

Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



Belfast
City Council

MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE COMBINED PACK

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room, City Hall on Wednesday, 11th September, 2024 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

2. Matters referred back from Council

- (a) Belfast City and Region Place Partnership Update (Pages 1 - 16)

3. Restricted Items

- (a) Belfast Zoo Quarter 1 Update (Pages 17 - 20)
- (b) Belfast Bikes Quarter 1 Performance Update (Pages 21 - 30)
- (c) Financial Reporting – Quarter 1 2024 / 2025 (Pages 31 - 38)
- (d) Markets Quarter 1 Update (Pages 39 - 44)

4. **Regenerating Places & Improving Infrastructure**

- (a) City Centre Boundaries (Pages 45 - 50)
- (b) Off-Street Car Parking – Notice of Motion Update (Pages 51 - 58)
- (c) Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme 2024/25 (Pages 59 - 62)
- (d) Belfast Waterfront Framework - Waterfront Tour Request (Pages 63 - 80)

5. **Positioning Belfast to Compete**

- (a) Night-time Economy Notice of Motion Update (Pages 81 - 100)
- (b) City Centre Animation (Pages 101 - 106)

6. **Growing Business & the Economy**

- (a) International Relations Activity Update (Pages 107 - 112)
- (b) Business Growth and Scaling Support (Pages 113 - 116)

7. **Strategic and Operational Issues**

- (a) Notice of Motion Quarterly Update (Pages 117 - 124)



Subject:	Belfast City & Region Place Partnership – Referral Back to Committee
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Marie Miller, Marketing Manager, City Regeneration & Development

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

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1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
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7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

☐

After Council Decision
Sometime in the future
Never

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The report is in response to a decision by Council on 2 September “that the decision to approve attendance by senior officers at MIPIIM 2025 as part of the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership (BCRPP) 2024/2025 programme, noting that the BCRPP presence at MIPIIM will be funded from the wider public-private sector BCRPP programme budget, be taken back to the Committee for further consideration.”
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve attendance by senior officers at MIPIIM 2025 as part of the BCRPP 2024 / 2025 programme, noting that the BCRPP presence at MIPIIM will be funded from the wider public-private sector BCRPP programme budget.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In considering the recommendation the Committee is asked to consider the appended detailed report as presented to Committee in August 2024 on outcomes from the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership (BCRPP) 2023 / 2024 Programme including attendance at MIPIIM as requested at the meeting of the Committee in June 2024.
3.2	In addition, the issue was raised at Council about the importance of considering proposals for attendance at MIPM in the context of an updated International Relations Framework. A separate report has been provided to the committee updating on International Relations Activity which asks the committee to note the planned review of international opportunities and potential areas of interest aligned to city priorities and agree to receive a future report to consider how targeted international engagement activity can support and advance our key ambitions. It also advised that this work will be developed alongside a paper for the committee setting out the principles that will underpin an updated international relations framework.
3.3	Although no longer current, Members may wish to note the main purpose of the 2017-2021 International Relations Framework was to;

	<p><i>Ensure that Belfast is optimally positioned on the international stage to realise our ambitions, and that our resources and priorities are aligned with the overarching strategic vision for the city and – as a driver of the regional economy.</i></p> <p>It focused on three main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business – investment and export/trade activity • Tourism development (both leisure and business) • Education/Culture development <p>The Framework was based on the premise that;</p> <p><i>Belfast can and should be active internationally, that the Council has a ‘value added’ role to play, and together with our partners across the city we can compete internationally for the benefit of our citizens.</i></p> <p>The framework recognises that our;</p> <p><i>international ambitions rely on strong collaboration with a range of partners including the Executive Office, Invest NI, the universities, FE colleges and a range of bodies with shared ambitions to attract investment, tourism, conferences, students and so on.</i></p> <p>And that we can;</p> <p><i>complement and amplify the work of these partners, rather than compete against them.</i></p>
3.4	<p>It is also worth highlighting that the focus on Business investment and export trade activity and the partnership approach are likely to be key elements of any updated framework with which the BRCPP partnership programme, including MIPIM attendance align.</p>
3.5	<p>The BCRPP is an important partnership to promote and position the city to compete globally to attract inclusive and sustainable investment to support the realisation of our inclusive growth ambitions as outlined in the Belfast Agenda, which is likely to require investment of £7.5bn - with a significant quantum from private sector funding and institutional investment. By way of context setting, as noted in paragraph 3.6 in the appended report, 24% of Northern Ireland’s commercial investment in 2023 came from Institutional investment with the proportion of investment in NI from institutional investors having reduced significantly since the UK’s referendum on EU membership in 2016. This private sector investment complements public sector funding, noting that in terms of housing delivery there is requirement for 20% affordable under LDP policy, and highlights the importance of collaborative working across the public and private sector to both attract external investment and delivery of our shared ambition for the city.</p>

3.6	<p>As part of the recently refreshed Belfast Agenda, Members will be aware that this included associated Action Plans aligned to each priority area. Under Our Place, Future City Centre and wider city regeneration & investment, we along with our Community Planning Partners have agreed to the strategic intent to “Promote and position the city to compete globally to attract inclusive and sustainable investment”, with the Council as the convening lead. Attendance by senior officers at MIPIM as part of BCRPP is a core component part of this, and, as noted above, complements other work streams that Council undertakes to promote the city internationally through our International Relations Framework. The Belfast Agenda is our overarching strategy, on our ambition for the positive inclusive growth of the city, and from this we have developed aligned policy and strategic priorities and our direct delivery.</p>
3.7	<p>As noted to this Committee in June 2024 the BCRPP is delivering a structured programme of work aligned to securing investment and regeneration for Belfast and the wider city region, which includes a presence at key real estate investment conferences including MIPIM. The ‘Team Belfast’ attendance at MIPIM is an important forum for Belfast to position itself to a global audience and attract the interest of institutional investors, developers, occupiers and funders in the context of bringing forward sustainable development to support the city centre and wider city regeneration and investment. Members will be aware that ‘Positioning the City to Compete’ is a key programme of work within this Committee’s work plan as agreed at a special meeting of CGR Committee in May 2024, with which the BCRPP, including MIPIM attendance align. In addition, it aligns and supports a joint public-private approach to promoting and positioning the city and city region as a priority location for investment, to underpin the generation, development and infrastructure required to deliver our inclusive growth ambitions – a key action within the Corporate Delivery Plan (2024-25) as agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in August 2024.</p>
3.8	<p>The appended report on the outcomes from the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership (BCRPP) 2023 / 2024 Programme including attendance at MIPIM highlighted the BCRPP programme objectives to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build collaboration and partnership in the city and wider region. • Continue to promote and market the Belfast region outside Northern Ireland. • Increase engagement and advocacy with all key stakeholders, in particular, investors and government. <p>It noted that outcomes from MIPIM should be viewed in the context of the wider programme objectives, with highlights of the tangible outcomes detailed below:</p>

3.9	<p>Programme objective: Increase engagement and advocacy with all key stakeholders, in particular, investors and government.</p> <p>Paragraph 4.10 in the appended report highlights that marketing activities during MIPIM have translated into inward visits to the city and subsequent investment into the city's built environment. While there is commercial sensitivity in terms of subsequent investment and delivery following introductions and engagement at MIPIM, a presentation to this Committee on the 2023 Regeneration Tracker in April 2024 noted that there has been an overall positive trajectory of development and regeneration activity in the City Centre since 2015 which has positively contributed to the wider region including economic growth, job creation, access to services and cultural and recreational amenities. Members will note that 133 leads were collected at MIPIM 2024 with interest from a variety of sectors including residential development, leisure / hotel development, green energy and life sciences, a number of follow up meetings having already taken place in Belfast with Council officers and also other BCRPP members, with more planned in the coming months.</p>
3.10	<p>Programme objective: Continue to build collaboration and partnership in the city and wider region.</p> <p>Members should note that BRCPP members continue to see value in attending MIPIM and continuing the collaborative partnership approach, as noted in paragraph 4.16 of the appended report, and have highlighted the importance of having the Council play a lead civic role in supporting this joint public private sector approach to collectively market the city internationally in the context of delivering our shared ambitions as outlined in the Belfast Agenda.</p>
3.11	<p>Programme objective: Continue to promote and market the Belfast region outside Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Members should note that other core UK cities in attendance at MIPIM include London, Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle and Cardiff, with Belfast representatives participating in joint events with these UK cities, UK government and private sector partners. MIPIM 2024 saw the organisation of the inaugural UK Cities Investment Event which Belfast co-hosted with Liverpool and Cardiff alongside The Department for Business and Trade and the British Property Federation, providing an invaluable platform to positively position Belfast as an attractive investment location and build relationships and share learnings with other UK cities, and planning has commenced for 2025 marketing activities. The sub regional approach outlined in the draft Programme for Government further underscores the importance of Belfast promoting itself in a global context to attract international investment.</p>
4.0	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>

