

# City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 7th December, 2016

## MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Graham (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Haire and McGimpsey; and  
Councillors Beattie, Boyle, Dorrian, Dudgeon,  
Hargey, Howard, Johnston, Kyle, Magee,  
Mullan, O'Hara and Walsh.

Also attended: Alderman Rodgers and Councillor Copeland.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Ms. N. Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development;  
Mrs. L. Toland, Head of Economic  
and International Development; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Aldermen L. Patterson and Spence and Councillors Carson, McAteer and McDonough-Brown.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of 9th and 16th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st December.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Dorrian, Johnston, Magee and Mullan declared an interest in Item 2b, Presentation – Transport Hub, in that they were Members of the Planning Committee and, given a planning application for the Hub would be coming before that Committee at a future date, they did not take part in the discussion.

### **Presentation**

#### **TransportNI and the Department for Infrastructure**

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Mr. K. Monaghan, Eastern Divisional Manager, Mr. T. McClay, Belfast North Section Engineer, Mr. G. Doherty, Belfast South Section Engineer, TransportNI, and Mr. C. de Burca, Director of Transport and Business Services, the Department for Infrastructure, were in attendance and they were admitted to the meeting.

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The Eastern Divisional Manager provided the Committee with updates on the key strategic transportation schemes for the city, including the York Street Interchange (YSI). He advised the Committee that, on 15th November 2016, the Minister for Infrastructure had announced the publication of the outcome of the Public Inquiry into the YSI proposal which included the publication of the Inspector's Report and the Department Statement. He advised the Committee that the procurement process for the Interchange had been progressing but that the contract award was currently on hold following the outcome of the EU Referendum, which had created some uncertainty. The Members were advised that the Minister was currently considering the impact of the additional funds which were announced by the Chancellor in the Autumn Statement and that he intended to make a decision in the coming weeks.

The Committee was apprised of the Department's plans to extend the busway on the M1 and to create a new busway on the M2 to give more priority to public transport. The Eastern Divisional Manager also reported that two significant cycle schemes had been completed to link the west and east of the city, from the Westlink/Grosvenor Road to College Avenue and from College Avenue to Castle Street/Donegall Place. The Members noted that the next two cycle routes were programmed from Castle Street/Donegall Place to the Queen Elizabeth Bridge and from the Queen Elizabeth Bridge to Island Street.

The Eastern Divisional Manager advised the Committee that progression of the A2 Sydenham Bypass and the A55 Knock Road schemes were dependant on the availability of funding.

The Director of Transport and Business Services provided the Committee with an update on the progress which had been made on the Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme which was due for completion in Autumn 2018.

In response to a number of Members' questions, the representatives clarified a number of points, including:

- there would be a new, off-board ticketing system for BRT;
- while there was no capacity to expand the Dundonald Park and Ride, they were looking at possible sites in Newtownards, which would relieve pressure on the Dundonald site;
- the Department was aware that there were gaps in the cycling network and it was working to address them;
- there was an online system for reporting streetlight faults to TransportNI, on NI Direct;
- a utility reinstatement code determined that tarmac work by utility companies should be of a certain standard and that fines could be imposed if the work was of poor quality;
- unfortunately the Glencregagh/Beechgrove Park area was unlikely to get Traffic Calming Measures in the near future given its position in the priority list;
- the replacement streetlights were LED and that the light was stronger and more focused on the footways, which might have resulted in less light falling onto the roads; and

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- in relation to statutory consultee responses to planning applications, TransportNI would be happy to attend a future Planning Committee meeting.

A number of Members also raised the following issues with the representatives:

- that the streetlights were not coming on early enough during the darker months;
- why the two loading bays at Chichester Street/Upper Arthur Street and at Queen Street (close to its junction of Wellington place) were operational 24/7, when most deliveries were made between 7 and 10am;
- that consideration be given to inner city communities in relation to the BRT routes;
- whether the yellow box at the junction of Grosvenor Road/Fisherwick Place could be extended to allow better traffic flow;
- that a number of gullies required clearing in South Belfast (the specific locations to be provided by the Member to Transport NI); and
- traffic wardens were required in Montgomery Street, to stop cars parking on the double yellow lines.

Mr. Monaghan advised that, where relevant, action would be taken on these issues by TransportNI if it was deemed necessary after inspection.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance and they retired from the meeting.

### **Translink – Transport Hub**

The Committee was advised that Mr. C. Conway, Chief Executive, Translink, and Mr. L. McComb, Project Director, Transport Hub, were present and they were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. Conway presented the Committee with an overview of the proposed plans for the new Transport Hub for Belfast. He advised the Members that significant public consultation had been undertaken on the proposals for the Hub and that consultation had closed the previous week. The Committee was advised, however, that the representatives from Translink would seek to address any queries from the Members and incorporate any comments into the consultation process.

Mr. McComb presented the masterplan vision of the Transport Hub to the Committee and outlined that it would act as a major gateway to the City. The Members were advised that it would be four or five storeys high with two main entrances on Durham Street and the Grosvenor Road. He reported that there would be ample wayfinding signage within and around the Hub, with pedestrian routes and cycle ways travelling through it and with clear links to the Belfast Rapid Transit system on the Grosvenor Road. The Members were also advised that there would be clear signage for the two major

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hospitals and universities. He reported that the Hub would connect through the mall into the business district of the Linen Quarter, and would also connect into the urban village of Sandy Row.

