival, attracting over 80,000 people annually to events throughout the year.

He stated that Féile an Phobail played a leadership role in the arts and culture within the city, by bringing communities together through the arts, attracting visitor spend and showcasing the city. He stated that Féile had led a cultural programme and had worked with arts and cultural groups, schools and youth groups across the city when the World Police and Fire Games had taken place in Belfast in 2013. He outlined that Féile continued to work alongside EastSide Arts, ArtsEkta, the Duncairn Centre for Arts and Culture and the Spectrum Centre.

In relation to the 30th anniversary of the festival, Mr Gamble outlined details and explained that it would be a community celebration of global culture over three festivals, one in March, August and October. He described to the Members that they would continue the comprehensive volunteer programme, the marketing programme and that it would commission specific pieces of work to reflect and celebrate 30 years of arts, culture and community through Féile an Phobail. He also pointed out that hospitality was at the core of the festival.

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The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and Mr. Connolly retired from the meeting.

**Feile re: St. Patrick's Day Consultation**

The Chairperson advised the Members that Mr. K. Gamble, Director of Féile an Phobail, and Mr. R. Crowe, Copius Consulting, were in attendance to provide the Members with a summary of the consultation which had been carried out in relation to the St. Patrick's Day celebrations in Belfast, and they were admitted to the meeting.

In response to a Member's question, the Chairperson clarified that the title on the agenda, namely "Fáilte Feirste Thiar", had been incorrect and that the presentation was in fact from Féile an Phobail and Copius Consulting.

Mr. Gamble explained that Féile an Phobail had been allocated Council funding in order to carry out work on the St. Patrick's Day celebrations in the city and to look at how the city could encourage visitors to stay in the city for longer periods. He explained that Féile had commissioned Copius Consulting to carry out research as part of this work.

Mr. Crowe provided the Committee with an overview of the quantitative and qualitative findings from the consultation, which included participants who had and who had not attended the St. Patrick's Day events in Belfast in the past three years. He also advised that businesses had been consulted about the events.

The Members were advised of the following key qualitative findings:

- the city should be making a greater effort for the festivities for the week leading up to St. Patrick's Day while encouraging the greater Belfast area to get involved in the parades;
- the city centre and parade should be more festive for the events, including global greening, street bunting and more street entertainment;
- the event(s) should last longer than just the parade and concert, a day of celebrations;
- more emphasis on community involvement with the parade;
- better policing and management of underage drinkers and anti-social behaviour; and
- more activities for children, similar to Culture Night.

Mr. Crowe described the successful activities which were held annually in Dublin, Downpatrick and New York to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and explained that Belfast should learn from those as examples of Best Practice. He stated that the natural next step for Belfast would be the creation of a Partnership approach to the celebrations, where resources could be shared amongst key partners, such as financial, human, skills, venues and equipment.

A number of Members stated that it was promising to hear new and creative ideas around the city's St. Patrick's Day celebrations and that Belfast should seek to attract many more tourists to the city for the celebrations. Other Members suggested that there

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was a lack of cross-community participation in the events and that they had some concerns in relation to the proposed “greening” of Belfast. The point was also made that activities to engage those aged 15 – 17 should be a priority, particularly in relation to the anti-social behaviour which had taken place in the Holylands area of the city.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and they retired from the meeting.

After discussion, the Committee noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting to include the full report on St. Patrick’s Day which had been commissioned by the Council.

**Restricted Items**

**The Information contained in the following two reports is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014**

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion of these items as, due to the nature of the items, that there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42 (4) and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

(Councillor Dudgeon, Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair.)

**Former Belfast Telegraph Building**

(Mr. J. Collier, Development Manager, City Centre Development Team, attended in connection with this item.)

The Development Manger provided the Committee with information on the range of interim uses which had been agreed for the former Belfast Telegraph site in advance of its redevelopment by Bel Tel LLP, the Council’s joint venture with McAleer & Rushe. He provided the Members with details of a nine-month licence with Limelight Belfast Ltd to occupy and manage a section of the ground floor of the site in the non-listed part of the building.

The Committee was also advised of a second temporary let which had been agreed, to Digital Catapult Northern Ireland, for the use of 4,500sqft of the first floor extension of the building. The Development Manger explained that it was for a project sponsored by the Department for the Economy which promoted pioneering immersive technologies.

A number of Members expressed concern in relation to how the application for an Entertainments Licence, regarding the interim use of the space, had been dealt with, and sought confirmation from officers that a similar situation would not occur again.

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During discussion, the Development Manager confirmed to the Members that Bel Tel LLP was the landlord and that the Council's role, as part of Bel Tel LLP, was distinct from its statutory function.

After discussion, the Committee:

- noted the contents of the report and the success of Bel Tel LLP in:
  - having secured an occupier for a large portion of the ground floor of the non-listed building, for use as an entertainments venue; and
  - having agreed terms for the use of 4,500sqft of the first floor extension of the building by Digital Catapult Northern Ireland, a project sponsored by the Department for the Economy that promoted pioneering immersive technologies.

(Councillor O'Donnell, Chairperson, in the Chair.)

### **Zoo Update**

(Mrs. J. Wilson, Business Manager, City and Neighbourhoods, attended in connection with this item)

The Business Manager provided the Committee with an overview of the recent visit to the Exploris Aquarium, Portaferry, which a number of members had participated in. She outlined that five Councillors from the Ards and North Down Borough Council, along with their Chief Executive, had also attended to inform the Belfast delegation of their involvement in the change to the operating arrangements of the Aquarium.

She explained to the Members that the procurement of a contract to undertake a feasibility exercise was underway, whereby the successful company would be required to present to the Committee in the New Year on the preferred cost benefit analysis of each option, with a clear rationale and a critical path of how each could be achieved.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **Request to Present to Committee**

#### **FCB Studios – Inner North and West Masterplan**

The Director of City Centre Development provided the Members with an update on the work which was ongoing on the Inner North and West Masterplan and sought the Committee's approval for a presentation by the consultancy team, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, at a future meeting.

