



Subject:	International Relations – Nashville Invitation
Date:	13 June 2018
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
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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"/>
Sometime 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 Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for an outward business-focussed visit to Nashville from 26 - 30 August 2018.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve the attendance of the Chair of Committee or nominee and one officer to engage in the outward business visit to Nashville with key stakeholders and Belfast

	businesses, from 26 - 30 August 2018. This is subject to confirmation of stakeholder commitment and programme value.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Members will recall the November 2016 approval of a new International Relations Framework for the period 2016 - 2021.
3.2	The aim of this Framework is to continue to promote Belfast on the international stage with other stakeholders as a place to invest, work, visit and study. The Framework will deliver primarily on the formal relationships already in existence through our Sister City Agreements with Shenyang, Boston and Nashville, the Memorandum of Understanding with Dublin, and developing relationships with the City of London. New areas of opportunity will be considered on their merits and relevance to Belfast.
3.3	Members will be aware that, at the 8 March 2018 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, an update report on International Relations activity for the previous six months was presented and the outline plans for the coming period were agreed.
3.4	As part of the agreed programme of activity for 2018/19, Belfast City Council hosted a <i>Nashville in Belfast Week</i> (28 April - 6 May 2018), showcasing joint activity across a range of sectors including music, food creative industries, education study abroad opportunities, doing business in Nashville and pursuing tourism opportunities. A detailed report on this highly successful week will be presented to members in due course, once all outputs have been measured.
3.5	As part of the Nashville programme, a series of focussed business meetings were held with Belfast City Council, Invest NI, Catalyst Inc., CSIT, Venture Capitalists and both Universities. The Nashville delegation included a leading entrepreneur in the field of healthcare, who is also a venture capitalist with interest in investing in business start-ups in Belfast. Since the visit, a proposal has been presented to Belfast City Council by the Nashville Sister Cities Board to invite Belfast City Council, economic agencies and a number of Belfast businesses in the healthcare/life health sciences sector to attend a conference in August 2018, and follow a wider but focused economic programme.
3.6	The conference entitled "Health: Further" is being held during the week of 26 August 2018

as part of a wider series of events happening in Nashville that week called “*Nashville Is... Week*”, a week of entrepreneurial celebration in the city. The Nashville Board and this leading entrepreneur have invited a delegation to attend the week free of charge, but to focus specifically on opportunities for Belfast businesses in health and healthcare, as Nashville is an economic driver for the USA in this field. The proposal asks that a Belfast delegation is made up of 1 Belfast City Council elected member and official, 4 healthcare entrepreneurs, 1 Venture Capitalist in this field, 1 representative from the Department of Health in Northern Ireland, 1 representative from Invest NI in this sector and 2 other representatives in the sector recommended by Belfast City Council and partners. There will be a maximum number of 14 delegates.

3.7 The Sister Cities Nashville Board and Nashville City Council are fully supportive of this invitation and are encouraging Belfast to attend to drill down into real cooperation and business opportunities. This is the outcome of 2 years of developing relationships and targeting the right people in business, government and academia and may lead to direct financial investment in Belfast companies.

3.8 With regard to the key International Relations activities for 2018/2019, all activity will be driven by a number of the priority outcomes set out in the Belfast Agenda. This proposal from Nashville will contribute to the ‘Growing the Economy’ theme of the Belfast Agenda. These focus on:

- Building the City’s position as a magnet for FDI
- Maximising the City’s connections worldwide to drive growth
- Positioning the City internationally as a key tourism, education and business destination
- Helping local companies to internationalise their business.

3.9 Financial and Resource Implications

It is proposed that Members approve and agree to provide financial support to the Nashville outward visit for BCC related participation at a maximum cost of £3500. This resource will be covered within the agreed 2018/19 International Relation’s Unit budget allocation, included in the budget estimates which were approved by the Council in February 2018.

3.10 Equality and Good Relations Implications

The International Relations Framework was equality screened.

4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None