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**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

12th October, 2015

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following item(s) will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 5.15 pm on Wednesday, 14th October, 2015.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

- (d) Eurocities AGM Attendance (Pages 1 - 10)

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Subject:	EUROCITIES AGM Attendance
Date:	14 October 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Interim Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, European & International Relations Unit Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for the attendance of the Lord Mayor and the European and International Relations Manager at the 2015 EUROCITIES AGM in Malmo and Copenhagen.
1.2	The annual conference is the main political networking event of the EUROCITIES year. Around 500 Officers and elected Members (mostly Mayors) attend each year to debate on key policy areas and challenges facing cities. These range from migration, to air quality, poverty, and job creation. This year, Mayor to Mayor debates will take place on key urban challenges including air quality, employment, making cities attractive for investment and urban mobility.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to agree Committee support for the attendance of the Lord Mayor and the European and International Relations Manager at the 2015 EUROCITIES AGM from 4

	– 6 November in Malmo and Copenhagen, at a maximum cost of £1,250, which can be covered from within the EU Unit’s existing annual budget.
3.0	Main report
3.1	The 2015 EUROCITIES Annual Conference will take place in Malmo and Copenhagen from 4 – 6 November. EUROCITIES is the network of major European cities, comprised of local elected Members and Officers of over 130 of Europe’s largest cities and 40 partner cities that between them govern over 130 million citizens across 35 countries. As a network, it monitors and influences EU policy and legislation, builds early intelligence and access to EU funding. It also provides a platform for council Officers and elected Members to share best practice and work together on developing solutions to social inclusion, economic development, knowledge society, environment and mobility.
3.2	The conference is an important milestone in the year of work undertaken by the organisation and its various working groups. It is also a key part of the ongoing work on the EU Urban Agenda, empowering cities to drive smart, sustainable and inclusive growth for Europe. Appendix One outlines the detail of the conference programme.
3.3	This year, a new format for politician’s debates has been introduced. Four parallel roundtable debates will take place providing a wider platform for political debate on key areas of urban development, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Air quality – Employment – Making cities attractive for investment and urban mobility – Urban mobility
3.4	These topics align to key areas of work within the Belfast Agenda and Council’s strategies including the Integrated Economic Strategy, Skills and Employment Strategy and the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy.
3.5	Specifically, the conference will consider best practice examples of how other cities have addressed air quality problems, youth unemployment and city economic inactivity, how to compete in a global marketplace for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and attracting international populations as well as tackling urban mobility challenges, such as neighbourhood connectivity and sustainable travel.

3.6	<p>Other elements of the conference include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Keynote speaker for the 2015 conference - Philip Rode, Director of Cities Institute at the London School of Economics – Speed networking sessions to exchange views and experience of urban policies and innovative projects – Site visits to a number of regeneration schemes in Malmo and Copenhagen – Awards ceremony celebrating best practice urban development projects from across Europe.
3.7	<p>It is proposed that the Lord Mayor and the European & International Relations Manager attend the event in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Network with other city colleagues and develop ideas for collaborative EU funded projects to deliver on elements of the City Centre and Future City plans – Promote the ongoing development in Belfast focusing on the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy and Belfast Agenda – Learn from best practice in other cities in the field of urban development in order to inform future development activity in Belfast.
3.8	<p>Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been a member of the EUROCITIES network since the 1990s. This network brings together over of 140 of Europe's largest local authorities at Officer and Member level. The secretariat for the network is based in Brussels with a staff and Executive Board of elected Members from cities throughout Europe. Through relevant Council Officer engagement, Belfast City Council has participated regularly in the following thematic fora around which EUROCITIES is structured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social Affairs – Economic Development – Environment – Culture – Knowledge Society.
3.9	<p>Meetings are held three times a year in rotated venues around Europe, and each Forum has a maximum of eight working groups. An AGM is held each November to provide a political platform for its Members on key challenges facing cities. Around 500 elected Members and Officers attend and cities bid to host the conference. Council may wish to consider the potential to bid to host the 2017 or 2018 Conference in the new Waterfront</p>

<p>3.10</p> <p>3.11</p> <p>3.12</p>	<p>Hall.</p> <p>The themes being addressed through this year’s conference align fully to the Belfast Agenda. Many member cities are successful international cities with best practice to share in many areas highlighted within the Belfast Agenda as outlined above. It is intended that a post conference report will be presented to the Committee to disseminate the learning and contacts made at the event. The reports contents will also be shared with the new City Centre Development Team.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The maximum cost of attendance at the EUROCITIES AGM is £1,250 which can be covered from within the EU Unit’s current annual budget.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no specific Equality and Good Relations implications attached to this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Appendix 1 – EUROCITIES 2015 programme</p> <p>Appendix 2 – EUROCITIES: Background and involvement of Belfast City Council</p>