A Member requested an update on the western part of the City Centre. The Director of City Centre Development advised that an overall Masterplanning strategy

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was to be agreed initially, which would then allow short, medium and long term plans for areas to be identified.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. that a Workshop on the Inner North and West Masterplan be held, with the date to be determined with the Chairperson; and
2. to receive a presentation of the draft Masterplan in December, to allow Members' consideration ahead of public consultation.

**Positioning Belfast to Compete**

**MIPIM 2018**

The Director of City Centre Development advised the Members that an event management consultant for the Belfast delegation to MIPIM 2018 had been procured over the summer and appointed in September. She also explained that a working group had been established to help steer the development of the programme.

She highlighted to the Members that the 4-day conference involved a concentrated programme of events, meetings and engagements which allowed the delegation to present Belfast as a City ready for investment. She explained that four days at MIPIM, based on the 2017 schedule, would include the following:

- 20 speaking engagements involving 40 high profile speakers from the city and beyond;
- joint events with other cities from across the UK and Europe;
- an intense schedule of investor and developer meetings as well as support to the Belfast delegation at development meetings each day;
- working and networking breakfast, lunch and/or dinner engagements;
- on and off-stand presentations to identified potential city investors and funders; and
- continuous media interviews and social media slots.

The Director of City Centre Development explained that the private sector delegates which financially supported Belfast at MIPIM expected support from the Council's Elected Members and senior officers to ensure that the City's potential was showcased and articulated at every opportunity. The Committee was advised that a strong team presence from Belfast City Council was therefore required.

She emphasised that the delegation was seeking to raise the investment profile of the City at MIPIM 2018 and, as a result, she expected that the programme would be even more demanding than in previous years.



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The Committee agreed the attendance, at MIPM 2018, of:

1. the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Committee, or their nominees; and
2. a number of senior officers who were needed to promote Belfast through the delivery of presentations, support media releases, target investors, present regeneration schemes and the economic growth profile.

**South by Southwest Update**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to:**

- **Update Members on planned activities as part of Council’s support for the business mission to South by Southwest (SXSW) in partnership with Invest NI, Generator NI and Digital Catapult**
- **Agree Member and Officer representation at the event, to support the programme of activity.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- **Agree the outlined programme of activity for SXSW 2018 in partnership with Generator NI, Invest NI and Digital Catapult. The budget for this was previously approved at City Growth and Regeneration Committee in April 2017 as part of the programme of support aimed at ‘Creative and Tech Profile and Development’.**
- **Agree, given the increased profile of activity, that the Lord Mayor or Chair of Committee along with two officers to manage operational arrangements attend the event**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Members will be aware that, at the April 2017 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, approval was given to support a programme of activity supporting the development and growth of the creative, digital and tech sectors in the City. This support is profiled and supported under the banner of ‘Output Belfast’. It encompasses a broader programme of work supported by our key partners including Invest Northern Ireland, Generator NI and Digital Catapult.**

- 3.2** While this report concentrates on SXSW, the Council has also engaged in other activities including supporting participation by local companies in events such as The Great Escape in Brighton (May 2017), AVA Output Belfast Conference (June 2017) and the Output Belfast Conference (Feb 2017). The Council's support in these areas has levered investment of £70,000 from Invest NI towards a music entrepreneurship programme as well as support to converge music with screen industries in order to develop new export opportunities. This collaborative approach is creating a more strategic sectoral approach to supporting businesses in this sector and maximising the return on investment for all partners.
- 3.3** The City's interactive and convergence sectors will continue to grow over the coming years and the Council is working with its partners to ensure that local businesses are well placed to take advantage of these opportunities. This work will include the development of the Immersive Tech Hub at the former Belfast Telegraph building which was recently approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
- 3.4** A flagship calendar event for Output Belfast is South by Southwest (SXSW). SXSW takes place in Austin, Texas each year and is seen as the premier global event focusing on the creative industries through conference keynotes, networking events and conference exhibition. By day, the 15,000+ conference registrants do business in the SXSW Trade Show in the Austin Convention Centre and partake of a full agenda of industry-specific panel discussions featuring hundreds of speakers of international stature. SXSW remains the key US showcasing, deal striking, networking and media forum for the international creative digital industry. Attendance is typically by those in the business of film, music, technology and creativity.
- 3.5** Five local businesses were supported by the Council to take part in the event last year. Some of the key outcomes include:
- Sales of £185k identified;
  - One company establishing links with Sony Playstation, Mattel group and Spotify;
  - One company now developing creative audio visual product as part of SXSW 2018;
  - One company established links with Amazon Prime to identify new workflow patterns to help secure ongoing work for a second season of a hit Amazon Prime TV show;

- One company collaborating with Kieron Pepper (The Prodigy) now ACM regarding working together on a programme to help students develop stronger visual brands.
  - One company established a relationship with High Snobiety magazine for provision of video content (2million Facebook followers).
- 3.6 The dates for SXSW are the 9–18 March 2018. Taking account of the key dates within the programme, it is proposed that the Output Belfast activity and engagement will be 12-16 March.
- 3.7 Belfast City Council presence at SXSW in 2018 will have the dual purpose of showcasing Belfast talent and providing capability support to business participants. It will also present an opportunity to profile Belfast as a dynamic, creative City that is a magnet for talent and innovation. We are aiming to increase the city profile at the event in 2018. We will invest in specialist support to help Belfast-based businesses to maximise the opportunities presented at the event and we will host a number of showcasing and networking events with the aim of profiling Belfast to the international marketplace in terms of investment, skills, technology and innovation.
- 3.8 For SXSW 2018, the Council will work in partnership with Invest NI, Generator NI, Digital Catapult and the Department of International Trade (DIT) as well as other international trade partners. Through our contribution to the business mission, Belfast City Council will support the attendance of six local companies. We will also deliver the following:
- Facilitated one to one networking events, demo days and pitching events for participating digital companies;
  - Engagement and participation as part of the DIT exhibition stand in the main convention centre (details currently being finalised with DIT);
  - 5 days of music showcasing and business networking in the UK Music embassy;
  - 1 ‘Output Belfast’ networking and profiling event to promote Belfast as an investment location and to provide participating Belfast companies the opportunity to invite and network with key international buyers and companies. This event has grown year on year. At SXSW it was unfortunate that we had to turn delegates away from the event as it was over-subscribed so this year the event will be increased to accommodate up to 250 attendees;
  - An ‘Output Belfast’ music showcase and networking event with a focus on promoting the music industry in

