



Subject:	Public / Private Partnership for Developing Regeneration, Infrastructure and a Modern Built Environment for the City of Belfast
Date:	8 th September 2021
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Marie Miller, Marketing Manager, City Regeneration & Development Laura Leonard, International Relations 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	The purpose of this report is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update Members on the Public- Private Partnership Programme to date• Seek approval to extend the Council's involvement in the Partnership Programme and contribution as part of a wider public-private approach
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the presentation to this Committee from representatives from the Renewed Ambition Partnership Taskforce• Note the update on the programme of work which is being delivered via a public private sector partnership, aimed at delivering regeneration, infrastructure and a

	<p>modern built environment for Belfast and the proposals as set out below in relation to the 2022 Programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Council contribution on basis as set out below as part of the wider public private partnership investment towards the delivery of the Programme
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>As Members will recall, at the meeting of the City Growth & Regeneration Committee on 9th June 2021, an update was provided on a public-private partnership programme of work underpinning regeneration, development and infrastructure activities in the city. As highlighted in that 'Renewed Ambition' report, the partnership is delivering a programme of work aimed at ensuring Belfast is positioned to continue to attract investment and deliver on inclusive growth. The partnership is supported by public, private and key anchor institution partners including BCC and other BRCD partner Councils, Invest NI, Belfast Harbour, Translink, Housing Association representation, the local development community and representatives from key city infrastructure, regeneration and development projects.</p>
3.2	<p>The programme of work is delivering activity across a number of strands aligned to securing investment and regeneration for the Belfast region. A key objective is to build awareness of the Belfast investment proposition aimed at attracting investment and creating employment opportunities and facilitate investor engagement to support the delivery of regeneration projects across the City, with a focus on creating the economic and social infrastructure/assets we need for inclusive sustainable growth.</p>
3.3	<p>Members had agreed that representatives from the Renewed Ambition Taskforce attend a future Committee meeting to update on activity and priority issues and these representatives will be attendance at this Committee.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Context</u></p> <p>Post-pandemic the City continues to face a range of economic, social and environmental challenges. At a city level 'Belfast: Our Recovery' identifies areas of focus to drive city recovery in the short term, laying the foundations for sustained recovery, while supporting our longer term ambitions as outlined in the Belfast Agenda, including supporting 46,000 additional jobs and our city being home to an additional 66,000 people. The City Recovery Framework also supports the delivery of our Corporate Plan and other city plans and strategies - albeit through the lens of these new challenges. Priority areas include building business resilience, digital innovation;</p>

	<p>investing in jobs-led growth within key sectors and working in collaboration with city partners to drive city regeneration and development, while maximising the impact of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) and partnerships including the Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor, Innovation City Belfast and Belfast Climate Commission.</p>
3.5	<p>The priorities within the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) together with the Future City Programme and city-wide regeneration and investment priorities remain critical to supporting city recovery and delivering physical and inclusive development in the city. From a Community Planning Partnership perspective, the City Development Board has identified housing-led regeneration; improving connectivity and active travel; supporting city-wide development and regeneration and delivering the Future City Centre programme as key priorities. Various Renewed Ambition partners are also represented on the City Development Board, underpinning the importance of a collaborative approach to city development.</p>
3.6	<p>Through our Inclusive Growth Framework, we are committed to working with others including the private sector, anchor institutions, community and voluntary sector and our wider public sector partners to create an inclusive city. The physical and built environment is part of an overall enabling framework to deliver on this.</p>
3.7	<p>Enhanced connectivity, in terms of connecting people physically as well as socially and economically to opportunities, will be key to supporting city recovery. This will require having fit for purpose physical and digital infrastructure in place. Major infrastructure projects, such as the Belfast Transport Hub and BRT Phase 2, are at differing stages of the development process and will improve connectivity at a city and regional level. The Bolder Vision Connectivity Study also seeks to address connectivity and the interdependencies with infrastructure and development /regeneration proposals. Critically, collaborative working across a number of city stakeholders and partners on such projects is needed to improve connectivity across the city and with communities.</p>
3.8	<p>Members will also be aware of the 'Reset for Growth' report that the Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission has recently produced. Delivering a house building programme at scale, creating a sustainable, connected and animated city centre, focusing on making Belfast a globally significant innovation hub in key sectors and building strong global co-operation frameworks were identified as focussed action areas to address to generate inclusive economic growth in Belfast. Specifically, the</p>