	Approval is sought for attendance of senior officers at MIPIM 2024. Travel costs for Council attendance at MIPIM 2024 to be met from within existing and approved departmental budgets. All other costs related to these events would be met from the 2024 / 2025 BCRPP Partnership programme budget.
5.0	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no Equality, Good Relations nor Rural Needs Implications associated with this paper.
6.0	Appendices - Documents Attached Appendix 1 - Belfast City & Region Place Partnership Update Report to City, Growth and Regeneration Committee August 2024

2. a) Appendix - previous report



Belfast
City Council

CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Subject:	Belfast City & Region Place Partnership Update
Date:	7 August 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Marie Miller, Marketing Manager, City Regeneration & Development

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After Council Decision
Sometime in the future
Never

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update members on outcomes from the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership (BCRPP) 2023 / 2024 Programme including attendance at MIPIIM as requested at the meeting of the Committee in June 2024.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note the update on outcomes from the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership (BCRPP) 2023 / 2024 Programme, including attendance at MIPIIM as requested at the meeting of the Committee in June 2024. Approve attendance by senior officers at MIPIIM 2025 as part of the BCRPP 2024 / 2025 programme, noting that the BCRPP presence at MIPIIM will be funded from the wider public-private sector BCRPP programme budget.
3.0	Background
3.1	<p>Members will recall that this Committee received an update on the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership (BCRPP) in June 2024. This Committee noted the presentation from representatives from the BRCPP; approved that officers continued to support the delivery of the BCRPP 2024 / 2025 programme including governance processes, administering programme funded expenditure and entering into associated contracts on behalf of and with oversight from the BCRPP and in line with Council's procurement processes; and approved the Council investment (from existing and approved City Regeneration and Development Budget) as part of the wider public private sector partnership contribution towards the delivery of the BCRPP 2024 / 2025 programme. They also agreed to write to the BCRPP to request that they consider establishing a sub-group of the partnership for community engagement with a focus on social value; and Members deferred consideration of attendance by senior officers</p>

	at MIPIM 2025 as part of the BCRPP 2024 / 2025 programme until a report was submitted to the Committee in August to outline the tangible benefits of the conference.
3.2	In terms of context setting, Belfast City Council has been working with public and private sector organisations to proactively promote Belfast to local, national and international audiences to attract capital investment to support realising the growth ambitions as set out in the Belfast Agenda, and this has included attendance at various national and international conferences, exhibitions and showcase events, including MIPIM, since 2016. More recently, attendance at MIPIM has been through participation in the BCRPP annual programme of activity, as reported to this Committee in June 2024, and aligned to our wider Positioning the City to Compete proposition, a key programme of work within this Committee's work plan as agreed at a special meeting of CGR Committee in May.
3.3	Members should note that delivering on our Belfast Agenda ambitions requires a £7.5bn investment. This quantum of investment will require significant private sector funding and institutional investment, highlighting the importance of continued engagement and promotional activities with capital investment markets to positively position Belfast as an attractive investment location.
3.4	Members will also be aware that work has commenced on a ten year stocktake of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (BCCRIS), as agreed in this Committee's work plan. The output report will identify the positive development that has come forward over the past ten years, but also identify catalyst opportunities for the city in the next decade. It is likely that many of these catalytical projects will require significant private sector capital investment to be brought forward, which will require Council and City partners working collaboratively to promote these opportunities through international forums such as MIPIM.
3.5	The Regeneration Lobbying & Advocacy Place Based Growth Proposition for Belfast, as agreed by SP&R Committee in February 2024, highlights the disparity in regeneration and investment funding for Belfast and the benefits that enhanced investment could make for Belfast, with work advancing at various levels. It also highlighted the key role that the private sector plays in terms of deliver of the growth ambitions for the city and the importance of working in partnership with the private sector to support delivery.
3.6	In 2023, Northern Ireland's commercial investment sector attracted £338 million of investment, with 24% of this investment coming from Institutional investors, which is notably lower than the UK average, as reported by property advisory firm, Savills. The report also noted the proportion of investment in NI from institutional investors has reduced significantly

	<p>since the UK's referendum on EU membership in 2016, by way of comparison YTD Q3 2023 the UK commercial investment (including offices, retail, industrial and hotel) from Institutional and REIT/ Listed investors was approximately 50%.</p>
3.7	<p>Members will recall that Party Group Leaders or their nominees and senior officers participated on a study visit to Manchester and Leeds in April 2024. Discussions with elected representatives and senior officers from Manchester and Leeds emphasised the important role that attracting institutional investment has played in shaping their city growth in recent times by providing both long term patient capital and partners who are bought into the cities' values and vision. Both Councils also noted that local authorities have a strong convening role in attracting investment and supporting private sector delivery by providing the strategic vision, city priorities and messaging to give confidence to the private sector and institutional markets. They noted that successfully delivering regeneration outcomes required them proactively and consistently sharing this vision and message both domestically and internationally to attract institutional investment. MCC highlighted that Manchester's success in recent years has been built on strong partnerships between the private and public sectors. This collaborative approach has allowed them to create a clear vision for growth and attending place promotion events such as MIPIM provides a global stage to present this vision and breadth of ready-made investment opportunities to investors who could become long-term collaborators.</p>
3.8	<p>It is evident that in order to deliver our aspirations for the city that Belfast must continue to proactively promote itself to the international institutional investment market to attract long term patient capital at scale and to assist with bringing forward the catalytic regeneration and development projects required to deliver on our wider inclusive growth ambitions.</p>
4.0	Main Report
4.1	<p>At City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 9 August 2023, the key objectives for the BCRPP Programme for 2023 / 2024 were presented as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build collaboration and partnership in the city and wider region. • Continue to promote and market the Belfast region outside Northern Ireland. • Increase engagement and advocacy with all key stakeholders, in particular, investors and government.
4.2	<p>MIPIM is the world's leading real estate conference and is recognised as a reference point for the global real estate industry. Over 20,000 delegates from 90 countries attended MIPIM in 2024, including over 2,000 investment companies which collectively manage approx. €4 trillion of assets, providing unique access to global investment capital to accelerate</p>

	regeneration and development activities through participation in face-to-face discussions, workshops and panel discussions.
4.3	UK cities / regions who attended MIPIM 2024 included Cardiff Capital Region; Liverpool; London; Greater Manchester; Newcastle; West Midland's region; and the Western Gateway. Many of these cities have attended MIPIM for a number of years, recognising the importance of MIPIM in providing a platform to showcase their cities and development opportunities to attract global sources of capital. Many UK cities success in recent years has been through collaborative private and public sector working, with local government taking a lead role in facilitating this collaborative approach to seeking this external investment required to deliver their growth ambitions.
4.4	The Belfast City Region presence at MIPIM 2024 comprised of executive-level representatives and decision-makers from 15 organisations including Belfast Harbour, BRCD Council representatives, Invest NI, Titanic Quarter, private sector developers and professional services firms.
4.5	Key activities over the three-day conference included Belfast representatives joining panel sessions organised by other UK cities, UK Government, and partners covering a variety of topics including city centre living, waterfront regeneration, social value and Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor, providing an opportunity to showcase city investment and development opportunities to potential investors and developers from across the UK and internationally. The Belfast delegation participated in the inaugural collaborative UK city event with Liverpool, Cardiff, Business Central South, British Property Federation, Department for Business and Trade and key investors. In addition, officers held a number of pre-arranged one to one meetings with key institutional investment funds and officers from other UK cities to build relationships and share learnings.
4.6	It is important to note that MIPIM forms one element of the overarching BCRPP programme of activity which is delivered through a structured programme of work focused on the key pillars of Research; Events; Advocacy and Engagement; and Communications aligned to securing investment and regeneration for Belfast and the wider city region. Therefore, outcomes from MIPIM should be viewed in the context of the wider programme objectives as outlined above.