**Belfast and supporting the participating bands and musicians. This event will be delivered in partnership with DIT. Whilst this is primarily a music event, it provides a unique opportunity for businesses to network with 500 SXSW delegates and identify immersive and convergence opportunities;**

- A Belfast city showcase and networking event to promote Belfast as an investment location and to provide participating Belfast companies with the opportunity to invite and network with key international buyers. This will be an invitation-only networking event targeting up to 100 key influencers. The invitation list will include civic stakeholders and partners/associates from the City of Austin, our Sister Cities of Nashville and Boston and key industry contacts. The event will showcase the vibrancy and innovation in Belfast, exemplified through our Smart Belfast approach. The City of Austin has agreed to help us prospect the right clients to network with our businesses and showcase the potential of the city as a dynamic business and investment location;**
- A potential business pitching event at Capital Factory, Austin for the 6 local businesses supported by Council to attend SXSW;**
- Participation on the business panel as part of the ‘Cities Summit’ during the conference programme (awaiting final confirmation). This panel will be in partnership with the City of Austin and key Belfast and Austin based creative digital companies;**

**3.9 In the run-up to the event, we will work with the six participating businesses to provide them with the necessary support to maximise the impact of their time in Austin. This will include prospecting for SXSW, sales skills development, pitch and marketing support, development of specific itineraries, development of an export plan and follow-up support and coaching following the event. As part of Global Entrepreneurship Week (13 – 19 November) there will be a pitching competition with a prize of enhanced support for attendance at SXSW 2018, mentor support and a year’s free membership of Innovation Factory. This is included within the 6 Belfast-based businesses supported.**

**3.10 Invest NI and Generator NI will support participating companies and a select number of artists again in 2018 by providing up to 50% of the travel, accommodation and conference pass costs. As referenced above, Belfast City Council will contribute to the cost for up to 6 Belfast-based creative and digital companies that will benefit from**

**participation in SXSW. The companies supported would not meet the criteria for benefitting from Invest NI support. It is anticipated that the NI delegation will consist of up to 20 local creative digital companies and 4 musicians selected to showcase. Given the volume of activity – as well as the potential profiling opportunities – it is proposed that the Lord Mayor or Chair of Committee attend along with two officers to look after operational arrangements.**

**3.11 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

**Belfast City Council will select the six participating companies who will be in receipt of Council support. As part of the application process, equality and good relations will be considered. Recruitment of participants will be sector-based and targeted at the industries best suited to SXSW.**

**3.12 Financial and Resource Implications**

**The overall cost of delivering the programme detailed above is in the region of £40,000 and is met from the existing Economic Development Budgets. The City Growth and Regeneration Committee in April 2017 approved an overall budget for Creative and Tech sector profile and development, supporting export and international trade and business incentivisation.”**

During a discussion on Members’ participation in Committee-related events and study visits, a Member raised concerns that the Independent Members had been excluded from participating on the upcoming City Centre Living trip to London, as the Committee had agreed the attendance of one representative from each of the six main parties. A Member pointed out that this had resulted in some Members which were not on the City Growth and Regeneration Committee attending the visit.

A further Member acknowledged the issue and stated that flexibility should be exercised by the Committee in determining the nomination of Members for future events and trips, with each event being dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. the outlined programme of activity for SXSW 2018 in partnership with Generator NI, Invest NI and Digital Catapult. The budget for this having previously been approved;
2. that the Chairperson of the Committee, or her nominee, and two officers, to manage operational arrangements, would attend the event; and
3. that consideration would be given to the independent Members of the Committee when agreeing the future attendance of Members on Committee visits.

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**BBC Music Events**

(Mr. G. Copeland, City Events Manager, attended in connection with this item)

The City Events Manager reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 9th August, it had agreed to provide funding for the following three BBC music events which were planned to take place across Belfast in 2018:

- BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards, Belfast Waterfront, 4th April;
- BBC 'The Biggest Weekend' Music Festival happening across the UK in four different locations. Northern Ireland's location would be Belfast Titanic Slipways and would happen across two days between 25th and 28th May, with potential for other fringe activity. The core of the Belfast activity would be the BBC Six Music Festival; and
- BBC Proms in the Park, Titanic Slipways, 8th September.

He provided the Members with an overview of each of the events. The Committee was reminded that it had specifically requested that officers engage with the BBC on how the events could assist the Council in relation to its Employability and Skills priorities, as outlined within the Belfast Agenda and Employability and Skills Framework.

The Committee was advised that the Council would coordinate with the BBC in relation to the following programmes of activity which were being delivered by the Council:

- **Employer Engagement Initiatives** - which aimed to create better connections between employers and local schools. This initiative could be utilised by the BBC to create linkages to provide a number of meaningful work experience opportunities which could be targeted towards local schools and/or individuals who may be unemployed. For this to be effective, Officers would need to confirm with the BBC the following: the number of work placement opportunities they can provide; the expected duration of work placements; the timing of placement opportunities and the operational areas of work experience opportunities;
- **Digital Skills Programme:** a new initiative being launched by the Council, working with local schools to develop the digital skills of teachers and students. Officers would look at opportunities for the BBC to add value to this new initiative through the provision of careers/educational resources or volunteering of BBC staff at workshops etc; and
- **The Princes Trust Get Started Programme:** the Council would be supporting the delivery of a Get Started Digital Skills programme targeting young people (aged 18-30 years old) who were disengaged from mainstream support. The participants would engage in a week-long programme of intensive activity and would have access to three months of follow up support to help them positively progress into training and/or employment. Again, Officers would work with the BBC to engage through the delivery of

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the one week programme or providing work experience opportunities for young people.

The Manager highlighted to the Committee that there were also plans for Industry Insight events which would be targeted at young people citywide. He advised the Members that the above mentioned programmes were an outline as to how the Council would work with the BBC in the Employability and Skills area, taking into account the BBC's operational capacity, timings, insurance liability and any legal issues, where the final programme would form a contractual agreement as part of the Council's funding of the 2018 projects.