The Project Director advised the Committee that his team was working closely with the Strategic Investment Board in relation to the Buy Social clause, in order to incorporate apprentices and 'new starts' into the development of the Hub. He also reported that they were hoping to create over 400 construction jobs and long term sources of employment.

In relation to the future of Central Station, the Chief Executive of Translink confirmed that, while it would remain a major halt for the east of the city, the Enterprise rail service between Belfast and Dublin would be based at the new Hub.

In response to a number of Member's questions regarding the number of different ticket systems across Translink's services, Mr. Conway confirmed that a new integrated ticketing system would be implemented by end of 2018, similar to Transport for London's Oyster card. He also advised the Members that the online reservation process for buses to Dublin airport would be streamlined in the next few months, allowing passengers to print their tickets, thereby guaranteeing them a seat at the selected time.

A Member asked the representatives if the Great Northern car park was going to be demolished and, if so, whether the car parking spaces would be included within the development of the new Hub. The Chief Executive of Translink advised that it was considered necessary to demolish the existing car park and advised that he felt there needed to be a discussion as to whether there was a need for any further car parking within the city centre.

The Chief Executive confirmed to the Members that the Boyne Bridge was to be removed as keeping it would strongly limit the level of regeneration which was possible. He advised the Members that, while there was no design which allowed them to keep the Boyne Bridge, they wanted to incorporate the story of the old Saltwater Bridge, which had pre-dated the Boyne Bridge, into the station square, in order to celebrate and maintain the history of the area.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and they retired from the meeting.

**Requests to Present to Committee**

**Visit Belfast**

The Committee acceded to a request from Visit Belfast to present at a future meeting.

**Cyber Security Working Group**

The Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development outlined to the Committee that the MATRIX Digital ICT report, which was launched in February 2016,

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had identified cyber security as one of four areas in which Northern Ireland had potentially world-class strength. She advised the Members that, in order to identify key areas for collaboration and to set out the priority actions to achieve growth potential, an action plan was currently being developed by the Cyber Working Group, upon which the Director of Development represented the Council.

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from the Working Group on Cyber Security at its meeting on 11th January, 2017.

**Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure**

**The information contained in the following report is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014**

**City Animation - Selected Areas for Animation and Costings for Approval**

The Director of City Centre Development presented the Committee with an update on the development of a programme of city centre animation and interim uses in each of the five Special Action Areas identified in the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS), namely, Inner West, South Centre, North West, North East and the river and East Bank areas. She advised the Members that the strategic interventions would seek to support the longer term need for investment and development in the city centre, with each intervention specifically tailored to meet the challenges and needs associated with the location.

The Director provided the Committee with an overview of the programme, which was planned to commence in the summer of 2017. She outlined that the use of specific sites would be subject to final approval by landowners and detailed inspections.

The Members were advised that, while some programme elements would generate income, others would support free access with indirect monetary or non-monetary benefits measured. She reported that a competitive tendering process would be completed for each site intervention and outlined some examples of proposed activities which included the use of containers for creative spaces for retail, food and cultural uses, pop-up outdoor cinema screenings and a community outdoor summer pond.

In relation to the financial implications, the Director advised the Committee that discussions had taken place with the Department for Communities, the Department for Finance and with the private sector.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. agreed, in principle, to the approach detailed; and
2. granted approval for officers to work up a financing strategy which would include partnership funding to support the delivery of the programme.

## **City Deal Update**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on recent advocacy activities in relation to developing the case for a Growth Deal for the Belfast city-region, and to outline next steps.**

### **2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- **Note the feedback from the ongoing advocacy programme in relation to securing a Growth Deal for the Belfast city-region;**
- **Agree that the Chief Executive develops a programme of co-operation and collaboration with the City of London Corporation, in line with the agreed International Relations Framework, with a particular focus on Growth Deals;**
- **Note the proposed work with the Belfast Partners' Network;**
- **Agree to invite the core cities group to Belfast in 2017 to hold one of their regular meetings**
- **Initiate a series of roundtables and research papers to examine the connectivity issues in relation to the Dublin-Belfast economic corridor, as part of the development of a Belfast city-region Growth Deal; and**
- **Building on the advocacy to date, commission a feasibility study which will quantify the scale and scope of a Belfast city-region Growth Deal, in preparation for detailed negotiations with government partners.**

### **3.0 Main report**

**Political meetings**

**3.1 Further to a workshop with the Belfast Party Group Leaders, party briefings with group leaders from neighbouring councils have taken place, facilitated by ResPublica. The purpose of these sessions has been to explore the assumptions underpinning the Growth Deal, and to seek their broad support for engaging in more detailed work on a city-region basis. This runs in parallel to ongoing discussions with the respective Chief Executives, examining economic**

opportunities for the city-region, to be presented to Committee in due course.

- 3.2** It is still proposed that a cross-party workshop for group leaders will be held in early 2017, subject to the final party briefings taking place.

**Westminster briefing**

- 3.3** On 16 November, over 80 people attended a briefing hosted by the four Belfast Members of Parliament. There was a broad political spectrum represented, including six former NIO Ministers/shadow Ministers, as well as the current Secretary of State and sitting members of the NI Select Committee. The 'take-away' document for the event is appended.