Appendix One

Eurocities AGM 2015

Programme

More information on the different parts of the conference

Wednesday 4 November, Malmo, [main venue: St Gertrud](#)

- 14.00-17.30 Registration, [venue: Malmo Live](#)
- 18.00 – 19.00 Drink reception for politicians, [venue: Malmo City Hall](#)
- 18.30 – 19.30 Registration, mingle
- 19.30 – 21.30 Awards ceremony
- 21.30 – 24.00 Meet, eat and greet

Thursday 5 November, Malmo, [main venue: Malmö Live](#)

- 09.00 – 09.30 Opening speeches: Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh, mayor of Malmo, Frank Jensen, mayor of Copenhagen, Johanna Rolland, president of EUROCITIES, Anna Lisa Boni, secretary general EUROCITIES
- 09.30 – 10.15 [Keynote speaker: Philipp Rode, senior research fellow and executive director of LSE Cities at the London School of Economics](#)
- 10.15 – 10.30 Introduction to roundtable session

10.30 – 11.00 Coffee

- 11.00 – 12.45 [Roundtables: air quality, employment, making cities attractive for investment, urban mobility](#)

12.45 – 14.00 Lunch

- 14.00 – 15.00 Outcome of the 4 roundtables
- 15.00 – 16.30 [Optional sightseeing: traditional sightseeing of Malmo by bus](#)
- 15.00 – 16.30 [Optional sightseeing: be thrilled by ‘the Bridge’ themed bus tour of Malmo](#)

Transport from Malmo to Copenhagen: our guides will help you find your way from Malmo to Copenhagen, and help you find the venue from your hotel. If you are changing hotels, we will take care of your luggage. [Read more about transportation here](#)

- 19.30 – 20.30 Welcome drinks in Copenhagen's old circus building, **venue: Wallmans**
- 20.30 – 23.30 Gala dinner, **venue: Wallmans**

Friday 6 November, Copenhagen, **main venue: Øksnehallen**

- 09.00 – 10.15 **Inspiration for breakfast -sightseeing with content**
- 09.30 – 11.30 **Private political session, venue: Copenhagen City Hall**
- 10.15 – 11.45 **Speednetworking**

11.45-12.15 Coffee

- 12.15 – 12.45 Closing of conference
- 12.45 – 14.00 Annual general meeting

14.00 – 15.00 Lunch

- 15.00 – 16.30 **Optional sightseeing: boat tour with the city architect**
- **Inspiration for Breakfast**
- **Keynote speaker Philipp Rode**
- **Private political session**
- **Roundtable session**
- **Sightseeing in Copenhagen**
- **Sightseeing in Malmo**
- **Speednetworking**

Menu

- **Inspiration for Breakfast**
- **Keynote speaker Philipp Rode**
- **Private political session**
- **Roundtable session**
- **Sightseeing in Copenhagen**
- **Sightseeing in Malmo**
- **Speednetworking**

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EUROCITIES 2015

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Appendix 2

EUROCITIES: Background and involvement of Belfast City Council

Background

EUROCITIES is the network of major European cities comprised of local elected Members and Officers of over 130 of Europe's largest cities and 40 partner cities, that between them govern over 130 million citizens across 35 countries. It is the platform for the Mayors of Europe's most important cities. The primary purpose of the EUROCITIES is to influence the development of European policy and legislation in the interest of cities. In Europe, cities are nowadays regarded very clearly as a vital part of the solutions to Europe's futures.

Belfast City Council has been an active member of the network since the early 1990s.

EUROCITIES exists to make Europe and its institutions relevant to local and regional councils throughout Europe. As a network, it monitors and influences EU policy and legislation, builds early intelligence and access to EU funding. It also provides a platform for council officers and elected Members to share best practice and work together on developing solutions to social inclusion, economic development, knowledge society, environment, mobility and cooperation issues.

The day to day work of EUROCITIES is conducted through these six thematic fora and their associated working groups. Each forum elects its own city chair and vice chair and meetings are held in different volunteer host cities 2-3 times a year.