In addition, the Manager highlighted to the Members that the BBC would extensively promote all three projects across all of its multi-media platforms, nationally and internationally, and pointed out that the value of this promotion could be in excess of £11million, based on Glasgow City Council's joint staging of BBC Six Music in 2017.

He advised the Members that the three events would also help to raise the profile of Belfast in the lead up to the European Capital of Culture 2023 decisions.

The Manager explained that the budget had already been agreed by the Committee, as part of next year's normal events unit budget. The Committee noted that the BBC would also operate a ticketing fee, but that the cost structure would be based on a socially accessible ticketing price and would offer value for money.

The Committee noted the update which had been provided.

### **St. Patrick's Day**

(Mr. G. Copeland, City Events Manager, and Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager, attended in connection with this item)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 This paper is to seek approval from Members in regard to proposed operational changes to the 2018 St Patrick's Day celebrations. This item was raised at September's Committee meeting and deferred to this month.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 Members are asked to:**

- **Agree that the Council amends its operations for the 2018 St Patrick's Day (Saturday 17 March) celebrations to a parade-only event and not to stage a concert in Custom House Square.**

**3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1** As Members are aware, the issue of health and safety is an ongoing and a changing dynamic. Across the Council, Officers continually work to ensure the safety of the public, staff and contractors when staging BCC's events programme. This involves a continual review of arrangements, whether the event is a one-off, an annual or multi-annual project. As part of this review process, Members are being asked to endorse changes to the St Patrick's Day Celebrations. These changes are designed to increase the robustness of health and safety plans attached to the event.
- 3.2** Members are being asked to endorse the removal of the concert element of the Council's annual St Patrick's Day festivities – the day normally involves both a concert and a parade. Over the last eleven years, both events have been staged to mark the Bank Holiday, with a city centre audience in excess of 20,000. However, the capacity to host the concert, at Custom House Square, has become an issue of concern in the last number of years. The key is the number of people trying to access the concert site after the parade, with significant congestion and safety issues at the intersection of High Street, Victoria Street and Queen's Square/Custom House Square. It is expected that the level of congestion will increase significantly given that the 2018 event will be staged on a Saturday. In addition to this, it is notable that after the initial influx, audience numbers tend to fluctuate, particularly depending on the weather. Therefore, for 2018, and subject to the Council's Events and Festival strategic review, Officers are seeking approval to expand the parade element of St Patrick's Day. This would involve a larger procession which would assemble in Custom House Square and then follow a city centre route which would traverse through the main retail district and return to Custom House Square. To enable this to happen it would mean there would be no concert on the day. Recent surveys by Belfast City Council indicate that the best way to improve the St Patrick's Day event would be the upscaling of the parade.
- 3.3** Therefore, given that St Patrick's Day, in 2018, will be delivered by Belfast City Council on a Saturday, there is a unique opportunity to attract a wider, representative audience to the event by growing the parade and carnival aspect of the day. This would involve an increase in spend to provide additional workshops, performers, props and expenses to allow more groups to participate from across the community. Any expenditure on this aspect would be found within the existing event budget. Plus, if permission is given, to rethink the



musical element of the event, by moving away from a mainstream concert at Custom House Square, and instead look towards 'pop up' musical and street performance to be staged within Belfast city centre in areas such as Writers Square, Bank Square, Corn Market, St Anne's Square and Cotton Court. The time frame for the event activities would also be increased to run from 11:00 to 17:00, contributing to a more festival feel throughout the city for the day. Such changes would adhere to suggestions from Belfast City Centre Management and Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

- 3.4 Overall, it is envisaged that these changes would assist in reducing significant health and safety concerns that now pose a major risk to the public, contractors and Council staff during the St Patrick's Day events. However, additional health and safety elements may be required due to ongoing reviews connected to overall security in public spaces in the light of recent terror attacks. Any arrangements would be introduced and conducted in conjunction with PSNI and would be subject to ongoing analysis.

3.5 Equality & Good Relations Implications

As with all major public facing cultural projects, the above events have the potential to bring together people from a wide range of backgrounds and therefore promote good relations in the city and across Northern Ireland.

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

It is envisaged that there will be limited additional costs connected to the proposed amendments. Any changes would be subject to input from PSNI and the Department for Infrastructure (Roads). However, Officers would be hopeful that any cost implications would be found within the Development Department's City Events Unit budget for 2017-18."

A number of Members asked for clarification on the health and safety concerns which had been cited within the report.

The City Events Manager explained to the Members that the concerns had arisen because the celebrations for Saint Patrick's Day 2018 were due to take place on a Saturday, which would likely mean an increased numbers of attendees. He also explained that there were concerns in relation to crowd control, specifically in the area where the parade would meet the concert.

A number of Members pointed out that the Council's City Events Team had a history of staging numerous large and successful ticketed events.

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During discussion, the City Events Manager and the Building Control Manager confirmed to the Committee that officers could alter the time of the concert and/or the start and finish locations for the parade in order to mitigate the health and safety risks.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. to hold a concert in Custom House Square and a parade for the 2018 St Patrick's Day celebrations in the City, on Saturday 17th March;
2. agreed that officers could alter the time of the concert and/or the start and finish locations for the parade in order to manage the health and safety concerns which had been raised; and
3. agreed that a further report would only be submitted for the Committee's consideration if any issues remained.

**Growing Businesses and the Economy**

**Innovation Factory Performance Review – Year 2 Action Plan**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to:**

- Update Members on the outcome of the Year One (2016/17) Annual Performance Review (APR) of the Innovation Factory Operator contract and set out the high level targets for the year Two Action Plan
- Note a proposed amendment to the contract, which will be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Note the outcome of the Innovation Factory operator contract Annual Performance Review 2016/17 and performance against year one targets;
- Note a proposed amendment to the contract, which will be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval;
- Note the Key Performance Indicators set within the Year 2 Annual Service Plan which have been incorporated into a business plan for delivery and are aligned to the original tender submission by Oxford Innovation.

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1** The Innovation Factory (IF) is located at Forthriver Business Park and offers Grade A-standard workspace for small businesses. The building is 55,000 sq. ft. in total; this includes 32,240 sq. ft. lettable space and 5,133 sq. ft. innovation space. It is the first development on the wider 14 acre business park site which was previously the site of James Mackie and Sons Engineering Works. This IF project was part-funded by Belfast City Council, Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for Northern Ireland.