4.7	<p>Programme objective: Increase engagement and advocacy with all key stakeholders, in particular, investors and government.</p> <p>The 2023 / 2024 programme included a presence at international real estate investment conferences, UKREiF 2024 and MIPIM 2024, and the organisation of a Dublin Investment Showcase event which was delivered in conjunction with Urban Land Institute (ULI). It is important to note that all three events took place within a six-month period which allowed for initial and follow up engagement with potential investors and collaborators in a relatively short time period. An overview of MIPIM investor engagement is set out below.</p>
4.8	<p><u>MIPIM Investor Engagement</u></p> <p>There was a significant footfall on the Belfast Stand throughout MIPIM with a number of requests for impromptu meetings for investors, highlighting the continued interest in Belfast within the national and international investment community. In total, 133 leads were collected on stand with interest from a variety of sectors including residential development, leisure / hotel development, green energy and life sciences. In addition, City Council officers held one-on-one meetings with key institutional investors, banks, pension funds and end-occupiers interested in opportunities across the city.</p>
4.9	<p>Work is on-going to follow up with contacts made during MIPIM 2024 and other BR CPP activities. As noted at June Committee there has been a number of follow up meetings in Belfast over the past months, with more planned in the coming months from investors, developers and occupiers including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major housing / residential developers who have not to date delivered projects in Belfast / NI • Real estate investment trust (REIT) with a strong interest in residential developments • End-use occupiers including FDI companies, commercial / leisure operators, innovation hub operators and F&B operators
4.10	<p>The marketing activities during MIPIM have translated into inward visits to the city, with many of these visits / meetings taking place with private and other public sectors partners of the BR CPP who have testified to the benefits of attending MIPIM. Commercial sensitivities and the length of timeframes for concluding investment transactions make it is difficult to precisely quantify the total level of inward investment achieved from attendance at international events such as MIPIM. However, to give Members an idea of the types of investment secured following introductions and engagement by 'Team Belfast' at MIPIM since 2016, Elkstone Partners, a leading Irish Investment House, have made a number of significant investments in Belfast, including purchasing Murray Exchange in February 2024 which was the key office investment in Q1 2024. Greystar, an international investment</p>

	management firm, have invested in a number of purpose-built student managed accommodation (PBMSA) schemes in Belfast, with their most recent investment being Nelson Street, a £48m PBSMA development.
4.11	In June 2023 Legal & General, with whom senior officers and other partners have held a series of meetings with at MIPIM, announced a £150m investment in the residential development Loft Lines, which is the largest single residential investment in Northern Ireland for 20 years, and will see the delivery of 778 new homes including 151 social and affordable homes, and significant public realm investment. MIPIM 2023 and 2024 saw a notable increase in interest in residential opportunities in Belfast from institutional investors, with follow up visits taking place. While these types of processes can take a number of years to complete, we anticipate that this engagement will continue to translate into investments to assist with bringing forward residential development in Belfast in the coming months and years.
4.12	Members will be aware of the Council's on-going competitive dialogue process to secure a private sector partner (PSP) to deliver residential led, mixed use developments across the city. This process follows an Expressions of Interest exercise which was presented at MIPIM 2023. Attendance at both MIPIM and UKREiF 2023 allowed officers to actively engage with the private sector and investment market and afforded the opportunity to fully detail and explain the scale of the opportunity and the type of partner Council were seeking to attract.
4.13	In addition, private sector partners have established working relationships and secured business as a direct result of relationships brokered at MIPIM. By way of example, the Belfast based team from ARUP, a BCRPP Partner, has highlighted that working relationships made at MIPIM resulted in increased business and successful tendering outcomes on specific major projects.
4.14	Positively positioning Belfast as an attractive investment location to an international audience relies on strong collaboration with central government and international partners. The Partnership works collaboratively with the Department for Business & Trade (DBT) throughout the annual programme of activity. It supported the delivery of Northern Ireland Investment Summit which took place 12 and 13 September 2023 through supporting the showcasing of capital investment opportunities via a Capital Investment Roundtable and familiarisation tour of city regeneration and investment opportunities, with follow up engagement with investors who attended the Summit taking place at MIPIM and UKREiF. In addition, MIPIM provided a useful platform for engagement with UK Government representatives to promote potential investment opportunities in Belfast and the wider city

	<p>region and have early engagement on the place-based growth proposition for Belfast. In recent years it has also provided an opportunity to showcase to both investors and international companies the research, development and innovation capabilities of the Belfast Region, which are being significantly enhanced in growth sectors through BRCD investments, and which is now so critical for international businesses when making decisions on where to locate or expand.</p>
4.15	<p>Programme objective: Continue to build collaboration and partnership in the city and wider region.</p> <p>As mentioned previously, the BCRPP is delivered as a public private partnership with a significant percentage of the partners having consistently supporting the Partnership since its inception, showing the value that city partners perceive from being part of this collective partnership approach.</p>
4.16	<p><u>Feedback from BCRPP Partners</u></p> <p>The private sector partners have highlighted that one of the significant benefits of attending MIPIM is the calibre of the Belfast delegation coming together to collectively showcase the city as “Team Belfast”, highlighting that relationships formed and enhanced at MIPIM help aid collaboration to deliver on our shared ambitions for the city. Outlined below is an overview of feedback received from the Belfast delegation post-MIPIM:</p> <p><i>“I believe it is crucial that there is a joined-up approach across public and private sector partners as well as third level education (QUB, UU) to promote Northern Ireland on the international stage. Given that we face constant challenges in this part of the UK, it is essential that we are able to have a platform from which to create our own narrative rather than allow others to shape this for us outside of our control. Northern Ireland has so much that is positive to offer and doing this face to face at MIPIM plays to our strengths.”</i></p> <p><i>“It is extremely important to promote the city region on an international level. If we don't talk about ourselves, there'll be no-one else talking about us. There are many countries around the globe that are promoting themselves at present, and subsequently many regions within each. It is important to be a part of these discussions in order to make sure Belfast is seen as the investment opportunity it truly is.”</i></p> <p><i>“We are all trying to sell NI to the world, so having positive people championing Belfast and wider NI is important as we need to keep shouting to be heard.”</i></p>

“It is essential that such events are supported by both the private and public sector. Investors are encouraged by economic and political stability. Great to see Belfast City Council and Invest NI represented alongside the private sector. The challenge (and opportunity) is how Belfast can demonstrate effective collaboration and strategic alliance with both Dublin and the UK that would make a compelling proposition to invest in Belfast and enjoy the benefits from dual market access.”

“I think it is extremely important for Belfast to be put on the international stage as the city continues to develop with our dual market access and North South relations continuing to grow, it puts our city up there with the largest UK cities in terms of attendance and visibility.”

“When you have everyone in the same boat, pulling the same way then you start to make waves and you can get really get places. It HAS to be a united approach: Council, businesses, planning, Translink, Invest NI, and employers with support from the Assembly so that we can give confidence to the people who are looking at us and Belfast/NI is actually worth spending time, money and effort in.”

“Important for Belfast to be represented as other cities such as Cardiff / Manchester etc to maintain prominence and increase exposure for future investment.”

“Public and private partners need to demonstrate that Belfast is a cohesive place to do business with as few barriers as possible.”

4.17 **Programme objective: Continue to promote and market the Belfast region outside Northern Ireland.**

Communications through digital marketing and PR activities is a key strand of work within the BCRPP programme of work. Outputs included the development of an interactive Belfast Region Investment Guide which was a key marketing asset at MIPIM 2024.

4.18 As part of the communications campaign focused on Belfast’s attendance at MIPIM, high quality media coverage was secured in a number of publications including Insider Housing, Ireland’s Business Post, Place North West, and Real Asset Management. A targeted social media campaign highlighting Belfast’s presence at MIPIM and key messaging on investment and regeneration opportunities reached 50.7K+ people and received 11.2k views of high-quality video content.

4.19	<p>Learning from best practice</p> <p>Beyond building important investor relationships, MIPIM also provides an opportunity for attendees to learn from best in class examples in delivering regeneration. A focus for MIPIM 2024 was bringing attention to crucial topics such as sustainability, waterfront regeneration and city centre living. Belfast delegates attended roundtables and panels on topics such as ‘delivering sustainable economic growth through partnerships’ and ‘creative retrofit’, partaking in discussions and learning from best practice examples. This knowledge sharing and understanding of how other cities have faced some of the challenges and opportunities Belfast is faced with is invaluable.</p>
4.20	<p>At the June Committee Members had also highlighted the need for community engagement by the BCRPP with a focus on social value. There have been some initial discussions on the most effective way of doing this and over the coming weeks this is to be explored further with community representatives, building also on a report BCRPP had previously commissioned (Building Social Impact) in relation to maximising social impact from the built environment. Further detail will be brought back to Committee on this.</p>
	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Approval is sought for attendance of senior officers at MIPIM 2024. Travel costs for Council attendance at MIPIM 2024 to be met from within existing and approved departmental budgets. All other costs related to these events would be met from the 2024 / 2025 BCRPP Partnership programme budget.</p>
6.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
7.0	<p>Appendices</p>

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
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Subject:	City Centre Boundaries
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager Callie Persic, Development Manager

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5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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Call-in