	<p>Commission highlighted the need for collaborative working with partners, building strategic networks and relationships and developing viable investment propositions to bring to market as being critical to positioning the city globally and attracting investment.</p>
3.9	<p>Working collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure we create the right environment and have the right physical, digital and social infrastructure in place, underpinned by our ability to attract investment, is critical to the creation of jobs and delivering sustained, inclusive growth across the city.</p>
3.10	<p>In terms of the journey that the partnership has taken, Members may recall that in 2016 a public private sector partnership was established to promote Belfast in the context of development and regeneration that provides for sustainable, inclusive growth. This also involved attendance at real estate and investment events, which in the past included MIPIM. More recently this partnership approach has evolved to having a wider focus, anchored in the desire to ensuring inclusive economic growth as a key objective of regeneration, development and investment in the region. This approach is one lever within a wider 'Position the City to Compete' proposition which seeks to build on the city's reputation as a unique destination for investment, tourism, development and supporting inclusive economic growth.</p>
3.11	<p>Outlined below are some of the programme objectives and activities although representatives of the Taskforce will be in attendance at Committee with further detail.</p> <p><i>Position Belfast's attractiveness to support delivery of regeneration projects across the city and create employment opportunities to provide for sustainable, inclusive growth:</i></p> <p>To date the programme has delivered an extensive programme of events, webinars and podcasts aimed at the regeneration, real estate and investment community. This provided an opportunity to highlight Belfast's key strengths and investment proposition on a variety of topics including Housing Led Regeneration, Reimagining our City Centre, Net Zero City, Waterfront Renewal, Sustainable Development & Construction, Tourism and Cultural Regeneration and Investment. In addition, major regeneration projects and housing opportunities were showcased to potential investors and end users to assist city partners to bring forward and maximise their regeneration potential. Upcoming events include a Belfast focused event on 'City Centre Living' at Real Estate Live which will showcase our ambitions to accelerate city centre living and bring forward significant city centre residential opportunities across all housing tenures.</p>

3.12	<p>A suite of marketing tools has been developed to facilitate the sharing of positive messaging around Belfast's investment proposition. This has included the development of a regular newsletter, marketing collateral and the delivery of a communications strategy, with Belfast featured in international, national and regional publications.</p> <p><i>Engage with key stakeholders to highlight the role real estate investment plays in strengthening the Belfast region's resilience and competitiveness, and delivering inclusive economic growth:</i></p>
3.13	<p>Delivering Belfast's ambitions relies on strong collaborative working, for e.g with the Department for International Trade (DIT), Invest NI and their extensive networks. Invest NI are one of the RAP partners and have provided access to their global teams to highlight investment opportunities in the Belfast City region. By way of example, through continued engagement with DIT, Belfast was invited to present (virtually) at the November 2020 'Downing Street – Investing in Cities' event. An Engagement and Advocacy programme is also continuing using local, national and international contacts of the RAP partners to showcase and pitch the city region for investment.</p> <p><i>Continue to foster a strong public-private partnership approach, and align with city recovery plans, Belfast Region City Deal, the Reset for Growth ambitions, and emerging city focus on being an innovative/digital, green and resilient city:</i></p>
3.14	<p>Future approach</p> <p>The Renewed Ambition Taskforce are keen to ensure that we continue to take a collaborative public /private approach to positioning Belfast globally for investment and regeneration and wish to extend the programme into the 2022 calendar year.</p>
3.15	<p>From the Council's perspective it is felt this partnership approach offers a strong foundation to build on the work to date and presents an ongoing opportunity for</p>

	<p>alignment with other strategic aims of the Council. For the Council, the key aims and objectives of being part of the partnership and contributing to the programme include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securing longer term institutional investors to support agreed regeneration plans of the Council and other partners. - Securing investment to deliver housing development at scale as set out in the growth ambitions of the Belfast Agenda and the 'Reset for Growth' report - Secure investment in the built environment on a city-wide basis to facilitate opportunities for jobs and business, communities and providing physical and social infrastructure to deliver on inclusive economic growth - Investment in waterfront regeneration and key infrastructure, connectivity and innovation related projects - Investment to help address dereliction and support the re-use and preservation of heritage assets - Investment in tourism and cultural products to underpin regeneration priorities - Investment in clean tech, environmental and sustainability initiatives
3.16	<p>Critically, these objectives form part of an overall Belfast proposition for economic growth and investment. Having the right physical, digital and social infrastructure in place is essential for the creation of jobs and delivery of sustained, inclusive growth.</p>
3.17	<p>The 2022 programme is currently under development and is to include focused stakeholder, investor and media engagement; showcase events; advocacy and research aligned to the real estate investment market and with a very clear focus on securing investment to deliver on city priorities. This public private partnership programme will continue to align to and complement other BCC led activities within the context of 'Positioning the City to Compete' and delivering a 'Global Future' - a key action area from the Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission. This includes work being undertaken by Economic Development, Tourism and Culture, International Relations, the SMART team and partnerships including Innovation City Belfast, Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor and BRCD. In addition, the need to continue to work in collaboration with international partners, including Department for International Trade (DIT) and Invest NI to promote investment opportunities in Belfast will be a critical component.</p>
3.18	<p>All five BRCD partner Councils have invested in RAP and it has been an important forum to showcase the real estate investment potential for the wider Belfast City Region</p>