EUROCITIES influences and works with the EU institutions to respond to common issues that affect the day-to-day lives of Europeans. EUROCITIES aims to influence the opinions of Brussels' stakeholders to help city governments to tackle strategic challenges at local level.

The network and secretariat is headquartered in Brussels and an Executive Committee made up of 12 elected representatives manage the business of the organisation. This is currently led by the Mayor of Nantes, President of EUROCITIES.

Why EUROCITIES? – Benefits to Cities

EUROCITIES provides a high profile international platform for ambitious outward looking cities. Participation in EUROCITIES earns EU and international visibility, both for the Member city and its engaged political leaders. EUROCITIES allows cities to showcase their best practice and learn from other international and influential stakeholders.

a) Shaping the EU agenda

It falls to local authorities to implement some 70% of EU legislation. Yet, the policy dialogue at European level is largely among National governments and the EU institutions. EUROCITIES improves the design and delivery of EU programmes by ensuring they are developed with input from city government. EUROCITIES ensures that the critical role of cities in Europe's future success is not only understood but also supported.

As the collective voice for Europe's biggest cities, EUROCITIES provide the EU institutions with a representative route for dialogue; helping to ensure that their strategies and policies are grounded

in local realities. This reinforces the role of cities in delivering on wider EU objectives beyond regional policy, from innovation through to energy to social inclusion.

The credibility of EUROCITIES as a lobby comes from its extensive transnational membership. Its member cities between them govern a quarter of the EU population, more than any single member state. EUROCITIES is often involved and consulted as a recognised stakeholder in EU policy development.

b) Resources

Financial: Much of EUROCITIES' efforts are geared towards making the strategic case for more powers and resources for Europe's major cities. As a result of lobbying, many EU policies and programmes have an urban dimension – not only those concerning regional development i.e. structural funds such as ERDF and Interreg, but also policies on, for example, transport, energy, innovation, culture and the social agenda.

The 'network effect' of EUROCITIES also means that Members have potential partners for short-term European projects ready to hand. Such projects offer cities the chance to bring in often quite significant sums of money to help them deliver their priorities in a particular field, such as climate, mobility, social inclusion or ICT. By virtue of the working relationships created through the forums and working groups, proactive partnerships of major European cities can be formed for a transnational project bid.

Learning: Participation in the EUROCITIES network brings real development benefits for individuals, whether politicians or technical and political staff. Seeing how colleagues in other European cities deal with similar challenges, and understanding better the strategic context of common work can widen horizons. This builds capacity and inspires new thinking back home, bringing real benefits to the organisation as well as to the participating individuals. It is a real strength of the network that among the 140+ member cities there are more than 2,000 people engaged in EUROCITIES' six forums and 40 working groups. All bring local expertise and experience not only to share with each other, but also to inform European policy-making.

Information: EUROCITIES members have the benefit of access to a strong team of European policy experts in Brussels. The web site is a resource in itself, with members' area offering partner search and discussion forum facilities alongside news and background information, and access to all the analytical and policy papers. The invaluable monthly EUROCITIES FLASH reports the network's activities and carries updates on new developments. The Brussels secretariat provides regular funding forecasts giving early warning of project opportunities, and guides to funding programmes when the calls for projects are published.

Belfast City Council Participation

BCC has been an active member in the EUROCITIES network since the early 1990s and currently participates in a number of relevant working groups.

Some of the key outcomes of the Council's engagement in the network include:

1. Access to EU funded projects:

Belfast City benefits from early access to information on EU funding calls and invitations into project funding partnerships with experienced cities. Some examples include;

- i) Funding for coloured low carbon lighting for City Hall
- ii) Funding to showcase GEMS NI employment project looking at 'integrated employment services at a local level'
- iii) Funding for a mutual learning and exchange programme for the 3rd sector bodies in Belfast addressing Roma inclusion issues

- iv) Sourcing partners currently for BCC's planned Creative Europe bid for funding to revitalise vacant space through culture
- v) Funding for intelligent ICT networking between cities
- vi) Funding for a local energy partnership.

2. Influencing EU policy:

BCC has participated in many EURO CITIES led lobby campaigns on shaping EU policy including;

- i) Development for new Structural Funds programmes 2014-2020
- ii) Push for an Urban agenda at EU level, and an urban dimension within all EU policies
- iii) Information and best practice on cyber security, big data usage for city planning and digital inclusion for practice
- iv) Leading and working with big cities to develop a clean cities tool kit and best practice approaches
- v) Working with experts to develop a materials and circular economy strategy for Belfast.

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