In addition, there were also a number of high-profile representatives from the business sector who spoke very positively about Belfast and the political ambition for the city, but that there remained an urgent need to accelerate its growth agenda. The importance of a single, powerful regeneration body was stressed on a number of occasions. In wider discussions, there was broad support for a Growth Deal – in particular noting that Belfast is one of the very few UK cities now to not have this package of additional investment and responsibilities. This was highlighted as a substantial limitation in an increasingly competitive environment, where other UK cities have the flexibility to optimally position themselves in preparation for the exit from the European Union. A similar briefing event is planned for Stormont MLAs on Tuesday 6 December and a verbal update will be provided on the key issues highlighted at that briefing.

**London City Corporation**

- 3.4** As part of the itinerary for the Party Group Leaders while in London, a number of meetings were held with the London City Corporation, including with The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor, Dr Andrew Charles Parmley, as well as their economic development team. In the course of these meetings, a number of key priorities for the Corporation were highlighted:

- Nurturing a favourable business 'eco-system'—ensuring that there is a single point of contact for businesses based in the City, streamlining where possible processes for locating investment and development in the City, while also being actively connected to wider UK investment sector;

- **Lobbying for infrastructure – global competitor cities have had infrastructure in place for a number of years and there is an urgent need in context of Brexit to ensure that London is well-positioned in this regard;**
- **Talent management – both growing your own, and also remaining attractive to new talent. Considering the potential for bespoke London arrangements to address identified sectoral shortfalls;**
- **Lord Mayor’s programme – the civic engagement programme is a national and international tool for the Corporation’s economic agenda, using the role as a platform to promote investment and economic development in the City; and**
- **Liveability – ensuring that growth is inclusive, by actively working with the business sector to encourage local responsibility e.g. inclusion of SMEs in procurement processes, and raising aspiration and achievement in local schools.**

**3.5 In terms of synergies directly linked to Belfast City Council’s emerging Growth Deal agenda, there are a number of key areas of potential mutual interest:**

- **In order to mitigate investor and business sector uncertainty, direct bi-lateral relationships between cities and with countries have increased importance in context of exit from the European Union. The Corporation is actively developing strong relationships with Brussels, Dublin and beyond;**
- **City-region governance – through Central London Forward, the Corporation is engaged in a sub-regional partnership, working collaboratively with 8 neighbouring authorities on a city deal for London, with an immediate focus on skills devolution and working with the business sector;**
- **Increasing social impact – consolidating inclusive growth outcomes through a broad range of programmes including ‘Heart of the City’ which supports a wide range of businesses to contribute to social outcomes through local responsibility programmes, and the ‘City Bridge Trust’ which tackles disadvantage through social investment and grant-making;**
- **Raising aspiration and educational achievement – working closely with The Honourable The Irish Society, the Corporation has a number of programmes working in and with schools, as well as Ulster University, to promote access to education; and**

- **Financial and technological services sector – there is direct connection between some of the specialisms in Belfast (e.g. cyber-security; legal services) and the financial services sector located in City of London, that could be further developed in terms of talent flows and off-shoring/near shoring mid/back-office support.**
- 3.6 Overall, the Corporation is keen to pursue a mutually beneficial city-to-city programme of co-operation and collaboration, particularly in the context of both cities' Growth Deal agenda and the common interests in relation to galvanising and stimulating both cities as growth engines, as the UK exits the European Union.**
- 3.7 It is proposed that over the coming months, the Chief Executive will work with her counterpart at the Corporation to develop this programme, in line with the International Relations Framework, approved by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee at its November meeting, to build strategic alliances with partners in both London and Dublin and report regularly back to committee.**
- 3.8 One focus of this will be that the Lord Mayor of Belfast will host the City of London Lord Mayor Dr Andrew Parmley in March 2017. Work is ongoing to develop a productive schedule, with a particular focus on economic development and cross-border linkages.**

**Belfast Partners Network**

- 3.9 In a similar endeavour, the Council has been approached to be involved in the Belfast Partners network in the City of London. This is an independently-run business networking initiative that seeks to make business linkages between companies and leaders in both cities.**
- 3.10 A launch of this network is planned to take place in London at the end of February 2017. This event will be hosted at the headquarters of the global communications business Thomson Reuters in Canary Wharf. It will be attended by more than 150 interested individuals from both cities and there will be an opportunity for the Council to make a positive pitch about the real estate investment opportunities available in Belfast as well as promoting the opportunities for foreign direct investment, particularly the emerging and growing specialisms such as cyber security, legal services and business and professional services. It is suggested that the Lord Mayor, Chair of City Growth and Regeneration and Party Groups Leaders attend the event.**

- 3.11 The purpose of the network is to engage various business leaders in many sectors who may consider growing businesses in the city of Belfast in future. It will provide an overview of the economic outlook for the city and the current sector strengths and opportunities.