**3.2** The Centre will accommodate 382 workstations across 111 business units when at full capacity. It will support at least 145 jobs by December 2018 and 187 by December 2020. It will provide support annually to over 100 businesses and create 5 collaborative networks. It will promote and encourage social and economic regeneration, encourage local and foreign direct investment and act as a catalyst for further development of Forthriver Business Park. Belfast City Council accepted hand-over of the Centre from the contractor on 18th April 2016. Oxford Innovation Limited was appointed as the Operator of the Centre via a Competitive Dialogue procurement process. The Service Contract with Oxford Innovation came into effect on 1 June 2016. The contract is for an initial term of 5 years with the possibility of extension for a further three periods of three years, subject to performance.

**3.3** In April 2017, the Council conducted the first Annual Performance Review (APR) of the operator contract. Given that this was the first time that the review was conducted, there were lessons learned on both sides in terms of the process and issues such as supporting information required. The timeframe for the sign-off of the document was extended by mutual agreement. This meant that an extended timescale was subsequently agreed for the finalisation of the Year 2 Annual Service Plan in order to ensure that the plan incorporated learning from the Year 1 Performance Review.

**3.4 Annual Performance Review June 2016 – March 2017**

The Annual Performance Review 2016/17 was undertaken by the Council's Economic Development Unit with input from the wider Council multi-disciplinary team and professional advisors KPMG. The review monitors and assesses the Service Provider's performance in Year 1 (to 31 March 2017) in

respect of annual targets and performance standards detailed within the contract.

- 3.5** The contract was designed to ensure that the Service Provider was incentivised to maintain a very high standard of service delivery across all Key Performance Indicators within each category. There are four categories, namely Service Performance, Financial Performance, Outputs and Outcomes. The contract therefore reflects the importance of the project to the Council, the economic benefits it provides and the ongoing requirement to meet funding targets.
- 3.6** Contract performance in Year 1 was deemed to be satisfactory in three of the four categories assessed, with some areas of weakness identified in the 'Service Performance' category. In some instances, there were mitigating factors to explain areas of weaker performance. Despite some concerns having been brought to light in this review, the Council is confident that the Service Provider is able and committed to quickly address and resolve any issues which have been identified.
- 3.7** The key issues highlighted in the review relate to:
- Timeliness and accuracy of reporting relating mainly to uploading compliance documents to the shared document system within agreed timeframes; and
  - Inability to meet some targets included in the Year 1 Social Integration and Community Engagement Plan. While there was a significant volume of community engagement activity undertaken, the limited pool of tenants in the first few months of opening meant that it was difficult to deliver on some of the community benefit clauses.
- 3.8** The commercial aspects of the Centre are performing well within a relatively short period of time. Average occupancy within the first six months of opening was 10% (3,571 sq ft) and actual occupancy at the end of March 2017 was 3,989 sq ft. The Service Provider performed well in a number of areas despite significant time pressures and a demanding mobilisation plan. This is reflected in the tenant survey which resulted in 93% of tenants saying they were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service provision and 98% of centre users (meeting rooms and conferencing) 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with facilities and associated services provided. Recruitment of staff was an efficient process and the calibre, productivity and cohesiveness of the team is testament to the recruitment process adopted by the Service Provider and commitment demonstrated by each of the staff. This included engagement

with local training organisations to provide work placement opportunities. A number of these work placements have now been employed as permanent members of staff.

- 3.9 The Centre's 'Buy Local' ethos has resulted in 56% of £232K spend taking place in Belfast and these local suppliers have been paid within an average of nine days.
- 3.10 Some of the Business Growth and Innovation Programmes delivered at the Centre were more successful than others and this learning has been built into the programme of activity for the year 2 plan.
- 3.11 The Payment Mechanism by which the financial settlement to the contractor is reached is based on them meeting or exceeding targets across the four categories (Service Performance; Financial Performance; Outputs and Outcomes). Given that performance was deemed to be satisfactory across three of the four categories with minor concerns in one of the areas (Service Performance), a deduction of 10% was made from the Year One fee payable to the operator. This was in line with the contract stipulations.
- 3.12 The relevant teams within Belfast City Council and Oxford Innovation are fully committed to working in continued partnership to ensure that the project delivers to the benefit of both parties.
- 3.13 Proposed legal amendment

In the course of the Annual Performance Review process, the Service Provider's representative raised an issue with one particular element of the contract, namely schedule 6, part 2 clause 5.2.2:

*'The Council's representative shall award the Service Providers a score between 1 and 5 in respect of each of the four categories of Key Performance Indicators (namely service performance, financial performance, outputs and outcomes), based on the scoring mechanism set out in the following table and the measures set out in the following table and the measures set out for each of the Key Performance Indicators in Annex 3 to this schedule. The score awarded shall be the highest score for which the performance of the Service Provider meets or exceeds the stated measure in respect of every one of the Key Performance Indicators (based on the evidence available to the Council).'*

**3.14** At present, each of the four categories has a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). For example, the KPIs for the 'Service Performance' category include Compliance with Council Requirements; Customer Satisfaction – tenancies; Customer Satisfaction – Business Growth and Business Innovation Services and Complaints. If the Service Provider falls short in any aspect of the KPI statements, this is reflected in the score for the category as a whole. Oxford Innovation felt that this condition didn't fully reflect the breadth of the activity undertaken. Following engagement with the Council's Legal Services Team and our contract advisors KPMG, a revised clause has been developed that meets the requirements of both parties. This revision also provides the Council with a mechanism to prioritise certain elements of the contract i.e. those linked to ERDF funding targets and areas that would pose a higher risk to the Council e.g. Health & Safety considerations. The change means that scores can be assessed more broadly rather than being dictated by the lowest scoring factor. The revised contract clauses will be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for authorisation.

**3.15** Updated Year 2 Annual Service Plan April 2017 – March 2018

As mentioned above, the Year 2 Annual Service Plan (April 2017 – March 2018) has been updated to incorporate key lessons learned from the year 1 Annual Performance Review. This report summarises updated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the coming financial year. Members should note that the next Business Plan (beginning April 2018) will be for a three-year period. It was agreed that year 1 and 2 would each be for a one-year period, due to this being a period of transition and in order to ensure that learning was being picked up and implemented on a regular basis.

