



<b>Subject:</b>	'Amazing Spaces Smart Places' Small Business Research Initiative
<b>Date:</b>	12 January 2021
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ryan Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Alison Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the 'Amazing Spaces Smart Places', Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) challenge.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Note the ongoing progress of this work.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> Members will recall previous updates on funding secured from Department of Economy (via Department of Justice) to facilitate fully funded innovation contracts with a small number of SME's to support the following objectives:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open spaces are more welcoming environments enjoyed by everyone</li> <li>- Increased positive usage and animation of open spaces</li> <li>- Empowered and involved communities</li> <li>- Crime and anti-social behaviour is reduced in open spaces in the city</li> <li>- Maintenance and security costs are reduced</li> </ul>
3.2	<p>The SBRI process is a 'pre-procurement' exercise, designed to enable SME's with funding for research/design and prototyping to stimulate innovative solutions, services and products to meet public sector needs.</p>
3.3	<p>It is used widely across both the UK and Ireland and Belfast City Council has already had previous experience leading on a successful SBIR project - the Rates Maximisation challenge in conjunction with Land &amp; Property Services (LPS). The Rates Maximisation challenge led to a full procurement exercise for technology that will increase Council's rates income based on the SBRI research/design and prototyping work.</p>
3.4	<p>Council has been successful in securing funding at both Phase 1 (£120K) and Phase 2 (£225K) to support this work and there is no cost to the Council and this Committee has identified implementation of Phase 2 as a priority action in the 20/21 Committee Plan.</p>
3.5	<p>The number of organisations in receipt of funding has reduced as the feasibility (technical and operational) and commercial viability (condition of the DfE funding) of proposed solutions has been worked through at each stage and Council is now working with two SME's as part of Phase 2.</p>
3.6	<p>Two technological solutions remaining as potentially feasible and commercially viable and details are provided below. Both solutions have been fully developed and tested in a lab/office environment and on site testing is required for the prototypes in Q4 20/21 to determine effectiveness against the programme objectives at point 3.2 and the technical robustness of the solutions.</p>
3.7	<p><b><u>SparroWatch</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SparroWatch is developing a range of technology to be used in Belfast's Parks and open spaces. They are developing a combination of hardware and software that will be used to improve safety and park management. SparroWatch are designing</li> </ul>

battery-powered cameras that provide a simple and low cost installation option to monitor parks. The Cameras will be located at Ormeau, Falls Park/City Cemetery and Dunville Park. It is hope that the this prototype will help address the ongoing issues of vandalism and ASB in these sites

- SparroWatch will also send a weekly statistical report to BCC (this will not contain any information identifying individuals) analysing park usage in Belfast through insights generated by Google Maps.

3.8

### **Civic Dollar**

- This prototype platform is a unique product using a mixture of technology, psychology and gamification to encourage greater use of the parks and open spaces. If properly utilized, it will have the desired effect of encouraging people to visit parks, open spaces and attractions as well as affecting behavioural change and driving footfall to local businesses.
- Encourage users to visit tourist areas across Belfast and Northern Ireland by creating geo-fences and earning CivicDollars while they visit, and trade them with local hotels, restaurants and businesses
- Expand the functionality of the platform to allow more business to drive footfall back by trading CivicDollars for a greater range of goods and services.
- Allow businesses to trade CivicDollars with the government (central/local and with businesses) to encourage the use of the system (the viability of this is being tested as part of Phase 2)
- On site testing is initially planned for the parks/open spaces along the Connswater Community Greenway before role out to a small number of other parks/open spaces across North, South, East and West Belfast.

3.9

As companies have been working with data throughout, real and perceived concerns about any privacy/data protection impacts from the project were identified at the initiation stage and a full privacy/data protection screening exercise was completed.

3.10

Council's Information Governance Unit (within Legal Services) are actively engaged in providing support to Officers and the successful SME's in ensuring ongoing and full compliance with legislation and Information Commissioner Officer Guidance. Additionally, based on political and community feedback, proactive community engagement has been undertaken both by Officers and by the SME's themselves to provide reassurance that no data that would identify an individual is being used.

3.11	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Phase 1 (18/19) - £120,000 Phase 2 (19/20 and 20/21) - £225,000</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.12	<p>As mentioned in the main report, equality and privacy implications have been proactively managed &amp; mitigated on an ongoing basis. This includes avoiding bias or stereotyping in the project. The equality and privacy impact screening process remains under constant review.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	None