



Subject:	Lighting Strategy
Date:	9 th September 2020
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and 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"/>
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	<p>The purpose of the report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Support a presentation being made to Members at Committee in relation to the development of a draft City Lighting Strategy as part of the Future City Centre Programme.- Seek approval of the draft strategy, 'Luminous City: A Lighting Strategy for Belfast', subject to consultation.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee are requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note that a presentation will be made at Committee by Park Hood consultants on the draft lighting strategy 'Luminous City: A Lighting Strategy for Belfast'. (ii) Note the findings and recommendations of the strategy and how this work relates to other initiatives within the Future City Centre Programme and city recovery priorities, with proposals to bring forward pilot projects in line with the strategy and emerging Action Plan. (iii) Approve the draft strategy, subject to the consultation process noted below.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Background
	<p>Officers, with city stakeholders, are continuing to explore new and innovative approaches to placemaking and regeneration within the city centre, informed by objectives including enhancing the offering to drive footfall; improving attractiveness and vibrancy; enhancing connectivity and permeability; maximising tourism and cultural opportunities; encouraging more families and young people to use the city centre; and supporting existing businesses.</p>
3.2	<p>This work has continued through the Future City Centre (FCC) Programme, with a clear focus on city recovery in light of Covid, which was reported on last month. The FCC Programme is intended to enable greater alignment of resources to maximise the impact of investment by Council, and to support engagement with external partners to secure buy-in to the priorities within the programme. A key strand of work within the FCC Programme is 'Physical and Environmental Improvements', which includes projects and themes such as connectivity, city centre living, public realm and open space. The development of a lighting strategy for the city is also identified as a priority, one that can make a significant contribution across all other physical (and many non-physical) workstreams within the FCC programme.</p>
3.3	<p>Thoughtfully designed lighting positively contributes to, and even creates 'places', and can have benefits including a reduction in anti-social behaviour and improved ownership of areas adjacent to local businesses and trade representatives through jointly designed and delivered projects. Precinct lighting in Belfast has predominantly been delivered through various departments and agencies without being guided by an overall set of design principles or vision for the city. Lighting of private developments or other feature lighting has been delivered in a similar context, with the opportunity to adopt a consistent approach in terms of key considerations and design ethos often missed. Consequently, the overall beneficial</p>

impact is less than if lighting within the city had been designed through a shared ambition. The approach to lighting, of buildings, streets, spaces, points of interest, across Belfast lacks coherence and falls some way short of both reflecting the character of the place, and supporting the functions of the city.

3.4 In response, Park Hood were commissioned to assist Council with the preparation of a lighting strategy and action plan for the city, which is envisaged will form a key component of the FCC Programme as it continues to shape and guide delivery of Council's short and longer term response to Covid 19.

Luminous City – A Lighting Strategy for Belfast

Purpose

3.5 The aim of the Strategy is to develop a well designed, co-ordinated and coherent approach to Belfast's lighting so that lighting design becomes an intrinsic part of urban planning and is understood as a critical material in the work to enhance spaces and create 'places'. It proposes ways to enhance the functional and aesthetic qualities of light in order to support and develop Belfast's social, economic and sustainability targets.

3.6 Across a range of key stakeholders there is a renewed focus on developing an accessible, well connected and sustainable city which supports our social and economic ambitions, celebrating our built environment and heritage as well as improving connections to communities by reducing the severance of harsh infrastructure. Through creative co-design of our cityscape we can reposition lighting as a strategic tool to help create a place that people love to live, work and play in.

3.7 The strategy aims to support and enable this ambition by setting out the key considerations that should inform approaches to lighting, and by providing clear guidance for streetscapes, buildings, and points of interest (e.g. bridges, entries, architectural features).

3.8 The document is intended to inform Council-led placemaking and regeneration initiatives, to promote best practice and collaboration among key agencies including DfI and DfC, and to guide others including developers and property owners, and any other organisation delivering lighting in the public realm.

3.9 Considerations

The following considerations informed the approach, recommendations and design guidance as set out in the draft strategy which will be presented at Committee:

- Connectivity
- Sustainability
- Quality
- Safety
- Security
- Character & Culture
- Human Centric
- Accessibility
- Economic Impact
- Technology
- Maintenance
- Planning & Delivery

Engagement

3.10 The development of the strategy has been informed by an audit of existing infrastructure, analysis of current delivery approaches, and review of international best practice.

Given the breadth of interested parties and the often fragmented responsibility for lighting, early and ongoing engagement and consultation has been undertaken with a range of public, private, third sector and statutory city stakeholders including:

- All 3 BIDs
- Belfast Chamber
- Belfast City Centre Management
- Visit Belfast
- Retail sector (Victoria Square, CastleCourt)
- Cultural sector (Cathedral Quarter Trust, Household, Sailortown project)
- Belfast Harbour
- Titanic Foundation
- DfI
- DfC (including Historic Environment Division)
- Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
- IMTAC

3.11 Council departments have also been engaged including Economic Development, Community and Neighbourhood Services, Smart Cities, Resilience, Facilities, and Planning. Wider engagement will be undertaken through the ongoing public consultation process which

is timetabled to run throughout September and complete in mid-October, presenting an opportunity to capture the views of local communities and residents.