#### Core Cities

- 3.12 Further to SP&R Committee's decision in August, officers have initiated the application process for Belfast to become a member of the Core Cities Group. The Chief Executive has undertaken a number of bi-lateral meetings, as well as attending the most recent meeting of all Core Cities' Chief Executives. As part of these discussions, Belfast's success in attracting Foreign Direct Investment is of particular interest to the Group. The Group may consider coming to Belfast in 2017 to further explore this issue.
- 3.13 Given the involvement of Core Cities' political representatives, it is proposed that this visit is hosted by the Lord Mayor, along with the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

#### Belfast-Dublin Co-operation

- 3.14 Further to the special meeting of the Council on 4 July, the Council asked the UU Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC), to carry out initial research summarising the key issues and implications of the UK leaving the EU and to outline the potential issues Belfast will need to consider and manage. In early analysis, a number of significant areas for Northern Ireland to consider have been identified, including the impact on cross-border trade.
- 3.15 As a consequence, discussions with the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) have been initiated to explore the issue of connectivity and the strengthening of cross-border physical and economic infrastructures. ICLRDR has a unique network of academics and researchers who are committed to best practice in spatial planning as a key component of sustainable economic and social development. The Centre has worked over a number of years with local government and is widely recognised for its work in supporting sustainable regional development and have an in-depth understanding of the central role of Local Government in driving and achieving this.

- 3.16 It is proposed that a piece of work is commissioned to understand shared priorities and common needs, and the progression of an economic/innovation corridor along the Eastern seaboard. This would also be of interest to Derry City and Strabane District Council and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. This would include a series of roundtables and research papers to examine the connectivity issues in relation to the Dublin-Belfast economic corridor, as part of the development of a Belfast city-region Growth Deal.**

**Next steps – negotiating the Growth Deal**

- 3.17 As a consequence of these various briefing events and Ministerial engagements, it is clear that there is broad support for the concept of a ‘city deal’ for Belfast. However, in order to meaningfully negotiate the scale of and detail for a deal, it is also clear from feedback and engagements that the Council now needs to prepare a much more detailed business case for presentation to the NI Executive and Treasury.**

- 3.18 Looking towards the Glasgow and Clyde Valley deal, their partnership went through a detailed feasibility study process. Using this, they were able to negotiate and agree:**

- Secure £1 billion of Scottish Government and UK Government capital funding to support proposed infrastructure investment programme for the area. This will be complemented by a minimum of £130 of investment from Glasgow and Clyde Valley local authorities**
- Leverage in an estimated £3.3 billion of private sector investment into the proposed infrastructure investment programme**
- Spread the benefits of economic growth across Glasgow and Clyde Valley, ensuring deprived areas benefit from this growth. In terms of access to jobs for the most deprived wards, it will be above the average for the city-region.**
- The Glasgow and Clyde Valley feasibility study modelled a permanent uplift of 4.4% in the regional economy, with an overall increase in the economy of around 29,000 jobs in the city region.**

- 3.18 Funding agreed by the UK Government and the Scottish Government will be paid over a twenty year period in annual instalments. This funding will be unlocked in five-year blocks, subject to Glasgow and Clyde Valley meeting agreed outputs and outcomes assessed through a Gateway Review**

mechanism. Further detail is provided in the summary appended.

3.20 It is therefore suggested that Belfast uses a similar approach. In a feasibility study, the following would need to be scoped, quantified and analysed:

- Engaging with partners, establishing governance and setting the geography for the deal;
- Determining objectives, prioritisation criteria and identifying schemes;
- Providing economic analysis, financial modelling and agreeing performance metric e.g. additionality in tax-take or increase in sustained employment opportunities; and
- Prioritising projects and funding/financing routes for delivery.

3.21 This would provide a road-map for negotiation and subsequently, implementation. The time-scale for this would be up to 12 months, given the engagement required with partners, as well as the economic modelling analysis to be prepared.

#### **RSA Inclusive Growth Commission**

3.22 The Royal Society of the Arts (RSA) requested as part of its nationwide commission on inclusive growth to meet with Belfast City Council. A roundtable was facilitated on 24 November. Some of the key issues raised by Members included:

- Importance of place leadership, in tackling the inclusion issues particular to Belfast e.g. segregation, low aspiration
- Role of Council and third sector in supporting those with multiple barriers through innovative employability programmes
- Mapping exercise needed in order to identify gaps and clear progression routes into sustained employment.
- Officers are working on a written submission to the Commission, which will publish its final report in Spring 2017.

3.23 Financial & Resource Implications

Provision has been made within existing revenue budgets to develop a business case and financial model for a city deal.

**3.24 Equality or Good Relations Implications**

**Any emerging ‘deal’ will be subject to equality and good relations screening.”**

The Director of Finance suggested that the Committee might wish to facilitate a meeting, in January 2017, with Sir Edward Lister, Special Advisor to the Department of International Trade, to discuss Belfast’s infrastructure needs. The Committee agreed to this course of action.

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

**Regeneration Best Practice Visit for Members**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

**1.1 It is proposed to organise a regeneration study visit for Members, to develop their awareness of best practice and to inform their role overseeing the Belfast Regeneration and Investment Strategy.**

**2.0 Outcomes and Recommendations**

**2.1 Members are asked to:**

- **Approve the proposed format of the visits, including the duration; a ½ day workshop in advance; and the key themes and projects for inclusion. A more detailed itinerary will then be brought before Members early next year.**
- **Confirm the overall numbers attending from the Committee, and to approve indicative costs of £500 per person. This cost is subject to a more detailed assessment being made for the final programme – see para 4.0 below.**
- **Approve attendance of an independent facilitator and one BCC officer to accompany members and to help maximise opportunities for learning.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 There are a number of UK cities that have undertaken city centre development schemes similar to those envisaged by Belfast. It would be beneficial for Members to experience these in order to understand what went well, and what learning points we could incorporate into the Belfast strategy.**