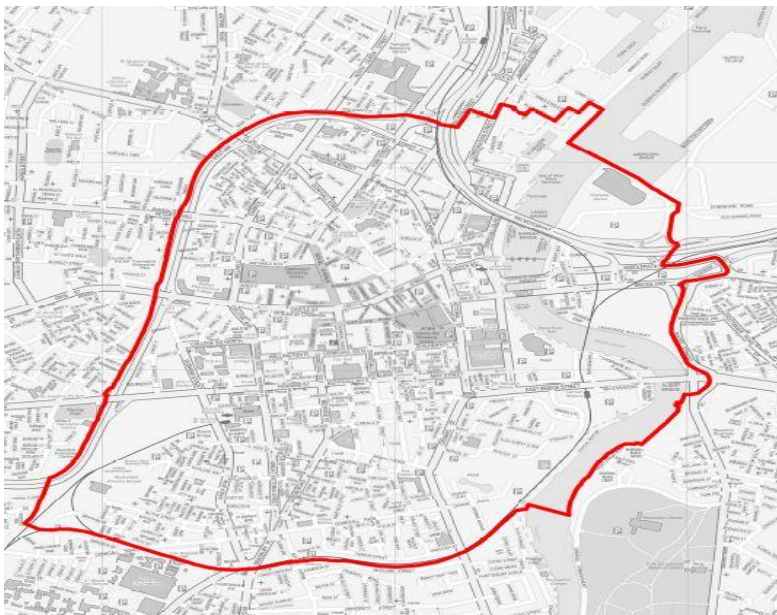
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	Following a request by Members to clarify the boundary of the city centre and the rationale for how boundaries are applied for projects, and how this might be looked at going forward, this paper sets out the city centre boundary and proposes a future approach on this issue.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note the context of the Draft BMAP City Centre Boundary and the update on the rationale for allocating city centre boundaries to specific projects.
3.0	Background
3.1	At the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 12th June and at the Climate and City Resilience Committee on the 13 th June 2024 Members raised queries in relation to the boundary of the city centre and how these are used to delineate project borders. Members had referenced certain examples including the Inner North West, UP2030 and the Business Cluster and Community Grant schemes. The Committee agreed that “a future report would be brought to the Committee to outline the rationale around red line boundaries including the city centre boundary and various Programmes and projects and how this might be looked at going forward.”
4.0	Main Report
4.1	<p>The statutory boundary of the city centre is often used as the recognised and defined boundary area given its definition within planning policy in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP). The city centre boundary as defined by draft BMAP remains the most up to date expression of the Department’s spatial planning approach to the Belfast Metropolitan Area and may remain a material consideration where appropriate within a planning context. The city centre boundary will be reviewed as part of the Local Policies Plan stage of the LDP process.</p>  <p><i>Figure 1 - Draft BMAP City Centre Boundary</i></p>

4.2	<p>A number of schemes or projects developed within in the city centre have been brought forward based on the eight principles of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) as set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the Employment Population; • Increase the Residential Population; • Manage the Retail Offer; • Maximise the Tourism Opportunity; • Create Regional Learning and Innovation Centres; • Create a Green, Walkable, Cyclable Centre; • Connect to the City Around, and • Shared space and social impact
4.3	<p>As projects are developed to target specific issues or priority areas the parameters of the project, including boundaries, are brought to the CG&R Committee for approval prior to designing and implementing the project. When developing projects aligned to BCCRIS the Draft BMAP city centre boundary is typically used as the starting point for setting the boundary, subject to discussions with Members. Setting boundary areas is often required on projects when addressing specific area-based issues, or when subject to funding constraints.</p>
4.4	<p>An exception to the use of the draft BMAP boundary is in relation to the Inner North West Masterplan which was defined by the Special Action Area agreed by Council in 2016 as a part of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Strategy document where, following consultation with Members the agreed BCCRIS document established the INW boundary as one of five Special Action Actions to be addressed through BCCRIS. With regard to the UP2030 Net Zero District the boundary was selected to encapsulate the highest concentration of typical city infrastructure, including high frequency transport networks, walking & cycling, a mix of commercial and residential areas, to develop a holistic framework that could be adopted for any city area. Following consultation with Members in 2021 the boundary area was increased to include more residential area that surround the city centre.</p>
4.5	<p>Recently delivered schemes such as Vacant to Vibrant, Grey to Green and the Active Travel Enablers were brought forward within defined funding allocations and/or timeframes and agreed through the Committee process. In each of these cases, the interventions were developed to address specific city centre issues, such as vacancy, or contained elements within the grant process that were aligned to the BCCRIS Strategy with the draft BMAP city centre definition used to identify the boundary for these projects.</p>

4.6	<p>For example, this definition was applied to the Vacant to Vibrant pilot due to the particular issues in the city centre where vacancy is significantly higher than the UK average and with a recognition that the city centre was in need of intervention to preserve it as the economic centre for the region. The initial pilot project for secure cycle facilities was also trialed within the city centre following a Notion of Motion from Members to bring forward secure cycle facilities within the city centre. Funding for both of these schemes was limited in the pilot phases and it was agreed that concentrating the funding within a defined area would create the greatest impact. Following the initial pilot period the secure cycle project received additional funding to deliver a city-wide project, and Officers are currently seeking external funding to deliver a city wide Vacant to Vibrant programme as agreed at the June Meeting of the CG&R Committee.</p>
4.7	<p>At the time of the initiation of Vacant to Vibrant and with the secure cycle parking projects there were a number of complementary projects and programmes under delivery that supported communities and businesses outside the city centre including the Vibrant Business Destinations Programme (in partnership with DfC) and community-focused funding streams such as the Business and Community Cluster Grants and city-wide covered cycle schemes. Members will also be aware that the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund was developed in line with the Area Working Group boundaries and other area-based funding streams, such as the Social Investment Fund, Urban Villages and the Local Investment Fund are delivered within an agreed geographical boundary and are reported to the appropriate Area Working Groups.</p>
4.8	<p>Where funding is defined or limited, it is often necessary to define the parameters and area of funding to ensure maximisation of the impact of benefits within a defined programme or when addressing area specific issues. While some Programmes do need to be defined within a certain area for a specific reason, it is acknowledged that using standard approaches may not always provide the best results and may lead to parties, groups, businesses or communities just outside the boundary area failing to be able to avail of or engage with the initiative.</p>
4.9	<p>While it is normal that the parameters of a new project are presented to the City Growth & Regeneration Committee prior to finalisation and initiation, it is recommended that at the development stage the proposed boundary areas are outlined as a specific element of the parameters for discussion and agreement by the Committee within the remit and constraints of the project, but recognising that budgetary constraints may influence the scope and impact.</p>

5.0	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> There are no financial or resource requirements associated with this paper, although financial implications will need to be considered on a project-by-project basis as boundary areas are agreed.
6.0	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no Equality, Good Relations nor Rural Needs Implications associated with this paper.
7.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None

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Subject:	Off-Street Car Parking – Notice of Motion Update
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Seamus McBride City Protection Manager
Contact Officer:	Gavin Bell Off Street Car Parking Manger

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
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7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Committee on a Notice of Motion relating to a Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the update on progress with respect to the original notice of motion detailed at section 3.1; and • Note Council's desire to make parking provision compliant with the provisions set out in the Park Access criteria but not to seek accreditation.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>At the City Growth & Regeneration Committee meeting in January 2021, former Councillor Mulholland on behalf of Councillor McMullan, outlined the following proposal:</p> <p><i>"This Council is committed to ensuring that the city and neighbourhood areas of Belfast are accessible and inclusive for disabled people, older people and carers. This Council recognises that access to a car is central to the independence of many people with mobility issues but notes the low provision of accessible bay parking spaces in its off-street car parks with just 3% of its spaces designated as accessible across the city. This Council agrees to join Disability Motoring UK's Disabled Parking Accreditation scheme to improve the minimum number, size and quality of our accessible bay parking spaces. This Council further notes this is one of many interventions that need to be taken by this Council and partners as part of our commitment to an inclusive COVID-19 response and recovery and our commitment in the Belfast Agenda to become an accessible city for all by 2035."</i></p>
3.2	<p>Members will be aware through quarterly Notice of Motion updates that officers contacted the British Parking Association (BPA) to discuss the general principles of the accreditation criteria and how this could be achieved within our current portfolio.</p>
3.3	<p>Along with general access requirements and a prerequisite number of bays, consideration would also be made of the standard and location of the pay and display machines within each car park. Following these conditions being met Council could apply for accreditation and pay an annual fee for membership. Officers met with the BPA to conduct site assessments, within the charged car parks in the city centre, to apply the criteria for the accreditation and making recommendations where appropriate.</p>
3.4	<p>This involved checking the markings and measurements of bays, measuring the hatching area at the side of bays and the hatching area at the front of bays (where this was present), presence of dropped kerbs and any access/egress issues for disabled persons which included ease of access to pay machines. The pay machines were also assessed against the criteria for the Accreditation which included height measurements for the cash insertion points and for the issue of the ticket.</p>

3.5	The stipulation within the criteria regarding Disabled Bay (DB) provision is that Council should have 2 DB bays + 3% DB provision within a car park with 1 - 50 spaces and 3 DB bays + 3% provision within a car park with 51 – 200 spaces. If a car park does not meet the minimum requirement for accessible bays, it can still achieve accreditation if justification can be provided as to why this is the case.
3.6	To achieve accreditation car parks must not only have accessible bays correctly marked and in the specified number but must also have alternative ways to enter and pay. Following the site assessments, the BPA noted that, although our provision was below the number designated within the criteria, there was an under use of DB bays. This could be explained by the number of blue badge holders parked on-street within the vicinity of car parks.
3.7	The general condition of the car parks was deemed acceptable, with an acknowledgement that some additional pedestrian access was required for people with more complex needs and the reconfiguration of some DB's for the same purpose. Officers have examined how to reconfigure the car parks to meet the criteria including structural changes where required. It should also be noted that most of these car parks have been earmarked for development and City Regeneration & Development are currently advancing plans for these locations. Officers are in the process of reconfiguring the car parks, to address the comments made during the Strategic Site Assessments.
3.8	Rather than incur the cost of accreditation, (£5,100 for initial registration and a £2,550 yearly fee) it is recommended that any costs should go towards work to reach compliance with the BPA's audit recommendations (attached at Appendix 1).
3.9	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> There will be costs to get the car parks relined for additional DB accommodation including remarking and any structural works. These costs will be delivered within existing budgets.
3.10	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> The paper seeks to improve the service of council's car parks for users with a disability.
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – BPA comments

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Belfast City Council Car Parks

Disabled Parking Accreditation

Pre-Assessments

I recently carried out a number of pre-assessments of Belfast City Council Car Parks in respect of the Disabled Parking Accreditation.