3.12 The recent delivery of a number of pilot lighting projects has enabled further direct engagement with property owners and members of the public, including through interactive 'creative stations' and through Public Engagement Hubs in vacant units.

3.13 Through more recent engagement in relation to city re-opening and recovery, stakeholders have continued to identify the importance of well designed and appropriate lighting as a solution to help with safety, security, accessibility, connectivity, sustainability, and general positive experience of the city for both locals and visitors.

3.14 The feedback gathered from a wide range of groups impacted both in terms of 'end users' and delivery agents has been used to shape the draft Lighting strategy. There are also upcoming presentations planned with BCC's Disability Advisory Panel, The Equality Consultative Forum and BCC's Seniors and Age Friendly group.

3.15 The draft document is currently out for public consultation via Citizenspace, feedback from which will be considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the final document, which will be brought back to Committee.

3.16 **Pilot Projects**

The agreed methodology included the delivery of three pilot projects, the learnings from which have informed the recommendations in the strategy:

- A series of 9 innovative custom designed and fabricated interactive video projectors. Phase 1 was installed in July 2020 at the DfC owned site at 83 – 87 Castle Street, with Phase 2 installation in another city centre street to follow in the coming months. Site surveys are currently taking place to identify best location. Two newly commissioned animated artworks have been created for the projectors themed on the waterways that run underneath the city, and the starling murmurations found throughout the city. Each unit includes a short throw projector and speaker which are activated via sensor by pedestrian movement. This approach to addressing issues identified in the stakeholder steering group as well as through on site engagement with residents and users of the street, is innovative in its solution and the application of the technology is unique to Belfast.

- A neon artwork was installed in Castle Arcade as a precursor to the longer-term feature lighting piece to be installed as part of the Entries & Lanes project. Once work progresses with the installation of the new lighting feature in Castle Arcade, the neon piece will be relocated. Site surveys are currently underway to identify most suitable location.
- A large scale animated projection was created and delivered as part of Belfast's 2019 Christmas offering.

3.17 Additionally, three new feature lighting installations are progressing as part of the Entries & Lanes project, which have been developed in line with the design principles and guidance in the emerging lighting strategy.

3.18 **Delivery**

While the strategy contains guidance for others, a draft action plan is also in development which identifies planned projects and opportunities for enhanced lighting to feature, as well as new Council-led initiatives. For example, potential incorporation of custom lighting features as part of the Entries Phase 2 and 5C's public realm projects.

3.19 The emerging action plan is developing in line with Council and wider city recovery priorities including the Bolder Vision, and will continue to be reviewed in this context. Lighting is key element of the Future City Centre programme and recovery work more generally both in terms of the Physical and Environmental Improvements and Animation work strands. Projects include considered lighting being incorporated into all physical social distancing hub initiatives across the three BID areas, as well as a dynamic programme of projections and light throughout Sept 2020 – Jan 2021, including a new Christmas lighting scheme with bespoke cross street features.

3.20 Projects will continue to be developed in line with the Cultural Strategy, including potential events and festivals as part of Belfast 2023. Built heritage is also considered a particular area of opportunity and officers will continue to explore, in consultation with relevant bodies, projects such as heritage lighting schemes focused on significant locations/buildings such as Donegall Square and Royal Avenue, using lighting to highlight features and character while incorporating infrastructure that can support more dynamic festive uses. There is also potential to reconsider the role of lighting of public art and other heritage features such as

	<p>the Thompson Fountain, the Big Fish, the Albert Clock, Gasworks tower, Harland & Wolfe cranes, among others. All the above projects are developing in line with the design principles, considerations, and best practice recommendations as outlined in the strategy document.</p> <p>3.21 It is envisaged that the delivery of future lighting projects / opportunities could be integral to the design of wider projects or subject to funding opportunities that may arise. Certain pilot projects will however be taken forward under existing commitments in line with the draft strategy and the emerging Action Plan. Officers will also continue to explore opportunities to source external funding, and to work with government departments and other city stakeholders to develop new and innovative interventions, and to ensure effective and efficient future management and stewardship of lighting as a key facet of placemaking in Belfast.</p> <p>3.22 <u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> The finalisation of the Lighting Strategy and Action Plan and delivery of certain pilot projects will be met from the previously approved City Regeneration & Development budget.</p> <p>3.23 <u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> The Council's Equality & Diversity Officers have been consulted on the draft strategy both in terms of Equalities Screening and Rural Needs Assessment. An extensive consultation programme has taken place with both general public and city stakeholders and partners throughout the development of the strategy and delivery of the pilot projects. There are additional presentations planned with Belfast City Council's Disability Advisory Panel, Equality Consultative Forum and Senior's Forum throughout September and October 2020. The document is also undergoing a 6 week formal public consultation process online. Future lighting projects developed and delivered by Belfast City Council will be subject to separate individual and bespoke equalities screening.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1- Draft 'Luminous City – A Lighting Strategy for Belfast'