**3.16** Some of the headline indicators for the Year 2 Annual Service Plan include:

- Occupancy forecast to be 24% of available space by year end, in line with projections. Note that this is scheduled to increase to 43% in year 3; 76% in year 4 and 85% in year 5. 85% is defined as full occupancy to allow for churn and growth of tenants within the Centre;
- Number of jobs at the Centre set to increase from 46 to 107 in the course of the year;
- Business Support programmes to focus increasingly on innovation support, in line with customer feedback;

- **Additional events to encourage networking and collaboration to take place on a quarterly basis.**

**3.17 In addition to the economic focus of the Centre, social regeneration is a key element of the work programme at the Innovation Factory. The Annual Performance Review 2016-2017 identified that, while there was a significant volume of activity and engagement, it was difficult to quantify the deliverables. As a result, the following amendments have now been made to the year 2 plan:**

- **The Community Engagement Officer will focus activity on a number of priority tasks including skills development, work placement provision and establishing a ‘buy local’ supply chain platform. Tenant engagement in social regeneration activities will also be a priority for 2017-2018 as the occupancy in the Centre increases.**
- **A small budget has been allocated to the Community Engagement activities to allow new and innovative projects to be developed. The Community Engagement Officer will also work closely with the Council’s Community Services and Economic Development teams to capitalise on other engagement activity with local young people in order to build skills, promote positive role models and encourage entrepreneurship.**

**3.18 In partnership with Invest Northern Ireland, Oxford Innovation have developed a soft landing, ‘plug and play’ option at Innovation Factory. This is aimed at attracting investment companies who want to mobilise quickly in the location and who may use this as a base from which to explore the viability of a larger presence in Belfast. By locating the space at this Centre, there are also opportunities to encourage potential collaborations with Centre tenants and to build local supply chains.**

**3.19 In order to ensure that this service is able to respond to client needs, it is proposed that the Director of Development – as the Senior Responsible Officer for this project – has delegated authority to grant access to the suite for relevant users, against a set of pre-agreed criteria. Any financial incentive would be agreed in collaboration with Invest Northern Ireland. This will be tabled to a future meeting of SP&R Committee for approval.**

**3.20 The updated business plan KPIs for Business Support and Social Regeneration activities to the period ending March 2018 are available on modern.gov.**

**3.21 Financial & Resource Implications**

- **Annual Performance Review 2016-2017**

**A 10% reduction has been applied to the annual management fee due for 2016/17 in line with the contract Payment Mechanism.**

- **Revised Annual Service Plan 2017-2018**

**The Year 2 business plan has been prepared in accordance with the financial model submitted as part of the original tender submission for the management of the Centre. These projections were taken account of in the Economic Development revenue estimates for the 2017/18 financial year. Income and expenditure aligned with occupancy and usage are consistent with the original submission.**

**3.22 Equality or Good Relations Implications**

**The Innovation Factory Project has been equality screened and the Social Regeneration Activities detailed within the Year 2 Annual Service plan will further develop equality and good relations impacts of the Centre.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report and also agreed that:

1. the Girls’ and Boys’ Model Schools should be included in the schools’ engagement programme; and
2. there should be more extensive marketing of the facilities and services available at the Innovation Factory.

**Newham Council Visit – Update**

The Committee considered a report which provided a summary of key learning points from the recent visit by the Deputy Lord Mayor and two senior officers from Newham Borough Council, on 21st September, 2017.

The Director of Development advised the Members that the purpose of the presentation was to enable Belfast City Council to learn from the success of Newham Borough Council’s “Workplace” project and how it could help shape future Council and partner support and investment in Belfast, particularly in the context of the commitments to Growing the Economy and Working and Learning in the Belfast Agenda.

Newham Council had advised the Members that ‘Newham Workplace’ had been established in 2007, in light of numerous development opportunities in the borough, in order to provide a focus and investment in employment support services in order to ensure



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that local people would be given the opportunity to avail of new employment opportunities as they arose.

The Members had been advised that the Workplace Programme had developed over the past ten years and that it currently comprised in excess of 120 staff and operated with an annual budget of around £6million. The Director advised the Members that the programme assisted an average of 3,500 people into work each year across a range of job areas at all skills levels.

The Committee noted that a report would be submitted to its next meeting, setting out the range of current employability support provided by, or resourced by, the Council, as well as an outline of the proposed way forward in line with the Belfast Agenda commitments and the City Deal proposals.

**BCCM Review Update and Support for  
Independent Retailers and Businesses**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the ongoing review of Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) which is being undertaken by consultancy firm Baker Tilly Mooney Moore. The review is being supported by Belfast City Centre Management, the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (BCTC) and Department for Communities (DfC). It is being funded by Belfast City Council. The purpose of the review is to assess BCCM’s added value in a changing city centre landscape and to consider how the organisation can complement and support its funders and partners going forward.**
- 1.2 The report also seeks approval for activity to assist local Business Associations to increase footfall and encourage additional investment and spend in local areas and proposes a targeted support intervention for retail businesses in those areas that are likely to be adversely impacted by the construction works around regeneration schemes in the short term. Finally, it proposes the establishment of a pop-up test trading retail unit, potentially working in collaboration with Social Enterprise NI (SENI), to encourage new retailers to test their products in a collaborative retail space.**

## **2.0 Recommendations**

### **2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Note the work undertaken to date in conducting the review of BCCM;
- Note that a further update on the review will be tabled at the November Committee meeting. This will detail a shortlist of options to be evaluated further and a rationale for each of the options being advanced;
- Note that Officers and the consultancy team are scheduled to provide an update on the work to date and emerging recommendations at the October Party Briefings;
- Approve the proposed way forward to support Business Association activity, with a maximum budget allocation of £30,000;
- Approve a one-year pilot aimed at supporting retailers and other businesses located in areas that are undergoing regeneration projects. A budget of up to £40,000 has been set aside for this work;
- Agree the proposal to develop a test-trading retail space, in association with Social Enterprise NI, at a budget of up to £20,000 for a one-year period.