These assessments involved applying the criteria for the Accreditation and making recommendations where appropriate.

My findings for each of the car parks assessed are listed below.

I have highlighted the text in red where improvements are required and in blue where I believe the Car Park should achieve Accreditation.

I have not mentioned the pay machines in each of these assessments as all pay machines located within the car parks are of the same type and are compliant with the criteria for the Accreditation.

Car Parks Assessed :

Charlotte Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 99 bays, 1 of which is an Accessible Bay. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, this bay was unoccupied. I believe 1 bay is sufficient at this time.

All measurements are compliant with the criteria. There was no drop kerb on exiting the car park and this will require to be rectified.

Little Victoria Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 89 bays, 4 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, only 1 bay was occupied. I believe 4 bays are sufficient at this time.

This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.

Hope Street North

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 36 bays, none of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 3 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. I believe that at this time, 1 bay would be sufficient for this facility.

A drop kerb is required at this facility to permit exit to the Train Station.

Smithfield

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 105 bays, 1 of which is an Accessible Bay. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, this bay was unoccupied. I believe 1 bay is sufficient at this time.

[This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.](#)

Kent Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 54 bays, 2 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, 1 bay was occupied. I believe 4 bays are sufficient at this time.

[This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.](#)

Little Donegal Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 105 bays, 2 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, no bays were occupied. I believe 2 bays are sufficient at this time.

[Consideration should be given to moving the Accessible Bays nearer to the Pay Machine for easier access. Drop kerbs would then be required for the Central island.](#)

All measurements were compliant with the Criteria.

Lancaster Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 53 bays, none of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays.

I believe that at this time, due to the location of this car park, 2 bays would be sufficient for this facility. [Bays should be located near to the Pay machine and the perimeter fence should be shortened to allow easier entry/exit access. All measurements were compliant with the Criteria.](#)

Corporation Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 124 bays, none of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. [I believe that at this time, due to the location of this car park, 1 bay would be sufficient for this facility. This bay should be located adjacent to the Pay Machine for ease of access.](#)

Corporation Square

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 168 bays, none of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. **I believe that at this time, due to the location of this car park, 2 bays would be sufficient for this facility. These bays should be located adjacent to the exit on to Corporation Square for ease of entry/exit to the facility.**

Exchange Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 45 bays, 2 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 3 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, no bays were occupied. I believe 3 bays are sufficient at this time.

This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.

Dunbar Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 36 bays, 2 of which are Accessible Bays. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 3 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, 1 bays was occupied. I believe 3 bays are sufficient at this time.

This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.

Cromac Street

This is a Pay and Display Car Park comprising of 99 bays, 1 of which is an Accessible Bay. The DPA requirement for a car park with this number of bays is 6 bays. Disabled Motoring UK will accept less than the required number if the Operator can give an assurance that the current number meets demand and they will continue to monitor usage and if demand increases, they will install additional Accessible Bays. At the time of my visit, the bay was unoccupied. I believe that at this time, due to the location of the car park, 1 bay is sufficient.

This car park was compliant with all other criteria and should achieve Accreditation.

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Subject:	Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme 2024-25
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Chris McCreery, Manager, Culture Development Unit

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Insert number

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7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	<p>The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that the Chief Executive exercise his delegated authority to:</p> <p>Grant permission for Council to apply for, promote, assess and manage the Access and Inclusion Programme 2024-25</p>
2.0	Recommendation
	<p>The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that the Chief Executive exercise his delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant permission for Council to apply for, promote, assess and manage the Access and Inclusion Programme 2024-25
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In line with previous years, it is expected that the Department for Communities will be inviting local Councils to administer the Access and Inclusion Programme 2024-25 within their respective local Council areas and to apply for funding to the Department. Whilst the Departments for Communities capital budget is currently fully allocated, approval is requested to launch the programme as a competitive process should the Department open the funding at a later date in 2024/25.
3.2	<p>The Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to arts, culture and active recreation venues across NI for people with disabilities. Make arts, cultural and active recreation venues more inclusive across society; and Increase participation in arts, culture and active recreation activities by people with disabilities.
3.3	The Council oversees the assessment and recommendation of projects via a competitive open call internally and externally and is responsible for delivery of all projects in receipt of funding.
3.4	<p>The Culture Development Unit has managed the programme since its inception in 2018/19. Previous years have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2018/19 - 14 external projects and 2 council projects with grants equating to £301,074 2019/20 – 5 external projects and 3 council projects with grants equating to £115,730 2020/21 – 7 external projects and 1 council project with grants equating to £129,438 2021/22 – 5 external projects with grants equating to £90,520 2022/23 – 3 external projects and 1 council project with grants equating to £99,701

3.5	2023/24 – Funding was reduced by 50%, resulting in 2 external projects with grants equating to £30,926
3.6	Examples of projects supported include improved access to City Hall and the Tropical Ravine; easier access for audience and participants to not for profit cultural venues across the city; installation of new specialised playground facilities and changing spaces; and provision of equipment to provide immersive theatrical experiences for children with complex needs.
3.7	Capital works and equipment costs are eligible under this programme. The maximum grant available is £30,000, (the maximum project cost cannot exceed £80,000), and applicants are required to contribute at least 10% of the total project costs. To receive a £30,000 grant therefore, applicants must provide a contribution of at least £3,000.
3.8	The Department for Communities is particularly keen to welcome applications for Changing Places facilities, accessible equipment for play parks and projects that will impact positively on sustainability and climate change. Projects must complete on or before 31 March 2025.
3.9	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Contribution of at least 10% of project cost is an eligibility condition. This resource will need to be sourced by the applicant. Council has staff resources to oversee the administration of this Programme.</p>
4.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The Culture Development Unit will work closely with the Council's Equality Unit and the Department for Communities to ensure positive equality implications which is the central component of the Programme. Officers will discuss the Programme with the Council's Disability Advisory Panel. There are no rural needs or good relations implications.</p> <p>There are no direct Equality or Good Relations implications associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None

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Subject:	Belfast Waterfront Framework – Waterfront Tour Request
Date:	11 th September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager, City Regeneration and Development

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to advise Members that the Waterfront Task Group has submitted a request to invite Members of the City Growth and Regeneration and the members of the Planning Committee to attend a walking and boat tour of the Belfast Waterfront Framework area. The visit will include an overview of the Framework, an update of progress to date and a boat tour along the downstream element of the framework area to provide a strategic overview of the area.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Agree to attending the tour and presentation of the Belfast Waterfront Framework area II. Agree to Council Officers attending the proposed Waterfront Task Group study visit to Copenhagen.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>As reported to the CG&R Committee in October 2023 a Waterfront Task Group was established to develop a focused approach to the Belfast waterfront, aligned to the A Bolder Vision key move 'Embracing the River'. The Task Group, chaired by BCC Chief Executive and consisting of Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Titanic Quarter Ltd, DfC, DfE, Tourism NI, Odyssey Trust and DEARA commissioned a detailed analysis of the waterfront area from the Ormeau Road Bridge to Thompsons Dock.</p>
3.2	<p>Consultants, Schulze + Grassov undertook a detailed analysis of over 10km of the waterfront, compiling analysis on the completed and pending developments, as well as identifying the catalyst opportunities and gaps in infrastructure to maximise the social, economic and environmental opportunities that exist along the waterfront. This work also undertook to identify the existing and proposed projects emerging from within the adjacent communities, and to identify catalyst opportunities to connect these projects and the local communities to the wider education, employment and leisure facilities along the waterfront corridor. This work was carried out in consultation with a range of stakeholders including local communities through online surveys and a dedicated charrette style design workshop. In addition, a specific Waterfront Neighbourhood Network has been established to build relationships and support ongoing engagement with the Task Group. The network will be asked to nominate two representatives to sit on the Task Group going forward to ensure representation and feedback.</p>