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- 3.2** It is proposed that the study visit should take place in April 2017, immediately following MIPIM, and should take place over two days (with one overnight required). It is suggested that the first day is spent in Manchester and Liverpool, which opens up a range of relevant themes including waterfront regeneration, the visitor economy, and inward investment. It is suggested that the second day could be spent in Leeds, incorporating issues such as retail led development, business improvement districts, and city regions.
- 3.3** To accommodate a visit to a successful Transport Hub, Members would look at Manchester Piccadilly, which received a £100m upgrade in 2002 and will provide the Northern Hub for HS2 (work on this should have started by the time of the visit). Members would also visit Media City at Salford Quays and the New Bailey Development in Salford.
- 3.4** It is proposed that before the regeneration visits begin that Members take part in a half day workshop, facilitated by a regeneration expert. This gives Members the opportunity to discuss what they are going to visit in advance, and learning points they would like to draw from it. The workshop could also include regeneration case studies, a review of relevant documents, and presentations of expert content.
- 3.5** Although the bulk of the time will be spent on project visits, the regeneration study will incorporate peer to peer learning with counterparts; as well as conversations with senior officers / academics. To help maximise impact, and to act as an expert resource to embed key learning, it is proposed that the workshop facilitator accompanies members on the regeneration study.
- 3.6** Day two (Leeds) could include:
- **City centre retail:** the development of Victoria Gate (anchored by the largest John Lewis outside London) to include the development / financial process and use of compulsory purchase orders.
  - **Regeneration Schemes – Leeds Southbank** is the largest scheme in the UK.
  - **Business improvement districts:** the role of BIDs in Leeds, including their role with city centre animation.
  - **City Region:** consideration of this developing area of public policy, and Leeds leadership role with surrounding local authorities.

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**3.7 To accommodate the full range of possible projects and themes, Members may wish to consider breaking up into 2 small groups. Following the study tour Members may wish to consider a further facilitated workshop so that the full range of insights and activities can be considered by the full Committee.**

**3.8 An alternative day 3 visit could include Stockport.**

**3.9 Financial & Resource Implications**

To accommodate flights, along with hotels, transport and subsistence for two days and one night, it is estimated that a budget of £500 per person will be required. Precise costs will be presented to Members in the next report, following development of the detailed itinerary.

**3.10 Equality and Good Relations**

**None.”**

After discussion, the Committee agree that one Member per party represented on the City Growth and Regeneration Committee would participate in the Best Practice visit.

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

**Positioning Belfast to Compete**

**RDS Science Festival**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

**1.1 The purpose of the report is to give an overview of proposals for a Primary Science Fair to be held at Belfast Waterfront in June 2017 and to recommend Council support for the event.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 Members are asked to:**

- Note the proposals for a Primary Science Fair to be held at Belfast Waterfront in June 2017.
- Agree to provide financial support of £20,000 towards the event. These costs have been built into the estimates for the 2017-2018 financial year and will be put forward as part of the rate setting process.

**3.0 Main report**

- 3.1** Members may be aware of a very successful Primary Science Fair that takes place each year at the RDS Dublin. The Dublin event has been running for eight years. It operates alongside the BT Young Scientist Event as a means of profiling the importance of science and technology as part of the educational development process. The events also showcase the very positive and innovative work of young people in this field.
- 3.2** The Science Fair is supported by the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) as well as education bodies and industry partners.
- 3.3** In 2016, The Science Fair was expanded to Limerick. The event attracted 60 schools and 1,500 pupils and was attended by 3,000 visitors over the two day programme including non-exhibiting schools, parents and families of those participating in the event.
- 3.4** Based on the success of the Limerick event, RDS is proposing to extend the event to Belfast for the first time in 2017. They have established a local planning team, supported by Sir Bruce Robinson, former Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.
- 3.5** The Belfast event will take in the Waterfront on 8-9 June 2017. Participation is open to all primary schools and organisers are aiming to attract 60 schools, bringing with them around 1,500 pupils to the event. In addition to the 1,500 pupils participating in the event, the event organisers have set a target of attracting 2,000 additional primary school pupils along to the event. Schools will be invited to attend from January 2017. They have the option of preparing and presenting a science-based project idea which will be assessed by a Judging Panel or they can just come along to view the projects presented by other schools and take part in the interactive exhibits and large-scale science shows which will take place on the day. The format will be repeated on each of the two days of the event. The project work undertaken by the children is linked to the curriculum, particularly focusing on themes such as The World Around Us and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.
- 3.6** Event organisers are working closely with Department for Education as well as The Teacher Training Colleges, The Primary Science Teaching Trust and the W5 Science Ambassadors. They are proposing to build on the work

undertaken by the STEM Ambassadors and other outreach work done by the Teacher Training Colleges to ensure that the event is not a one-off but that children are exposed to a range of opportunities to develop their skills of enquiry, information-finding and curiosity to explore the science behind the everyday.