## **3.0 Main Report**

### **3.1 Belfast City Centre Management review:**

Members will recall from the March 2017 Committee meeting that BCCM has undergone some changes to its business model. Two BIDs (Business Improvement Districts) have now been developed, with work on a third BID underway and (if approved) likely to be operational from early 2018. In addition to the BIDs, the Council has also increased its focus on the City Centre, with the establishment of the City Centre Development Team and the allocation of additional resources to help bring forward key development schemes.

### **3.2 The scope of the review includes:**

- Consulting with key stakeholders on the performance and future remit of BCCM;
- Comparing other city case studies for effective approaches to city centre management;
- Conducting an organisation review and evaluation including value for money analysis and definition of remit, role and City Centre Management Services

across organisations so to avoid duplication, ensure efficiency and strategic alignment;

- Identifying a long list of options with estimates and costs;
- Shortlisting options for further appraisal and make recommendations (*a summary of the work to this point will be tabled to November Committee*);
- Producing a comprehensive business case to support a preferred option.

3.3 As part of the review, a total of 85 people contributed to face-to-face stakeholder consultations. A consultation questionnaire has also been issued to businesses within the City Centre (via Citizen Space) to pick up outstanding issues and elicit views on what is required for modern city centre management.

3.4 A long list of options is being considered by a Steering Group consisting of Belfast City Centre Management, the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Department for Communities and Council Officers. A proposed short list of options will be carried forward for further appraisal and tabled to Committee in November for consideration. The lead consultant from Baker Tilly Mooney Moore will be available to attend Party Group Briefings at the end of October to seek Member views and share the detail and rationale behind each of the options.

3.5 Members should note that any recommended changes arising from the review will most likely come into effect 2018/19 financial year. Core funding for the organisation will be considered in this context but the full funding commitment to City Centre Management of £190,000 will be drawn from Council for 2017/18 financial year in accordance with the Committee approval obtained in March 2017.

3.6 Support for local retail groups:

Members will be aware that the Council provides support to new and existing businesses and focuses on activities to increase sales and footfall in local neighbourhood shopping areas. Last year, five Business Associations benefited from this support and they ran a number of marketing and promotional initiatives aimed at generating sales and enhancing the profile of the area with a view to stimulating economic activity.

3.7 A total of £20,464 was drawn across the following associations: Antrim Road Business Association (£3,150),

Ballyhackamore Business Association (£5,000), Strandtown Business Association (£4,977), Hollywood Arches Business Association (£4,937) and West Belfast Traders' Association (£2,400), benefiting a total of 176 Business Association members. It is important to note that Shankill Traders' Association did not avail of support last year but officers are re-engaging with representatives with a view to supporting local businesses in that area.

- 3.8 The Business Associations identified above have been engaging with the Council to seek support for additional business development and promotional support in the current financial year. As with previous years' funding, it is proposed that up to £3,000 per Association will be available from the Council, with a further £2,000 available if the group can provide evidence of £ for £ match funding (total potential Council funding of £5,000 per association).
- 3.9 There continues to be a number of challenges facing Business Associations. Their work plans are delivered by volunteers and capacity and longevity of roles within Associations vary significantly across groups. Business Associations continue to require ongoing expert assistance with capacity building, communications, marketing and PR support to help them plan events, monitor and evaluate activities. While these events are useful in building local capacity and generating a 'feel good' factor in local areas, it is difficult to be precise about the economic benefit against the outputs of the Belfast Agenda. It is considered that it may be more appropriate to look at support for these groups in the context of a wider programme of local area working. Given that this activity is still in its infancy, it is recommended that the current system of support remains in place but that officers engage with colleagues across the organisation to consider whether there is a more effective engagement mechanism for future years.
- 3.10 Resources of up to £30,000 are in the budget year on year to support the Business Associations. This includes costs associated with providing professional PR and marketing support to facilitate the sustainability of the groups and provide advice on individual area campaigns and activities. The availability of this support has been welcomed by the groups. The overall budget is provided for within the existing 2017/18 estimates.

**3.11 Helping businesses address short-term challenges associated with redevelopment work**

Members will be aware of the significant programme of physical investment that is currently underway across the City. While this will create very positive improvements in the medium to long term, it may create some short-term disturbance that risks impacting negatively on traders and companies located in the vicinity of the works.

**3.12** Some of the most significant works currently impacting or likely to impact on local businesses include the Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme (due for completion in June 2018) as well as the current phase of the Leisure Transformation Programme (LTP), particularly in the built-up area of Andersonstown. If the Casement Park planning application is approved, this could have a disruptive impact on local businesses in the short-term, while the work progresses. Members should note that support will be widespread depending on need across the city.

**3.13** In order to support these businesses, it is proposed that an additional budget allocation of up to £40,000 is set aside for a period of up to one year. This would be a flexible resource to be allocated following engagement with relevant businesses. Officers have tested these proposals with some businesses to date and they have indicated that they would benefit from additional promotional and advertising support, social media profiling and voucher schemes to encourage shoppers to use these businesses and mitigate against the negative impact of the works.

**3.14 Support for test-trading for new retail businesses**

Members will be aware that the Belfast Agenda makes a commitment to creating 46,000 new jobs up to 2035. An important element of the job creation growth will be the number of new business start-ups. This figure currently sits at around 1,000 new start-ups each year. However, this is significantly below UK and Irish averages and one of the major challenges for the City is to explore new and innovative mechanisms to increase the volume of new business starts.

**3.15** Many of the businesses starting up through the Northern Ireland Business Start-Up Programme (Go for It) are retail-focused businesses. They often struggle to find appropriate retail premises for their business as they are tied into expensive rents and long-term leases. Potentially working

with Social Enterprise NI (or other suitable organisations) to explore the potential for social business start-ups, it is proposed that the Council works to secure a one-year lease on a property which will be a shared retail unit for a number of new business starts. The businesses will be provided with support including marketing and merchandising and will be encouraged to move towards taking on their own retail units at the end of their time in the shared space. A unit has not yet been identified for this activity, but it is proposed that this should align with ongoing investment in some of the redevelopment and regeneration areas. It is expected that the budget for this project will not exceed £20,000.

