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

10th August, 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, 10th August, 2016.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

- (c) Inward & Outward International Relations visits, October 2016 (Pages 1 - 4)

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Subject:	Update on Inward & Outward International Relations visits, October 2016
Date:	10 August 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, European & IR 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
1.1	The purpose of the report is to seek Members approval in relation to a number of inward and outward visit proposals for October 2016, in the context of our work on international relations.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are asked to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hosting a joint inward Sister Cities delegation from Boston and Nashville from 12 – 16 October 2016 – The attendance of the Chief Executive and the Chair of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee or nominees at the Boston Health Symposium and joint Belfast, Boston and Nashville business showcase to take place in Boston in October 2016.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Boston / Nashville visit to Belfast, 12 – 16 October 2016</u></p> <p>Members will recall the Sister Cities Summit held in both Belfast and Dublin in April this year. Belfast City Council co-ordinated a programme of targeted meetings and visits for delegates from Boston and Nashville.</p>
3.2	<p>To build on the connections made during the visit, Boston and Nashville Sister Cities officials wish to return to Belfast from 12 – 16 October 2016. This visit will coincide with the 3rd Annual Homecoming Conference, which the City Growth and Regeneration committee has already agreed to sponsor.</p>
3.3	<p>A delegation of 30 representatives from both cities will involve officials from academia, business and government, ranging across a number of Belfast growth sectors including creative business, legal services, tourism and education.</p>
3.4	<p>While the delegates originally intended to visit primarily to attend the Homecoming event, the city delegations from both Boston and Nashville have now asked for a series of parallel meetings and visits to be arranged. These will build on the connections established during the April 2016 Sister Cities event and will also provide opportunities to establish new connections with other city partners in areas of mutual interest.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Boston Connected Health Symposium, Boston 20 - 21 October 2016</u></p> <p>In the course of the visit to Nashville in March 2016, the Belfast City Council delegation attended presentations and had a number of meetings on areas of interest for economic collaboration. One of the key growth sectors in Nashville is the healthcare sector. Members will be aware that this is equally an important sector for Belfast, and a number of areas for collaboration between businesses and institutions in both cities were identified.</p>
3.6	<p>Invest NI and the NI Connected Health and Innovation Centre (CHIC) at Ulster University have planned to participate in the annual Connected Health Symposium in Boston from 20 - 21 October 2016. This event has been attended by Invest NI in the past and attracts over 1,000 attendees in the industry.</p>
3.7	<p>Both CHIC and Invest NI, along with Council officials have identified an</p>

	<p>opportunity to support Belfast companies attending this event. In parallel, a number of Nashville-based companies will be in attendance.</p>
3.8	<p>It is proposed that Belfast City Council, in partnership with Invest NI Boston office and CHIC host a business networking session for the Belfast, Boston and Nashville businesses under the Sister Cities brand. This could be held in the new Boston Library innovation centre on 19 October 2016 prior to the main conference.</p>
3.9	<p>The purpose of the event would be to promote networking and collaboration in digital healthcare and smart city working, and to encourage tri partite cooperation between Belfast, Boston and Nashville companies.</p>
3.10	<p>It is proposed that the Chief Executive and Chair of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee or their nominees travel to Boston to host the event and attend the opening of the Connected Health Symposium as well as undertaking a number of government, academic and business side meetings to promote the sector with Sister City of Boston, and follow up on linkages made, and opportunities pursued, during earlier inward visits by Boston and Nashville.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>It is anticipated that costs will be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hosting joint Boston and Nashville delegates from 12 - 16 October will not exceed £5,000 for programming, transport and hospitality – Travel and expenses for the Chief Executive and the Chair of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee or nominees, (18 – 20 October), as well as co-hosting a Belfast, Boston and Nashville business showcase reception will not exceed £6,000.
3.12	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations implications attached to this report.</p>

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