	<p>and forthcoming BRCD projects. BRCD, which seeks to deliver a 10-year programme to increase GVA by £470m and creating up to 20,000 new and better jobs across the Belfast City Region, is expected to commence its delivery phase across 6 Council areas from Autumn 2021. Within Belfast, it will support the delivery of Belfast Destination Hub, active travel through a new cycle & pedestrian bridge, a Smart District as well as innovative University-led centres of excellence in life & health sciences, data analytics and virtual production. Whilst c.£150m is expected by way of direct capital contributions from the private sector to these projects, there are opportunities and a requirement for a further £1bn of private sector investment in order to deliver the benefits through jobs and productivity set out within the business cases.</p>
3.19	<p>The Council has a lead role to play in delivering on this shared agenda. Supporting the collaborative partnership approach taken by the Renewed Ambition Programme to showcasing Belfast, locally and globally, to the real estate investment, development and occupier market is critical, as we seek to attract the right investment into the city to drive the delivery of key regeneration projects, including residential, commercial and forthcoming BRCD projects, to provide for sustainable inclusive growth in the city.</p>
3.20	<p>In terms of future events, due to the on-going uncertainty from the health pandemic, a hybrid approach to showcase events is currently being explored by the partnership. This may potentially include physical attendance at investment showcase events and participation in webinar forums, though partners including UKREiif, MIPIM, Real Estate Live and Estates Gazette. However, it is still unclear at this stage how some of these events might be held and the extent of participation by all potential attendees.</p>
3.21	<p>UKREiif, the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum, is currently proposed to take place in Leeds in May 2022 and seeks to connect investors, developers, the public sector, funders and occupiers to drive inward investment to unlock inclusive economic growth through an exhibition and forum focusing on the following themes - the UK's Net Zero Target, Social Value and Inclusive Growth, the Future of Real Estate and Building Better Communities. Discussions are on-going via the Renewed Ambition Taskforce with the event organisers to maximise Belfast brand awareness and explore the potential of a Belfast presence at the UKREiif Forum.</p>
3.22	<p>MIPIM, the world's leading real estate market event, is planned to return in March 2022 following the cancellation of the March 2020 event due to Covid-19. In previous years</p>

3.23	<p>Council had participated as part of a 'Team Belfast' delegation to MIPIM of over 100 delegates from private and public-sector organisations and included a dedicated Belfast stand. The Renewed Ambition partners are, however, currently in discussions with event organisers, other UK and European Cities and DIT to understand plans for March 2022 and explore potential alternative formats to the dedicated stand approach.</p> <p>Discussions are also ongoing with key stakeholders including INI and DIT to leverage their national and international networks to facilitate focused investor engagement events aligned to specific city priorities and aimed at delivering regeneration, infrastructure and a modern built environment for Belfast.</p>
3.24	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Given the make-up of the partnership across a number of organisations, the funding to deliver the programme comes from a number of parties, with external funding forming the majority of the overall budget.</p> <p>Within the CGR Committee Plan (2021 – 2022) as agreed in June 2021, the Renewed Ambition Programme was included as a key programme of work to support inclusive economic recovery. A Council investment of £80,000 is proposed to contribute to this overall public and private sector partnership budget to extend the programme into the 2022 calendar year. This is a similar contribution made by Council in previous years, but will also be subject to a significant matched funding package from the other partners, as was the case in previous years where the majority of the funding came from external partners. Eighty per cent of funding for the current programme came from the wider private and public partners and it is envisaged that external funding will again form the majority of the overall budget for the 2022 programme. The Council's contribution will be met from within the City Regeneration and Development existing departmental budget for '21/22.</p>
3.25	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents attached</p>
	<p>None</p>