**3.16 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

Business Association and retailer support will be directed on a needs-led basis and will be available to businesses all across the City.

**317 Financial and Resource Implications**

The costs associated with the BCCM Review are being met from existing Economic Development budgets in the current financial year. A funding allocation of £190,000 for BCCM in 2017/18 financial year was approved by this Committee in March 2017.

- 3.18** The additional £40,000 to support businesses that may be negatively impacted by the regeneration works across the City as well as the £20,000 to support the pop-up retail space for new business starts have been set aside within Economic Development budgets for the current year and were approved by this Committee as part of the estimates process.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Belfast Two BID**

The Director of Development provided the Members with an update on the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) in the Linen Quarter.

He reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 9th December, 2015, it had agreed to provide Belfast City Centre Management with £30,000 towards the cost of a dedicated member of staff to develop a BID in the Linen Quarter District, which would be named ‘Belfast Two.’ He advised the Members that this project was now at ballot stage. The Committee was advised that the ballot was open, ending on 26th October, with the declaration of the result taking place on 27th October.

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The Director reminded the Members that a BID was a business-led initiative, where the businesses agreed on the level of funding required to deliver projects and services which were additional to those already being provided by the Council or other statutory partners. The businesses agreed to fund those services, as set out in a business plan, through a levy.

He outlined that the levy would be applied to all eligible businesses within the defined area with a rateable value of, or exceeding, £4,500, provided that they were listed on the Non-Domestic rates list by Land and Property Services, with additional exemptions for religious organisations, voluntary-staffed local community services, non-profits and charities with an entirely subscription and volunteer-based set up.

The Director pointed out that there were 431 properties within the Belfast Two BID area and that the proposed levy for businesses in the area was 1.5% of the rateable value. He advised that this would produce a total annual income of around £455,000 in year one and that it was projected to rise to £510,000 in year five, owing to redevelopment in the area.

The Committee was advised that Belfast City Council would be liable for a levy payment on seven properties within the Belfast Two boundary, totalling approximately £33,601 per annum.

The Director advised the Committee that the Council would have seven votes in the BID ballot and he recommended that the Council used its votes to support the BID.

The Committee:

1. noted the update on the Belfast Two BID; and
2. agreed to a 'yes' vote in the BID ballot, with the votes to be cast by the Director of Finance and Resources on behalf of the Council.

**Strategic and Operational Issues**

**Rural Development Programme – Basic Services Measure**

Councillor O'Hara declared an interest in this Item, in that she was a Council nominee on the Local Action Group for Hannahstown, and left the room for the duration of the discussion).

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Members' approval for the Council: To act as the lead applicant for submission of a bid under the Rural Basic Services theme as part of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2014-2020, on behalf of Hannahstown Community Association: To recommend that the capital match funding element and the**

request that the Council acts as the delivery agent, which is required to support the submission, is referred to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee for consideration.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to:

- Authorise the submission of a bid under the Rural Basic Services Theme of the Rural Development Programme for Hannahstown Village by Council, on behalf of Hannahstown Community Association.
- To secure the maximum funding allocation of £50,000 for the scheme, which is 75% of a total budget of £66,666, this requires Council to contribute a minimum of £16,666 which would make up the remaining 25% of the budget. As this money is capital, it needs to be considered by the SP&R Committee as the Council's investment decision maker and Members are asked to agree that this scheme is referred to the SP&R Committee for its consideration
- That the project is delivered by the Property and Projects Department, subject to approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

## **3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1 Members will recall that at its meeting on the 13 January 2016 the City & Growth Committee agreed to enter into an SLA with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council to support the development and delivery of activities within the eligible area for the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (NIRDP).
- 3.2 At the 8 March 2017 meeting Members agreed to authorise the submission of a bid under the Village Renewal theme of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Hannahstown and Edenderry.
- 3.3 The SP&R Committee Council on 24 March 2017 agreed to provide match funding of £70,000 to secure the maximum allocation of £150,000 capital and approval of a contribution of £7,500 per year for 2016/17 and 2017/18 to support programme overheads from within existing Departmental budgets. It was also agreed that Officer time resource is used to work up the proposals.



- 3.4 A further funding programme under the RDP 2014-2020 is the Basic Services Measure. This is designed to support investments in the setting up, improvement or expansion of local basic services for the rural population including related infrastructure. The call for funding opens on 9 October 2017, and closes on Friday 22 December 2017. Applications can be made for up to £50,000.
- 3.5 Hannahstown and Edenderry have been identified as the only villages within the city council area eligible for funding under the Rural Basic Services theme. Mandatory workshops for all potential stakeholders on the RDP measures, including the Rural Basic Services theme were held on 24 November 2015 in Malone House and 2 December 2015 in Sally Gardens Community Centre Poleglass.
- 3.6 Hannahstown Community Association identified a project to improve the Association's community hall facility, however as a community association they cannot apply for the funding and have requested that the Council act as the lead applicant for this funding on their behalf.
- 3.7 To secure the maximum funding allocation of £50,000 for the scheme, which is 75% of a total budget of £66,666, this requires Council to contribute a minimum of £16,666 which would make up the remaining 25% of the budget. There is also a requirement for the Council to act as the delivery agent for the proposal and it is proposed that this is taken forward via the Property & Projects Department, subject to approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

3.8 Key Issues

The call for funding will officially open on 9 October 2017, and close on Friday 22 December 2017.

The delivery timescale and pre application requirements will include the development of a

- Business Plan
- Evidence of planning permission approval
- All related procurement documentation (quotes/tender documentation)
- Evidence of match funding

3.9 Equality and Good Relations Implications

All activity will be subject to equality screening.

**3.10 Financial and Resource Implications**

***Match funding*** - The Rural Development Programme is subject to securing match funding from the Council. To secure the maximum funding allocation of £50,000 for the scheme, which is 75% of a total budget of £66,666, this requires Council to contribute a minimum of £16,666 which would make up the remaining 25% of the budget. As this money is for capital works this needs to be agreed by the SP&R Committee as the Council's investment decision maker, and it is proposed that this is referred to the SP&R Committee for their consideration.

**Officer time resources** is required in continuing to work up the proposals and as the delivery agent, subject to SP&R approval.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Chairperson