3.3	Members of the CG&R Committee received a presentation on the Framework in October 2023 and approved the Belfast Waterfront Framework (as attached in Appendix A).
3.4	Correspondence has been received from the Waterfront Task Group inviting Members of this Committee to attend a presentation on the progress of the Belfast Waterfront Framework, followed by a boat tour along the lower Lagan waterfront area providing an overview of the of the proposals included within the Framework and to receive an update on the work of the Maritime Belfast Trust in preserving, developing and promoting the Maritime Mile. Representatives from Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast Harbour Commissioners and Titanic Quarter Ltd will be in attendance along with Officers from BCC. The tour is planned to take place in October and, pending agreement Maritime Belfast Trust will engage with Democratic Services to organise a suitable date.
3.5	The Waterfront Task Group are proposing a study visit to Copenhagen in November 2024 for members of the Task Group and members of the Waterfront Neighbourhood Network. The study visit will explore best practice examples of a leading waterfront city in terms of how the city engages with the water's edge, how the public realm integrates art and maritime heritage, and how the area engages and connects to the local communities and the wider city. The trip will be subsidised by Maritime Belfast Trust reducing the costs for organisations to c£550 per attendee for travel, accommodation and food. Members are asked to approve the attendance of the BCC Chief Executive and up to two officers on the study visit.
4.0	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>No additional financial or resource requirements are associated with this paper. Any costs included within the paper are included within existing budgets.</p>
5.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
6.0	<p>Appendices - Documents Attached</p> <p>Appendix A – 'Embracing the Belfast Waterfront' framework summary document.</p>

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EMBRACING THE BELFAST WATERFRONT

Framework Summary

A framework for the future development of
the Belfast Waterfront Promenade

September 2023

 SCHULZE
GRASSOV



BELFAST WATERFRONT PROMENADE

This is a summary of **Embracing the Belfast Waterfront**, a framework for future development at the interface of water and land along the River Lagan in Belfast.

This study was commissioned by Belfast's Waterfront Task Group, consisting of key landowners and stakeholders along the waterfront including Maritime Belfast, Belfast Harbour, Belfast City Council, Titanic Quarter Limited, Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Department for Economy, Department for Agriculture and Environment and Tourism NI. The Task Group has been established to scope how the waterfront can fully realise its potential as a connected, vibrant corridor linking to and with key destinations, neighbourhood communities and the city centre.

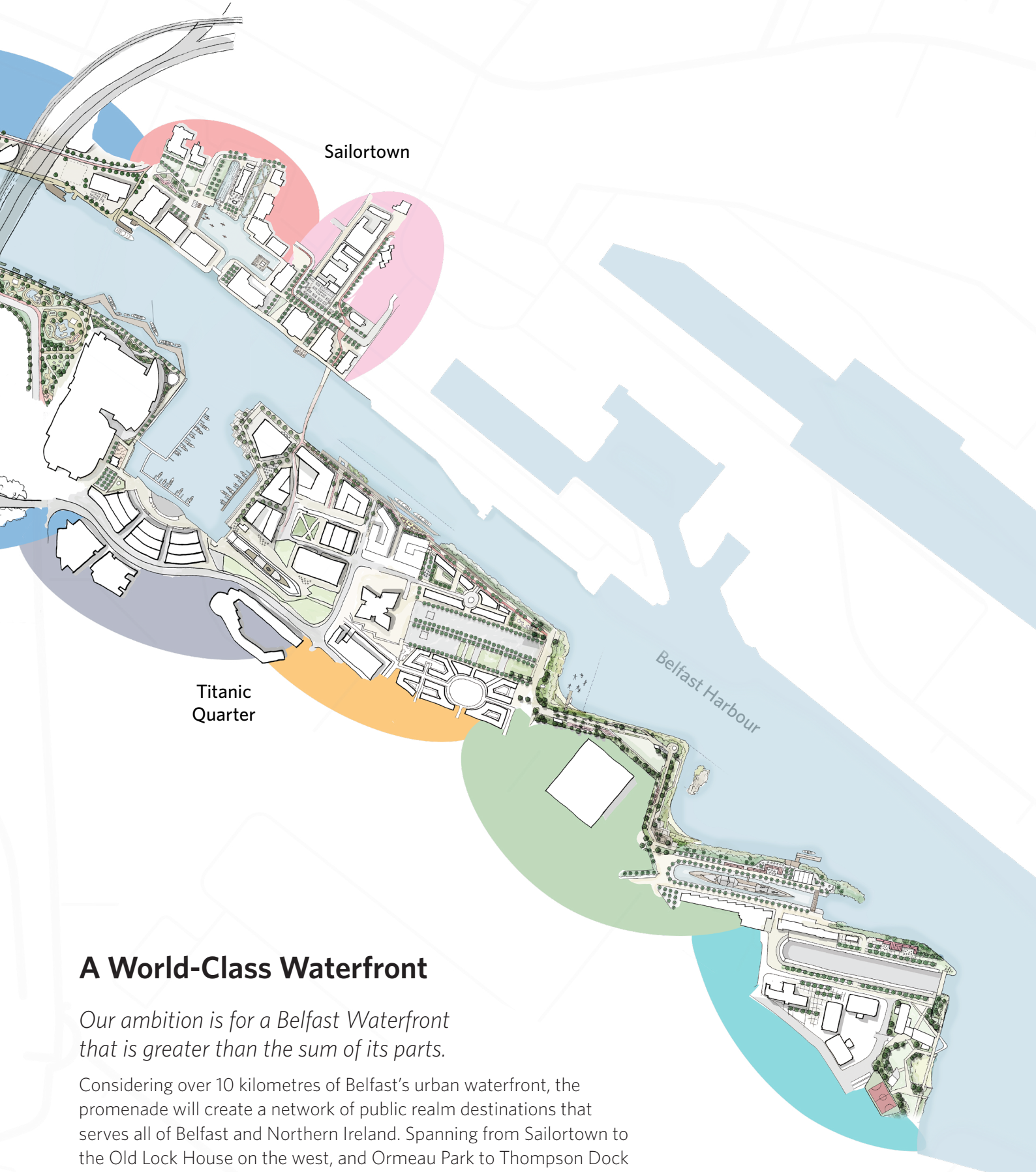
Vision

Belfast Waterfront is a critical component of the city's economic growth ambitions, and the promenade project will bring it to life.

The Waterfront Promenade project is **an important opportunity to encourage and harmonise new sustainable development on the waterfront**. The promenade will create a high-quality environment for existing communities, new residential and commercial development, and will serve as a major visitor gateway.

Exploring the promenade will offer connections to iconic tourist attractions and heritage assets. **Simultaneously, the promenade will become a hub of distinctive and vibrant cultural activities, attracting a dynamic setting for creative and green enterprise**. Development of the promenade sparks a point of momentum for net-zero and blue economies to emerge, adding employment and training opportunities that will have a genuinely positive impact on the lives of those living or working adjacent to it. **The envisioned waterfront promenade will offer safe and green public spaces to socialize, infrastructure for active travel and exercise, improved connectivity and easier access to jobs and services.**

By balancing community, nature, and development, a world-class waterfront will emerge over time.



Sailortown

Titanic
Quarter

Belfast Harbour

A World-Class Waterfront

Our ambition is for a Belfast Waterfront that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Considering over 10 kilometres of Belfast's urban waterfront, the promenade will create a network of public realm destinations that serves all of Belfast and Northern Ireland. Spanning from Sailortown to the Old Lock House on the west, and Ormeau Park to Thompson Dock on the east of the River Lagan, the site already includes internationally recognized points of interest that attract people from all over the world. Direct access to City Centre, East Side, North Foreshore, and the Lagan Towpath will connect Belfast's communities back to the waterfront.

A future connected waterfront promenade will be defined by variations in combinations of shoreline typology, building density, and programming. Three typologies emerge which can be customized within each character area: urban, maritime, and natural.

Framework Objectives

Unlocking a strategic opportunity of national scale to encourage usage on both sides of the River Lagan to achieve the ambition set by the Bolder Vision.

Create a Distinctive and Competitive Place

Deliver the cultural and lifestyle offerings to meet local needs, attract global talent and entice Northern Ireland's diaspora to live, invest, and innovate.

Deliver Social Value for Local Communities

Improve health, wellbeing, safety, and employment opportunities for deprived communities, create welcoming and safe spaces for community to flourish.

Bolster Climate Resilience and the Circular Economy

Make a significant contribution to net zero aspirations by enhancing active travel options, incorporating renewables, green industries and the circular economy.

Drive Further Tourism Success

Improving access and connections between existing assets and creating new destinations and experiences.

A Focal Point for City Growth Ambitions

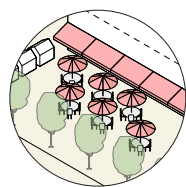
Accommodate significant housing and commercial growth around the waterfront, while supporting future growth of port operations.

Catalyse Investment and Unify Development

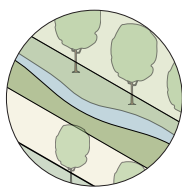
Align plans for different sections of the waterfront to a clear vision, invest to encourage private sector action.