- 3.7** In order to ensure that the event is targeted at young people in more challenged neighbours, it is proposed that the Council works closely with Department for Education to target specific primary schools and encourage their participation.
- 3.8** The organisers expect that the costs associated with hosting the event in Belfast will be in the region of €230,000. The RDS has committed €115,000 of that amount and is seeking to secure investment with other partners. They are currently engaging with a range of government and industry partners to meet the outstanding amount (around £100,000). At this stage, they have secured €35,000 from the Irish American Partnership (IAP) and anticipate that they can achieve €20,000 from sponsors and exhibitors. It is proposed that Belfast City Council provides £20,000 towards the costs of the event.
- 3.9** Members will be aware of the emerging outcomes of the Belfast Agenda. These include an ambition to ensure that ‘Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy’ and that ‘Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential’. Likewise, the priority areas of work include a focus on areas such as reducing economic inequalities, supporting our young people, addressing educational inequalities and increasing skills attainment, increasing skills levels of our residents and matching people and skills to opportunities around Belfast.
- 3.10** The Primary Science Fair recognises the need for early intervention with young people to stimulate their curiosity and to get them thinking about the science of how things work. At present, we have a deficit of essential STEM skills and this is at odds with the future growth areas in the city. There is a need to invest efforts and resources in new activities which will help steer young people towards STEM subjects when they reach secondary school.
- 3.11** The Primary Science Fair will work alongside a number of other STEM-related interventions that take place in the course of the year. This includes the Northern Ireland Science Festival which will take place in February 2017. The Science Festival focuses on getting people engaged and enthused with science while the RDS Primary Science Fair is the next

step in terms of skills development and confidence with science for young children. One specific area of collaboration between the two events is around efforts to address the lack of quality learning materials. Both are currently working on a series of new curriculum-based materials for primary school children that will be trialled at the June Primary Science Fair and developed for inclusion in the programme at the Northern Ireland Science Festival in February 2018.

**3.12 Financial and resource implications**

The overall cost of the event is anticipated to be around €230,000 (around £200,000). It is proposed that Belfast City Council contributes £20,000 towards the costs. The RDS has committed to covering 50% of the costs (€115,000) and is working with other public and private partners to secure the outstanding amounts. The Council contribution has been included as part of the budget estimates for 2017/2018 financial year.

**3.13 Equality and good relations implications**

No specific equality and good relations implications. Belfast City Council will ensure that all local schools have an opportunity to participate. There will be additional support available for young people with special educational needs.”

During discussion, a number of Members stated that they were pleased that there would be an emphasis on encouraging primary schools in more deprived areas to attend the Science Fair, particularly given the close correlation between the most deprived areas and the lowest educational attainment.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Growing Businesses and the Economy**

**Maximising Social Value from Council activities**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on work under way to maximise the social value return from Council activities, principally procurement and to set out some emerging areas of work and timeframes.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Note the ongoing work to integrating social clauses, where appropriate, within capital and revenue contracts
- Note the proposals to expand this activity to take a broader definition of ‘social value’ which will maximise the return on Council investment, based on the model adopted within the Innovation Factory operator contract
- Note the proposals to work with other funding partners to develop a collaborative approach to social clauses and social value return across a number of projects.

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 At the 22 January 2016 meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, Members adopted the Council’s social clause policy. This committed the Council to scope out all upcoming tender opportunities (focusing on those with a value of at least £250,000) to explore opportunities for securing social value returns by introducing social clauses. These social clauses were focused primarily on employability related issues (e.g. apprenticeships, ring-fenced employment opportunities, work placements for long-term unemployed) but also included clauses relating to environmental sustainability.**

**3.2 Members will be aware that social clauses, as currently applied, are a relatively ‘blunt’ instrument in supporting employability and engagement by those furthest from the labour market. To date, social clauses have been largely focused on construction contracts. This means that the social clause obligations can only apply for the construction period of the project. As a result, the employability opportunities on these contracts tend to be limited in both duration and scope.**

**3.3 Recognising the limitations of the current arrangements, Members agreed that it would be prudent to review the Council’s Social Policy to consider moving towards greater alignment with the ‘Buy Social’ approach recently adopted by central government departments by June 2017.**

**3.4 ‘Buy Social’ takes a broader approach to government purchasing, with a commitment to maximising the social and economic benefits from public procurement. This approach is**

now being rolled out across all government contracts and there is interest from the Finance Minister to extend this as far as is possible within the legislation. Following the commitment to working towards the Buy Social model, Officers introduced a number of developments in the Council's approach to social clauses. This included:

- Collaboration with training providers already in receipt of financial support from the Council to act as a point of contact/ 'broker' for the contractor in providing training and work placement opportunities. This has improved the opportunities for coordination and has improved working relationships between key training organisations and the contractors
- Consideration of opportunities for social clauses within service contracts as well as construction contracts. One recent example of this has been the operator contract for the Innovation Factory.

**3.5** A report to the 18 November 2016 meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee noted that Council contracts since 2014 have supported the following training and employment opportunities over the respective contract periods:

- 47 long-term unemployed
- 47 student placements
- 105 apprenticeships
- 26 trainees supported through work placements.

**3.6** In addition to employability benefits as social clauses, Officers have also taken a wider approach to maximising social and economic return on Council procurement spend. Some key examples of this include:

- Organising Meet the Buyer events: Contractors securing business with the Council are required to participate in at least one supplier information day, facilitated by Belfast City Council. Events provide an opportunity for local businesses to get direct engagement with the contractor. Events are specifically targeted towards small businesses and social enterprises and can also focus primarily (although not exclusively) on businesses located in the area adjacent to where the investment is taking place. For example, the operator of the Innovation Factory has recently entered into a contract with a local company to supply office furniture to the building

- Delivering programmes to help local businesses access public procurement opportunities: although not exclusively focused on Council contracts, these programmes support up to 30 micro businesses and social enterprises each year to build their skills base on public sector procurement processes. They also receive support from mentors to advise them on how to take a targeted approach to opportunities from the public sector and to give them support on compiling bids, including looking at opportunities for building consortia to access larger contract opportunities. These programmes have been running over a number of years and local companies have secured millions of pounds of new business with public sector buyers.

