



Subject:	Request to Support Research Project at Queen's University Belfast into Sustainable Packaging
Date:	10 August 2021
Reporting Officer:	Ryan Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Alison Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager

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	Queen's University Belfast (QUB) are planning to carry out research into new biodegradable materials that can be 3D printed and used as protective packaging.
1.2	The materials will be compostable or reusable, unlike current materials e.g. expanded polystyrene.
1.3	QUB have requested support from the Recycling Outreach Team in this project by way of officer input and feedback and a letter of support from Council.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4 th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a letter of support for the project.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	Queen's University Belfast in partnership with the University of Southampton are in the final stages of applying for funding from the UK Government to carry out research into new bio-degradable/compostable packaging materials.
3.2	The project aims to develop novel foams that can be 3D printed into custom protective packaging for transporting products, e.g. in e-commerce. The foam materials will be bio-mass derived and degradable into useful end-products so that they can be used in a circular and sustainable way (e.g. producing compost for growing food).
3.3	The ultimate aim would be to develop a replacement to current packaging materials like expanded polystyrene, which are not recyclable or made from renewable resources.
3.4	They have requested the involvement of an officer from the Recycling Outreach Team to help support their work at approximately 2 hours per month.
3.5	<p>This would involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing input on requirements to bring new sustainable protective packaging solutions into use from the perspective of municipal waste management systems and the associated public policies and education • Providing feedback on project activities and progress updates • Participating in planned stakeholder engagement activities, including surveys and workshops • Helping QUB to engage with other relevant stakeholders, such as waste management providers and processing companies • Helping plan and promote public outreach and education activities
3.6	The research project will run for 3 years.
	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u>
3.7	Officer time is estimated to be no more than 2 hours a month.

	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.8	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment are the responsibility of the Queens University Belfast as the lead organisation for the project.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Draft Letter of Support