



Subject:	Supplementary Report - Designation of Belfast district (or the city centre) as a 'holiday resort' providing large shops with an option to extend Sunday trading hours between the months of March and October
Date:	18 May 2018
Reporting Officer	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
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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?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	PURPOSE OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee with supplementary information (to the original reports of 20 April and 27 April 2018) to inform any decision by the Council as to whether Belfast City Council should designate the Belfast district (or the city centre) as a 'holiday resort' under Article 6 of the Shops (Sunday Trading &c.) (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 - to seek a decision from Members on whether to proceed with a 'holiday resort' designation.
1.2	<p><u>Deputations</u></p> <p>Members will wish to note that officers have received a request from Michala Lafferty, Usdaw to make a further oral submission to the Committee on this issue. It will be a matter for the Committee to decide at the start of the meeting whether or not to receive the deputation from</p>

	Usdaw (or indeed any other organisation who may make a similar request prior to the meeting).
2.0	RECOMMENDATIONS
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <p>(i) advise whether to receive the deputation(s) indicated at para 1.2</p> <p>(ii) refer to the original SP&R reports dated 20 April 2018 and 27 April 2018 which include the findings from the original public consultation which concluded on 5 May 2017 and the supplementary public consultation which ended on 2 April 2018 (Appendix 1), as well as the additional briefing report on a range of issues which was provided to Committee on 27 April 2018 (Appendix 2)</p> <p>(iii) note the independent chairperson's brief prepared by Richard O'Rawe following the summit held with a range of stakeholders on 10 May 2018 in Belfast (Appendix 3).</p>
3.0	MAIN REPORT
3.1	<p>At its meeting on 20 April 2018 the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed to defer a decision in order to receive additional information.</p> <p>At its meeting on the 27th April the Committee agreed to once again to defer a decision to enable a Summit to be hosted by the Council that would include key stakeholders such as the Trade Unions, business organisations such as the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Retail NI and the tourism sector and representatives of those shops who wish to have extended Sunday opening.</p>
3.2	<p>Following ratification of the SP&R minutes at the full Council on 1 May, officers issued an invitation to the key stakeholders outlined above to attend a summit meeting on Thursday 10 May in the council offices at 9 Adelaide.</p> <p>The council secured the services of an independent chairperson, Richard O'Rawe, to facilitate the summit meeting. A copy of the Chairperson's brief prepared after the summit meeting is attached at Appendix 3.</p>
3.3	<p>The main summary points from the Chairperson's brief are as follows:</p> <p>Areas of Agreement</p> <p>All parties agreed that they want to support the creation of a more vibrant city centre to attract visitors and residents on a Sunday morning. They agreed that a programme of animation and promotional activity should be developed in order to enhance vibrancy and increase footfall in the city.</p> <p>On Extended Sunday Trading</p> <p>Most of the organisations in the room were in favour of additional hours for large retailers on a Sunday. In order to test the impact of the scheme and to review and address any issues arising, they noted that they would be open to considering a pilot scheme running to the end of September 2018. They viewed the benefits as being both social (Sunday morning recreation) and</p>

	<p>economic (increasing visitor spend and more viable trading environment).</p> <p>Those in favour point to the extended trading hours as being optional and suggest that this will provide a choice that extends to shops, workers and customers.</p> <p>The Trade Unions and Retail NI are opposed to the proposal on the grounds that they believe it will take trade from smaller independent retailers and it will be detrimental to workers and their families. Both the Unions and Retail NI would support a campaign to encourage small retailers to open additional hours on a Sunday and would be keen to package this up by ensuring that a programme of animation activity and promotion was put in place as well.</p> <p>Those against extended hours are not convinced by the economic argument and believe that a “Small Shop Sunday” programme would bring greater overall economic benefit.</p> <p>There was a view in the room that the disagreement on the economic value arising from extended Sunday trading hours will be tested if the pilot is approved.</p> <p>On the Charter</p> <p>Most of those in attendance were in favour of having an explicit commitment to reinforce the protection of workers’ rights. Those in favour of a charter noted that all of the commitments are already enshrined in law. They felt that the charter offered a vehicle for retailers to make a public statement of their commitment to ensure that workers’ rights are protected in line with the existing legislation, and also to ensure that there is a regular forum for raising any issues related to the implementation.</p> <p>The Trade Unions feel that the charter is meaningless as it has no legislative effect. They also would have wanted to ensure that the draft text was agreed with them.</p>
3.4	<p>Economic evidence</p> <p>In previous reports, a series of research pieces to support the demand for the proposed extension were undertaken. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21 cruise ships will arrive in Belfast on a Sunday (across the key Summer months). 20 of these ships will be in port by 09.30am. These 21 ships will bring more than 36,000 passengers and staff - Visit Belfast research (April 2018) into the GB market (which accounts for 41% of overnight stays) found that 60% of potential visitors expected to be able to shop on a Sunday morning and 93% expected shops to open earlier than 1pm. Retail is an important element of a vibrant city: 42% of GB visitor spend is on shopping - Hotel occupancy rates on a Saturday evening over the Summer period in 2017 averaged at 91.7% - with the highest levels of occupancy on Saturdays in August (97.2%). Based on these figures, there could be up to 10,000 people in the city on a Sunday - Tourism NI confirmed that Belfast plays an important role as the gateway to NI, with 30% of all tourism spend in Belfast. With over 1,000 new hotel rooms to open in 2018 and a similar number to become available in 2019 – there will be an increased demand to provide a range

	<p>of options, in line with visitor expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retailers argue that the sector is under pressure and that they have to adapt and try all possible avenues open to them in order to attract new business. A report from Springboard (14 May 2018) demonstrated a 7.3% drop in footfall in retail across Northern Ireland in April 2018 – with a number of High Street stores closing or under significant pressure. - USDAW do not believe that there is evidence of economic benefit from extended trading hours. Those supporting the proposal consider that the pilot phase will allow for data to be collected which will provide specific detail on the impact of the extended opening hours.
3.5	<p>FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>See original report dated 20 April 2018</p>
3.6	<p>EQUALITY OR GOOD RELATIONS IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>See original report dated 20 April 2018</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices - Documents attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 – SP&R Report dated 20 April 2018</p> <p>Appendix 2 – SP&R Report dated 27 April 2018</p> <p>Appendix 3 –Independent Chairperson’s brief from summit meeting held on 10 May 2018</p>