



Subject:	City Region Growth Deal – update
Date:	22 November 2019
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 Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To update Committee on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD).
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree to that the Fraunhofer Institute support the development of the regional digital projects, including the Regional Innovators Network and testbeds.• Agree the minutes of the BRCD Council Panel held on 23rd October 2019.• Note the next steps in maximising the cross cutting challenges of the BRCD Programme.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Programme Update</p> <p>Members will be aware that work to support the development of Phase 2 of the BRCD Programme is continuing with the establishment of an overall governance structure at a regional level and the set-up of a central Programme Office in Belfast City Council (BCC).</p>
3.2	<p>The focus of this has primarily been the development of Outline Business Cases (OBCs) for the individual BRCD projects which will help inform the content of the documents required for this phase including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Financial Plan and Agreement • A Deal Document - detailed document covering all elements included within Heads of terms, including Governance Framework • An Implementation Plan - summarising milestones for key deliverables, outputs, resources and risk mitigation for each project
3.3	<p>The majority of the OBCs are being progressed through the individual partners, who have committed specific internal and external resources to their development, under the guidance of the Advisory Boards and in consultation with colleagues from UK Government and NICS.</p>
3.4	<p>Members will also be aware that the Fraunhofer Institute have been appointed to support the development of the digital projects, given their complexity and specialist nature. The regional aspect of the digital programme, which includes Regional Innovator Networks and testbeds across the city region is a key element of the programme as it enables the benefits of the Digital and innovation projects to be connected across the region and support wider, more inclusive economic growth. Again the further development of these will require specialist input and it is therefore recommended that the Fraunhofer Institute undertake an additional specific piece of work which focuses on the regional aspect of the digital programme to maximise the overall benefits. This work has been costed at £134k and will be paid for by the other five councils within the BRCD.</p>
3.5	<p>BRCD Council Panel</p> <p>The BRCD Council Panel provides a joint forum for members from all six councils to meet to jointly discuss issues, progress and benefits of the BRCD. Each council has four members on the Forum and as agreed by this committee the four nominees from BCC are the party group leaders (or their nominees) of the four largest parties.</p>

3.6	<p>The Panel held its first meeting on 23rd October in Belfast City Hall. They agreed terms of reference, received an update on the BRCD programme and discussed items for consideration at further meetings. The minutes of the meeting are attached at Appendix 1. The next meeting will be held on 29th January 2020 and will be hosted by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.</p>
3.7	<p>Cross Cutting Programme Challenges</p> <p><u>Benefits Delivery:</u> Given the scale of the BRCD investment programme there is the potential to use planning agreements and social clauses in support of our inclusive growth ambitions, including through the provision of significant new opportunities in terms of training, skills development, employability placements and apprenticeships. The E&S Board will be leading work to review good practice and maximise the impact of the BRCD investment on local communities across the Belfast Region.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Communication</u> Progressing OBCs has been and will continue to be the key priority for the BRCD during phase 2. However, it is also essential to ensure that momentum is maintained while detailed project and programme work continues in the background. A small number of key events will therefore play an important part in a communication programme over the next six months in order to effectively communicate our progress to date in delivering such a complex and ambitious programme.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Business/Private Sector Engagement</u> It will be vital that planned investments are responsive to industry requirements and that businesses support and invest in them. The BRCD partners are therefore working to ensure more direct business engagement and involvement in the development of projects. This remains challenging, particularly for those projects which are at early stages of development.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Partnership Working</u> The city deal process offers an opportunity for developing sustainable relationships which will enable partners to continue working in a more collaborative way in the longer term. The BRCD partnership is continuing to strengthen with increasing evidence of effective joint working between universities, colleges and central and local government.</p>
3.11	<p>NI departments and key agencies such as Invest NI and Tourism NI are now directly engaged in supporting project development and there is a recognition among all parties of the need to keep momentum as the Belfast region is competing for the proposed</p>

	<p>investments, in areas such as innovation and digital, with other UK and European cities. In such a complex programme this will require genuine cross-government collaboration, timely decision making processes and a strong focus on the goal of the programme- more and better jobs</p>
3.12	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets. The additional £134k for the digital regional piece will be paid for by the other five councils in the BRCD, with no cost to BCC.</p>
3.13	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The Approach taken to develop the City Deal has been subject to independent equality screening and rural proofing and states that;</p> <p><i>BRCD is inherently inclusive, affording an opportunity for the region to grow in a way that will benefit the economy of Northern Ireland as a whole, thereby enhancing the lives and well-being of its citizens. If during further development of the programme it becomes apparent that there may be an adverse impact on certain groups or communities then the partnership commits to carrying out further Section 75 work and including screening and EQIAs as and when appropriate.'</i></p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Minutes of the BRCD Council Panel held on 23 rd October 2019