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

3rd March, 2016

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, 9th March, 2016.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

- 6 (a) Events planned for September 2016 – RESTRICTED (Pages 1 - 4)
- (b) New York New Belfast, Homecoming - Request for funding (Pages 5 - 8)
- (c) Lord Mayor Visit to the White House (Pages 9 - 10)

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Subject:	Request for International Events Support
Date:	09 March 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, EU & International Relations Manager, ext 3577

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 or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to financially support the following events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New York New Belfast Conference, 01 – 02 June 2016, New York - Homecoming Conference, 12 – 14 October 2016, Belfast.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are requested to commit a maximum of £12,400 towards 2 international events, broken down as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New York New Belfast: £5,000 sponsorship contribution plus travel and attendance at the conference to include the Chair of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee or nominee and one Officer (max. £2,400) - Homecoming Conference: £5,000 sponsorship contribution.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>New York New Belfast</p> <p>The seventh annual New York New Belfast conference will take place at Fordham University on 1 and 2 June 2016. Belfast City Council has been approached to request a sponsorship contribution of £5,000 towards the event. In return for this contribution, the Council will be invited to speak at the event and there will be opportunities to provide editorial and advertorial input into the Conference promotional materials.</p>
3.2	<p>The Conference aims to provide a platform for collaboration between the business community, public, cultural and education sectors in both cities and to develop mutual strategic alliances and business partnerships.</p>
3.3	<p>It provides an opportunity to promote Belfast as a place to do business and to highlight the new investment potential of key city centre developments. It will also allow the Council to present the new narratives developed through the City Positioning work and to present a coherent rationale for investment in Belfast.</p>
3.4	<p>The annual event has an impressive business focus, featuring speakers and meeting opportunities with key sponsors and participants such as KPMG, United Airlines, HBO, Whitehat Security and Shopkeep. Many of the business participants have a base in Belfast or are considering establishing here. The event therefore offers an opportunity to engage with these companies to explore opportunities for re-investment or to promote the range of incentives and attractions of Belfast as an investment location – including the reduction of the corporation tax rate from 2018.</p>
3.5	<p>The conference brings together artists with a connection to Belfast and also gives artists and cultural organisations from Belfast a chance to build international connections. Some of the city’s flagship venues and events have taken part in previous years’ conferences and have taken the opportunity to promote their work and to develop new opportunities for collaboration.</p>
3.6	<p>In the seven years since the inauguration of the event, there have been a number of key introductions and opportunities presented including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opportunity to engage further with New York businesses that have already invested in Belfast and potential for collaboration with Invest NI to promote the Belfast proposition to secure further investment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visits by key business and political delegations to Belfast, including New York State legislators - Supporting investment opportunities by New York State into local venture funds - Presenting opportunities for local start-ups to pitch to New York Angel investors - Facilitating cultural exchanges and showcasing opportunities such as Brendan Behan at the Chelsea in New York and The Flood from New York to Belfast.
	<p>Homecoming Business and Investment Conference</p>
3.7	<p>The third annual Belfast International Homecoming Business and Investment Conference will be held in Belfast from 12 – 14 October 2016. The conference aims to engage the Diaspora in Belfast’s growth and regeneration. The 2016 event will focus on attracting 25 Chief Executive-level business leaders to the city. This aligns well with the Council’s ambitions to attract additional investment to the city and to foster business growth in Belfast.</p>
3.8	<p>To date, a significant level of private sector partners have committed to the Homecoming. These include Ulster Bank, Deloitte, CPL Recruitment, Concentrix and Market Resource Partners as well as global partners such as Tyco, Bitnet Technologies, Google and Mïet Hennessey.</p>
3.9	<p>The Homecoming offers BCC an opportunity through the Lord Mayor to present the new Belfast propositions and elevate the city ‘Let’s Talk Belfast’ messaging to expats and Diaspora who wish to invest in the city.</p>
3.10	<p>Some of the outcomes of the previous two Homecoming events include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early engagement around opportunities for collaboration in the field of sport, culminating in Friendship Four Tournament – the inaugural event of which took place in Belfast in November 2015. - Opportunity to attract UK Board of global brand Deloitte to Belfast to showcase investment opportunities and understand the potential presented by global connections. - Opportunity for high level legal symposium on international human rights law between local legal practitioners and their international counterparts, including an engagement with the Lord Chief Justice. This has presented additional opportunities for collaboration which are currently being pursued.

3.11	Members are asked to agree a sponsorship of £5,000 towards the event. In return for this sponsorship contribution, the Council will receive speaking roles for the Lord Mayor and Chief Executive along with Conference passes for five delegates and prominent use of council branding on conference material.
3.12	<p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>It is anticipated that the cost to the Council for financially supporting the above two events will not exceed £12,400. These costs can be met within the agreed International Relations budget for 2016-2017.</p>
3.13	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations implications attached to this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	None



Subject:	Invitation to Lord Mayor to visit the White House
Date:	09 March 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, EU & International Relations Manager, ext 3577

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 or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to request Members' approval to accept an invitation received to attend a St Patrick's Day visit to the White House, Washington DC on 15 March 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve that the Lord Mayor accepts from the US Consul General to attend a St Patrick's Day visit to the White House, Washington DC on 15 March 2016 and agrees to the cost of travel and expenses for the Lord Mayor and one Officer, to Washington from 14–16 March 2016.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The US Consul General, Dan Lawton, has nominated the Lord Mayor as his guest at the White House St Patrick's Day event on 15 March 2016.</p>

<p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p> <p>3.5</p> <p>3.6</p>	<p>Mr Lawton and his team have been working closely with Belfast City Council to support the delivery of the Council's International Relations Framework and in particular, the Boston and Nashville Sister City relationships.</p> <p>Acceptance of the invitation would allow the Lord Mayor to represent the City at this prestigious event and promote the new City 'Let's Talk Belfast' messaging. It would also allow the Lord Mayor to attend other events over two days, including the NI Bureau networking event and the Irish Ambassadors reception, to which he has already been invited.</p> <p>Other targeted meetings would also be built into a programme for the Lord Mayor to take advantage of the visit and promote the objectives of the International Relations Framework.</p> <p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u> The cost for the Lord Mayor and one Officer to travel to Washington for the US Consul General / Whitehouse event will not exceed £2,000.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> There are no equality or good relations implications attached to this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents attached</p>
	<p>None</p>