



Subject:	Future of the City – proposed Members Workshop
Date:	9 December 2020
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development

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	Seek Members agreement for a proposed workshop in relation to the Future of the City.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to agree to a workshop for City Growth and Regeneration Committee and Party Group Leaders to consider the Future of the City in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated social, economic and environmental challenges. Further details of the proposed workshop to follow.
2.2	Members are asked to note the composition of a Retail Forum following the request of Councilor Heading agreed at Council on Tuesday 2 nd December 2020 to establish an All-Party Forum on City Centre Retail.
3.0	Main report

3.1	Members will be aware of the current challenges impacting on the city, brought about by the current Covid-19 pandemic.
3.2	The Covid-19 pandemic has opened up a debate around urbanisation and the future path cities will take. It is recognised however that how cities perform going forward will be critical, particularly in terms of responding to the current Covid crisis and the associated economic, social and environmental challenges. Recent research has highlighted that the coming years are likely to see significant disruption to cities and that there is a need for cities to consider now how they become 'future fit'.
3.3	In common with all other cities, Belfast has clearly been impacted by Covid. This impact is right across the city and in the context of the core city centre, recent announcements in the retail sector have exacerbated many of the issues that existed pre-Covid. The criticality of the city centre as a key economic and employment hub is well recognised.
3.4	Members will be aware of a number of priority areas of focus for the Council, as set out in the Council's Recovery Framework, including for example City Deal, the Future City Centre Programme, Housing Led Regeneration, Resilience, Digital and Innovation, Connectivity and Active Travel, Economic Led Programmes etc.
3.5	It is proposed that a workshop is held with Party Group Leaders and Members of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, on the Future of the City and the priority areas of focus, including the role that Council and other partners can play.
3.6	At the request of Councillor Heading at Council on Tuesday 2 nd December 2020 members agreed that an All-Party Forum on City Centre be convened. It is proposed that forum consists of representatives of each party through nominations from party group leaders, Trade Union officials, relevant business representative organisations and relevant departmental representation.
4.0	Finance & Resource Implications
	None associated with this report
5.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
	None associated with this report
6.0	Appendices
	N/A