**3.7** One of the key lessons learned to date has been the value of including social requirements as an element of the evaluation criteria in relevant contracts: The first example of this has been the operator contract on the Innovation Factory. Bidders were asked about how they would support investment in social regeneration alongside the work that they would undertake to operate the centre efficiently and ensure occupancy levels in line with business plan projections. The contractor on this project has now developed a social integration and community engagement plan and has put in place an extensive programme of outreach, engagement and skills development, focusing on the adjacent community. Some of the highlights include:

- Delivery of an Innovation Boot Camp in Summer for 10 local young people
- Commitment to buying 25% of supplies from local businesses
- Delivery of work placement opportunities, with commitments from at least 25% of all tenants to take part
- Development of a mentorship programme between tenant businesses and local young people, giving an insight into innovation, self-employment and new career options.

**3.8** Lessons learned from this approach are currently used in the ongoing procurement for the next phase of the Leisure Transformation Programme (LTP). This tender has included social value considerations as part of the evaluation criteria for the main works element of the proposed three new leisure centres.

- 3.9** The introduction of ‘social value’ assessment as part of the evaluation criteria in tenders is the start of a process of taking a more holistic approach to the commissioning process. This will lead to the development of a ‘Social Value Procurement Framework’ for the Council. This essentially means that, in addition to securing the specific supplies or services that they need, buyers can ask potential suppliers to set out how they will help them deliver on wider organisational priorities. For the Council and its key city partners, the Belfast Agenda provides the backdrop for the Social Value Procurement Framework. Depending on the contract, bidders may be asked about what actions they can deliver to support some of the themes including ‘Growing the Economy’ and ‘Working and Learning’. Their contributions will be assessed as part of the evaluation of the bids and any commitments made will then become contractual obligations which must be delivered. The approach is likely to actually go beyond the ‘Buy Social’ obligations, taking account of the Council commitment to support inclusive growth and improve the quality of life for all residents.
- 3.10** In order to ensure that the Council approach to this new way of working is compliant with all relevant legal requirements and that we maximise opportunities to engage with our anchor institutions and Belfast Agenda partners in the development and delivery of this work, we will be supported by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). CLES are leading on this work with a number of UK local authorities. They have agreed to work with Belfast as a case study city. The first stage of this process took place at the end of November when CLES facilitated a workshop with the Council, Central Procurement Directorate (CPD), other government departments, business representative organisations, Strategic Investment Board and third sector representatives. It is planned that a draft action plan will developed by February 2017. It will be brought back to Committee for approval at that point.
- 3.11** Part of this action plan will look at how we can work with other partners to ensure that they adopt similar principles and ways of working. In advance with this, we have been engaging with public investment partners who are bringing forward major schemes in the city, particularly where these are adjacent to work being undertaken by the Council. This will include Urban Villages areas and other major developments such as Belfast Rapid Transit. Through early engagement in the planning and development phases, it is likely that we will be able to secure greater impact from our collective investments. This will be particularly important in terms of supporting apprenticeships

etc. where it is important to have a critical mass of activity in order to provide long-term opportunities for apprentices to complete their full programme of work-based training.

**3.12** The planning service is currently undertaking work on the publication of a Developer Contributions Framework, which will formalise the negotiations that have been taking place between the City Council (as local planning authority) and developers. Developer contributions may be sought where they are necessary to mitigate the impacts of a specific development. Officers are preparing the Framework in order to provide clarity and certainty for potential developers in the planning process. The Framework will be brought to a future meeting of the Planning Committee for endorsement before going out to public consultation.

**3.13** Financial and resource implications

No specific financial or resource implications at this point. Officers are currently working to re-align resources to ensure the effective development and management of these opportunities.

**3.14** Equality or good relations implications

The social value framework will take account of all relevant equality and good relations and will seek to have a positive impact on both.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Finance, Procurement and Performance**

**Finance Update - Quarter 2**

The Director of Finance and Resources advised the Committee that the 2016/17 Quarter 2 position for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee was an underspend of £94,000, with the forecast year end position being an underspend of £195,000, which was well within the acceptable tolerance of 3%.

He advised the Members that Land and Property Services was forecasting a district rate clawback position of £2,154,000, which would mean that the Council was required to find an additional £658,000 above the forecast departmental positive balance to fully finance the rates claw back.

The Committee noted:

1. the report and the associated financial reporting pack; and

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2. that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed that, in order to limit the impact on the Council's reserves, departmental cash limits were capped at their forecast position and that officers would review the planned capital programme and non-recurrent work programmes to secure the £658,000 balance of the rates claw back from the capital financing budget.

**Operational Issues**

**Twilight Market – Update**

The Head of Economic Initiatives provided the Committee with an update on the most recent Twilight Market at St. George's Market which had taken place on 8th and 9th November 2016. She advised the Members that, despite inclement weather on the first evening, more than 28,000 people had attended over the course of the two evenings with over 140 local craft and food retailers on offer, including 15 stalls from local restaurants. The Members were also advised that, as with the first two Twilight Markets, the event had generated significant positive coverage on social media.