Toolkit Interventions

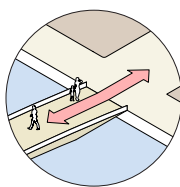
Our approach is to consider the site from multiple perspectives: the scale of the promenade, the places that are connected to the waterfront, and the processes that will shape the future of the Belfast Waterfront. This 'toolkit' of interventions is a starting point for designing custom solutions to enhance each character area. Some interventions should be incorporated in all character areas, like SuDS, while others are only suitable in some locations, like playgrounds.



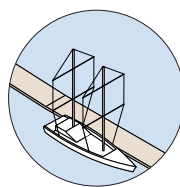
Food+Beverage



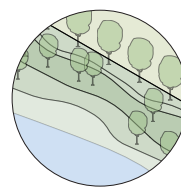
SuDS



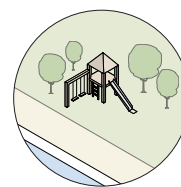
Bridges &
Active Travel



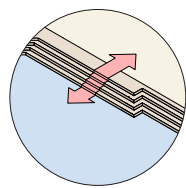
Heritage &
Views



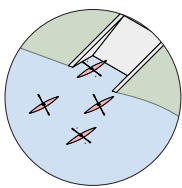
Habitat



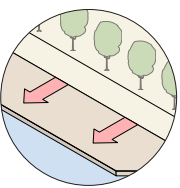
Playground



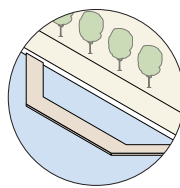
Stepped
Shoreline



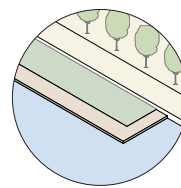
Boat Ramps &
Moorings



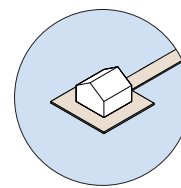
Boardwalk
Extension



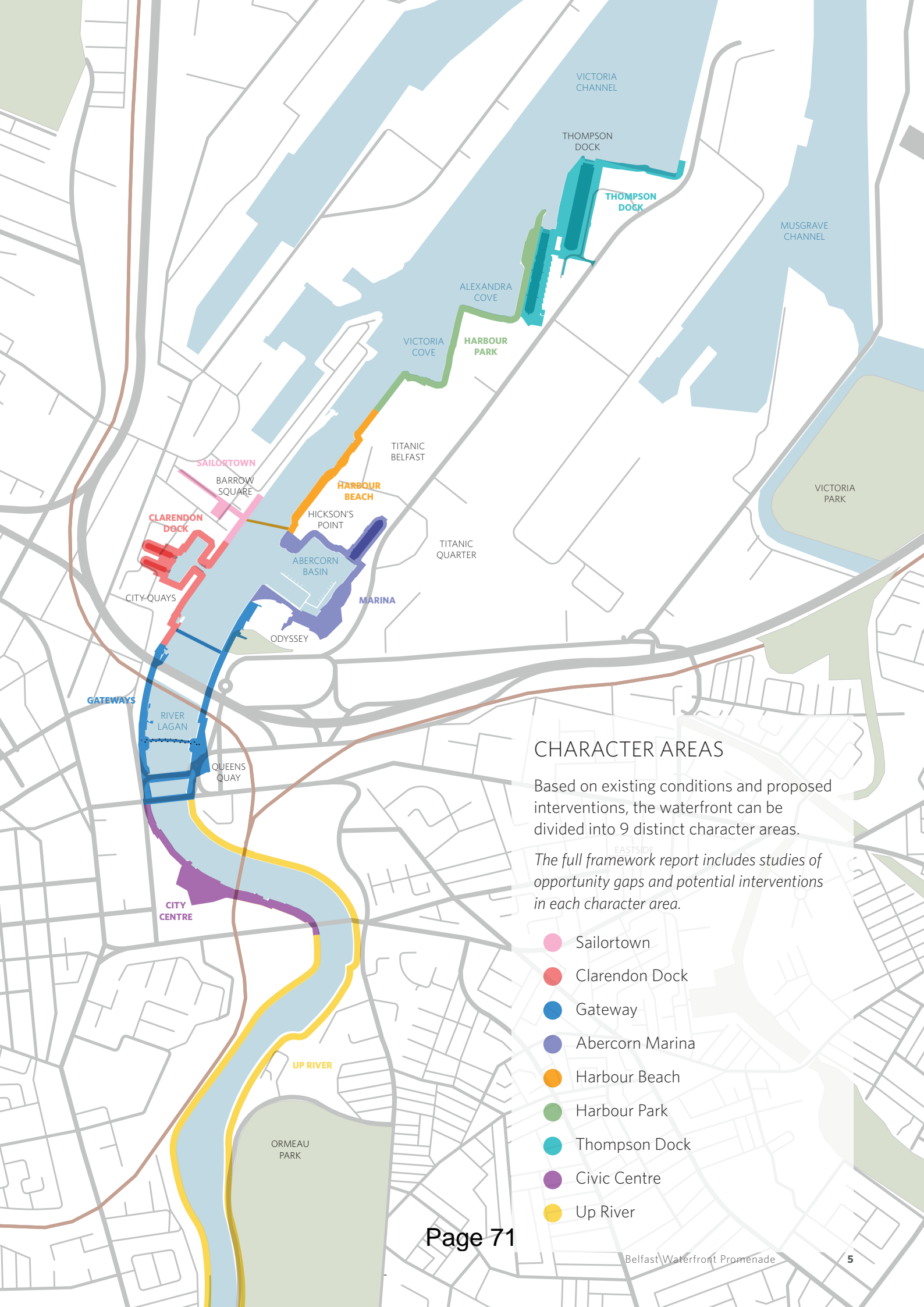
Floating
Boardwalk



Floating
Wetland



Floating
Business



CHARACTER AREAS

Based on existing conditions and proposed interventions, the waterfront can be divided into 9 distinct character areas.

The full framework report includes studies of opportunity gaps and potential interventions in each character area.

- Sailortown
- Clarendon Dock
- Gateway
- Abercorn Marina
- Harbour Beach
- Harbour Park
- Thompson Dock
- Civic Centre
- Up River

Waterfront Parameters

An urban waterfront promenade is more than just the area of public realm. Often narrow, it is shaped by its neighbours: the buildings and the water that border and support it. The Belfast promenade will connect many neighbourhoods, presenting varied challenges and requiring diverse solutions. As such, we consider interventions in the public realm, water's edge, and buildings with equal importance.



A Living Shoreline

Environmental engineered shorelines embrace ecosystem services and create access to the water fostering a sense of connection and responsibility.

Split-level Promenade

A split-level promenade creates shared space for active travel while integrating seating and flood defense.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

A sustainable drainage system with connected soil creates a resilient network of street trees and native planting that filters stormwater, increases habitat, and creates a welcoming environment.

Activated Public Realm

Varied building heights with setbacks create a more comfortable public realm where ground level businesses can spill out.

Conditions Unique to Belfast Waterfront

Opportunities

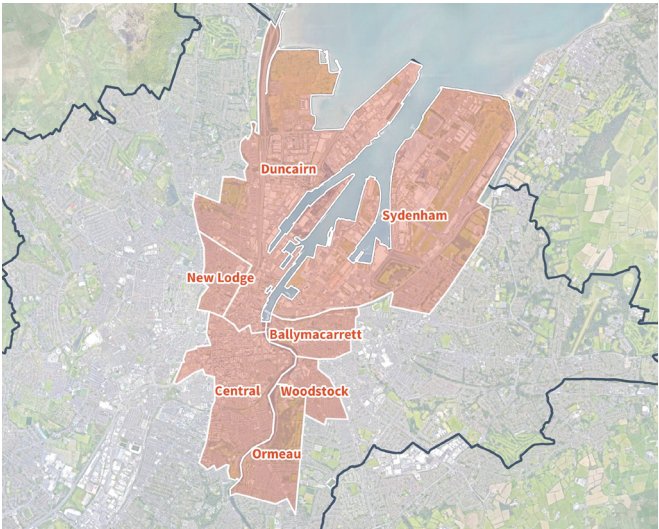
- + Samson and Goliath as roving landmarks in a working harbour
- + Rich maritime history and heritage unique to each neighbourhood
- + Belfast Hills provide a natural backdrop
- + Large scale, continuous waterfront
- + Proximity to city centre

Challenges

- + Loud bridges in need of acoustic barriers
- + Flood risk is increasing which needs soft and hard engineering
- + Excessive river railing disconnects people from the water
- + Hard shoreline decreases ecosystem services
- + Few connections across the water given the length of shoreline

LOCAL IMPACT AREA (LIA)

A preliminary Local Impact Area (LIA) for the promenade has been defined based on ward boundaries adjacent to the waterfront between Ormeau Park and the harbour.



