



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>UK - Republic of Korea Innovation Twins Programme</b>
<b>Date:</b>	25th March, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Deborah Colville, City Innovation 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>Sometime 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/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To seek Committee approval of a Statement of Intent to support ongoing collaboration with the city of Sejong (South Korea). A pre-recording of the signing of the Statement by the Chief Executive will feature as part of a virtual International Showcase Day with Sejong on 30th March, which will mark the culmination of this last phase of the project.
1.2	To provide an update on the virtual international Showcase Day on March 30 <sup>th</sup> and planned agenda.

<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. approve the Statement of Intent - which has been developed with support from key institutions across the city - to progress opportunities for collaboration with the city of Sejong in South Korea; and</li> <li>ii. note the arrangements for a joint city to city virtual international showcase day on March 30th, which will feature a pre-recording of the signing of the Statement of Intent by the Chief Executive.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	At the Committee meeting in November 2021, Members were presented with details of the Council's participation in the ' <i>UK-Republic of Korea Innovation Twins</i> ' programme <sup>1</sup> which was set up by the Connected Places Catapult and funded by BEIS and UKRI.
3.2	The programme aims to build relationships between smart cities with high potential for accelerating long term R and I collaborations and generating opportunities for trade and FDI. Committee has also received regular updates on the programme and has been made aware of the development of a Statement of Intent to support ongoing collaboration and this is now being submitted for approval.
3.3	While not legally binding, the Statement sets out areas of shared interest which will form the basis for ongoing cooperation between Sejong and Belfast. These include smart cities, medtech, cyber security, fintech, academic, educational and cultural cooperation, economic development and opportunities for bilateral trade and investment.
3.4	The Statement of Intent has been developed in conjunction with our colleagues in the city of Sejong in South Korea and with support from Invest NI who are in the process of developing a presence there. It will facilitate opportunities for mutual benefit between both cities and make it possible to unlock further funding from BEIS post March, 2022.
3.5	It has also been discussed with Colin Crooks, the newly appointed UK Ambassador to South Korea. Following a meeting led by the City Innovation team with representatives from Queens University, Ulster University, Health Innovation Research Alliance and QUBIS, Ambassador Crooks has taken the opportunity to table areas of interest detailed in the Statement with the Mayor of Sejong to promote future collaboration.

3.6	With Committee approval, a pre-recording of the signing of the Statement of Intent by the Chief Executive will be shown on March 30th, at a virtual international Showcase Day (organised and funded by Connected Places Catapult) to mark the culmination of the UK innovation twins programme.
3.7	Ian Greer, Vice-chancellor of Queens University and Chair of Innovation City Belfast will provide a keynote speech at the showcase event, setting out the city's innovation ambitions and sector strengths and addressing the benefits of bilateral engagement between Belfast and Sejong, potential outcomes and impact for both cities. Invest NI will outline their role to support international trade and showcase companies currently doing business and who wish to do business in South Korea.
3.8	Deborah Colville will present at the event on the theme of Smart Cities and Belfast Digital Innovation investments and John Greer will attend a panel session to outline how opportunities can be further developed between Belfast and Sejong beyond the current programme.
3.9	Local companies who have received funding (from a total budget of c £100k as part of the Innovation Twins programme) will also have the opportunity to show-case their innovative products or services at the event. Eight companies in total have been successful in their application for funding and will present on a range of products relating to areas such as encouraging recycling behaviour, fitness hubs, virtual tourism, community rewards programmes, last mile delivery, safer cycling, and personal safety.
3.10	There are also opportunities for companies not directly involved in the programme but who wish to explore business/collaboration in Sejong/South Korea to profile their work within a virtual exhibition space.
3.11	Work undertaken to develop an 'Innovative Procurement Playbook' will also feature as part of the event. The Playbook will capture the learning from the full programme and support local councils and public sector bodies across the UK to find better ways to procure more innovative solutions and services. It will also include learning from the delivery of a training programme delivered to local SMEs, and to council officers (who took part in the programme) to build their capacity to engage in challenge-led competitions.

3.12	The training for both officers and for SMEs will provide useful preparation and learning for the council to ensure that we are able to maximise the innovation opportunities offered by the Belfast Region City Deal challenge funds and in particular the Innovation for Societal Impact fund which is in development.
	<b>Financial and Resource Implications</b>
3.13	The programme requires officer time commitment from across the Departments.
3.14	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</b> None
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 - Draft Statement of Intent  Appendix 2 - Draft Agenda