She advised the Members that the November 2016 Twilight Market had instigated a number of new partnerships, including the Bank of Ireland which linked the event to Global Entrepreneurship Week. The Committee was advised that this had opened the door for further partnerships and potential sponsorship or other income arrangements.

The Head of Economic Initiatives advised the Committee that, given the success of the three events to date, it was proposed that three Twilight Markets would take place in 2017. She advised that, where possible, the events would link into other planned activity in the City in order to maximise visitor numbers. She reported that indicative dates of March or April, June and November were being proposed but that these were subject to change.

She reminded the Committee that St. George's Market had recently won the UK Market of the Year Award at the Observer Food Awards. She advised the Committee that financial support was available from the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to support some of the activity at the market, while Tourism NI had provided promotional support as part of its Year of Food and Drink 2016 campaign. However, she outlined that it was not yet clear whether this income would be available in the coming financial year.

The Members were advised that work was underway to look at how the markets could act as a starting point for new businesses, including exploring opportunities for traders to do business in alternative venues and looking at how vacant properties could be regenerated.

The Head of Economic Initiatives advised the Committee that there was a net cost of approximately £4,000 for each Twilight Market and that the funding for the 2017 Markets had been factored into the budget for the 2017-2018 financial year.

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During discussion, a number of Members asked that officers explore the possibility of hosting more than three Twilight Markets in 2017, given their popularity.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. noted the success of the award-winning Twilight Markets to date;
2. agreed to support the delivery of three future Twilight Markets in the course of 2017, alongside a wider programme of activities to support tourism growth, business start, local regeneration and city development, noting that the costs had been included in the estimates for the 2017-2018 financial year and would be subject to approval as part of the rate setting process; and
3. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting on the possibility of increasing the number of Twilight Markets which took place in the year, given their success.

**2018 Healthy Cities WHO Conference**

The Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development advised the Committee that Belfast Healthy Cities had asked if the Council would support the bid for the 2018 International World Health Organisation European Healthy Cities Network Conference.

She advised the Members that this was an opportunity for Belfast to host the international conference and that it represented an important milestone in the WHO European Healthy Cities Network as it marked the close of Phase IV (2014-2018) and would also act as a celebration of 30 years of the Network. The Committee was advised that the WHO was seeking a host city which was enthusiastic and committed to delivering a memorable event.

The Head of Economic Initiatives reported that the global conference would take place over four days in June, 2018, with an estimated 800 - 1,100 attendees. She advised the Members that the Belfast Waterfront was holding a number of dates if Belfast's bid was to be successful. The Members were advised that tours would be provided for both delegates and any accompanying persons during the four day conference, creating an opportunity for many visitors to explore Belfast, adding to the growth of tourism and regeneration of the city and promoting the significant changes within the city over the past decade.

The Committee was advised that, while there were no financial implications at that time, the CEO and Belfast Healthy Cities team had met with Visit Belfast and four tenders had been submitted, with estimated costs for Belfast Healthy Cities to host the conference likely to be between £30,000 and £100,000.

The Committee agreed to recommend that the Lord Mayor would forward a letter indicating the City's interest and support to host the 2018 Healthy Cities WHO Conference.

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**MIPIM Update**

The Director of City Centre Development provided the Committee with an update on the preparations for Belfast's delegation to MIPIM, which would take place between 13th and 17th March, 2017.

She reported that the Council had hosted the Sponsor's Launch event at the Belfast Telegraph building on 1st December, with over 100 guests and that a number of expressions of support had already been received.

The Director advised the Members that the key messages for MIPIM 2017 would be built on the City's strengths, to project Belfast's success and to make a compelling narrative for investors. She outlined that this could include:

- Talent – the growth of the knowledge economy and the financial / professional sector which was fuelling demand for Grade A offices and showcase the Belfast film industry, including eye catching events using the authentic "Iron Throne" from Game of Thrones;
- Track record – to showcase the growth of tourism, the need for new hotels, and the ambition to create a second world class visitor attraction; and
- Quality of Life – which would incorporate high profile events around Belfast's sporting heritage and a separate event on the IRFU bid for the 2023 Rugby World Cup.

The Committee noted that the Belfast presence at MIPIM 2017 would be launched formally at a "Go to Market" event at the Belfast Waterfront, on 21st February, 2017. She also suggested that the consultants be invited to present to the Committee in February, in order to present the final programme, branding and associated collateral to the Members.

The Committee was reminded that in 2016, the Belfast delegation had consisted of 53 people from 23 organisations, with £163,000 of private sector sponsorship. The Director highlighted that, the Council had doubled the size of the Belfast stand at MIPIM for 2017, which, in addition to the adjacent 30m sq terrace, would provide a focal point for the delegation.

The Director highlighted that Investors would want to see visible political leadership and that the role of Members was fundamental in leveraging external interest and support. The Committee was advised that the number of Council officers attending MIPIM this year had decreased to four.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. noted the successful Sponsor's Launch event on 1st December, and the ongoing preparations for MIPIM 2017;
2. approved the delivery of a more detailed presentation to the Committee in February 2017, to update it on the final draft

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- programme, branding and marketing collateral ahead of the proposed public launch on 21st February; and
3. agreed the attendance of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee (or their nominees) and up to four officers at MIPIM between 13-17 March, 2017, and their participation in the associated forthcoming events.

Chairperson