Source: NISRA, Ward Boundaries (2014)

LIA User Groups



**125,500
Workers**

54% of total Belfast workforce within the LIA (2019)



**40,500
Residents**

12% of Belfast population within the LIA (2019)
15,500 of these residents reside in the top 10% most deprived wards in NI



**45,000
Students**

Across Ulster Belfast, QUB and Belfast Met TQ campuses that fall within the LIA (2022)



**1.9m
Visitors**

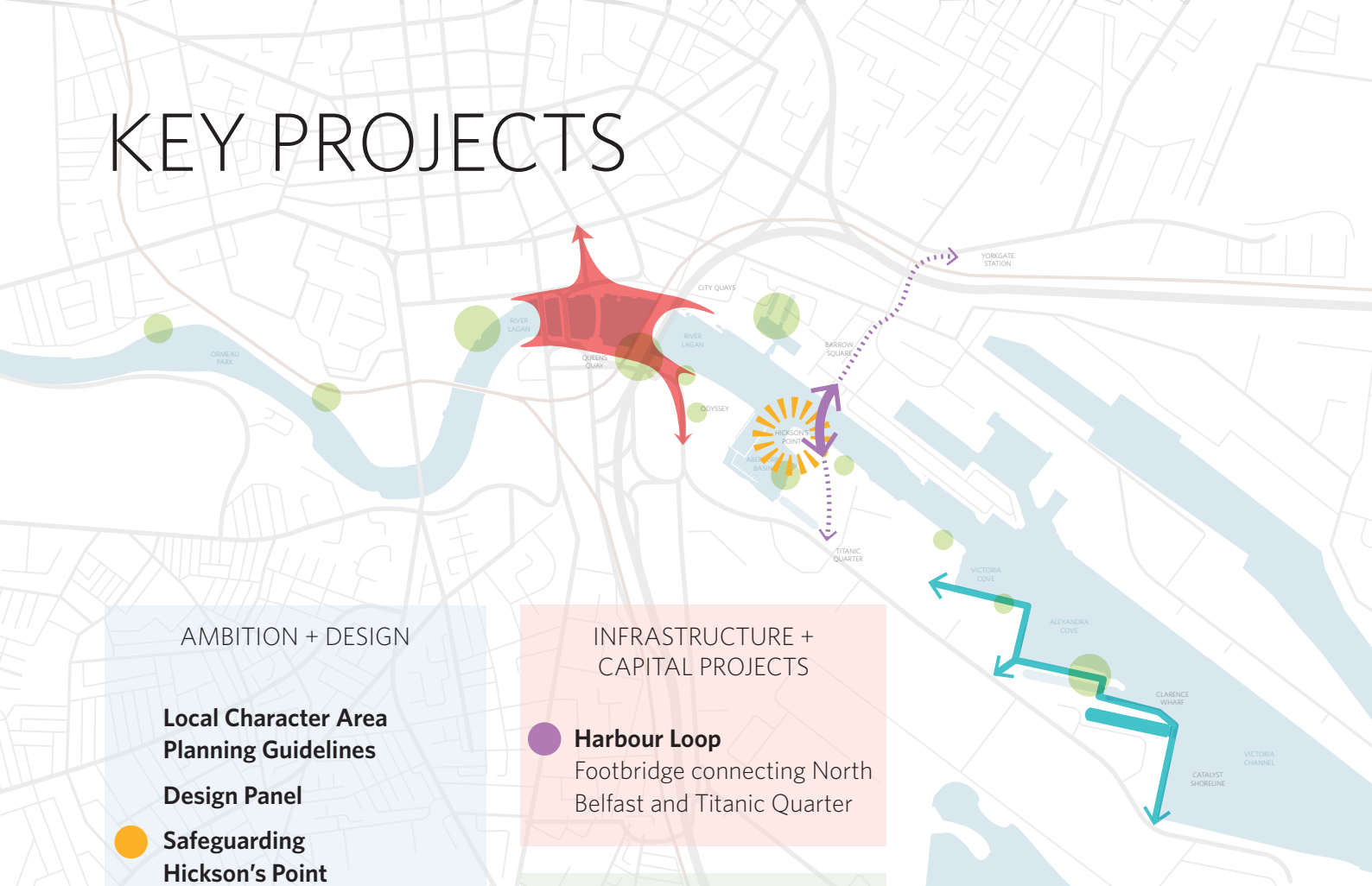
Overnight trips to Belfast (2019)
Plus 3.6m approx. footfall to TQ and Odyssey complex within the LIA (2017)



**4.1m
Travellers**

200,000 Cruise Passengers (2018)
1.5m ferry trips between GB (2021)
2.4m City Airport passengers (2019)

KEY PROJECTS



AMBITION + DESIGN

Local Character Area Planning Guidelines

Design Panel

- **Safeguarding
Hickson's Point**
Future prominence

INFRASTRUCTURE + CAPITAL PROJECTS

- **Harbour Loop**
Footbridge connecting North
Belfast and Titanic Quarter

PROMENADE + CONNECTIONS

- **Thompson &
Alexandra Docks**
Heritage, biodiversity and
connectivity
- **Gateways**
Connectivity, amenity and
unlocking investment

ACTIVATION + MEANWHILE USE

- **Kickstarting the
Waterfront Vision**
Meanwhile uses and
ecological enrichment

Consultant Recommendations

1. *Establish the Waterfront Promenade as a character area in its own right, with its own characteristics and design guidelines*
2. *Pilot a City Design Panel to review proposals along the Promenade*
3. *Strengthen collaboration and project integration under the Waterfront Task Group*

Development Priorities

We have derived key projects based on alignment with stakeholder priorities and community feedback, scale of impact and potential to catalyse wider benefits and public investment, and potential for short term design development and feasibility testing.

- + Infrastructure, strategic planning, and investment opportunities on key sites
- + Phased implementation of promenade interventions, coordinated with planned development along entire waterfront
- + Initial activation and meanwhile use that is community oriented, dispersed, and flexible
- + Design guidelines adopted by planning authorities with expert design panel to provide advice, challenge, and support

Local Character Area Planning Guidelines

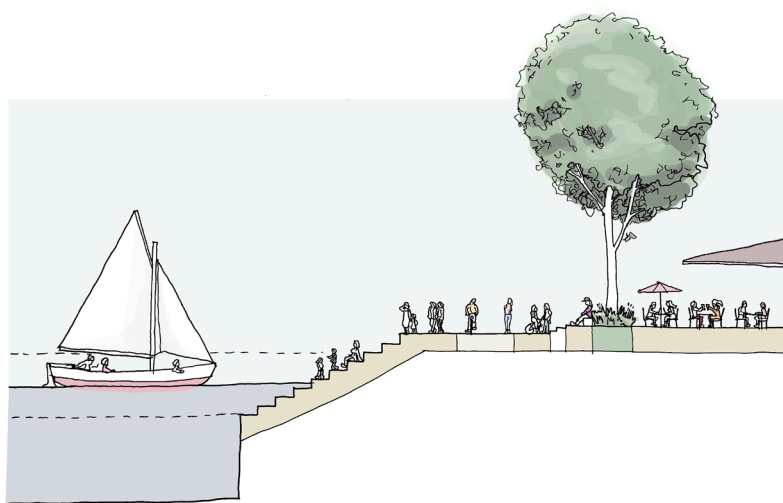
AMBITION + DESIGN

- + Align the Waterfront Promenade with Belfast Local Development Plan Aims and Objectives in order to receive recognition as a Character Area with design guidelines



STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Belfast Local Development Plan: 2035 Plan Strategy



Design Panel

AMBITION + DESIGN

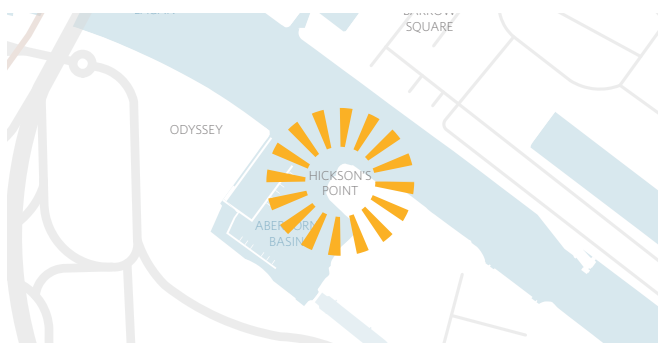
- + Pilot a City Design Panel to review proposals along the Promenade against guidelines and surrounding context

Safeguarding Hickson's Point

AMBITION + DESIGN

The prominence of Hickson's Point and exposure to views from all directions create a place of great opportunity for national significance.

Public space design and potential building functions in this location should emphasize a lively public destination and avoid exclusive use for residential or commercial space.



DESIGN CONCEPT

- + Embrace this prominent point for civic use such as a building of national importance or an iconic public space
- + Potential public realm improvements include stepped access to the water's edge, gathering spaces, and ground level activation

SCOPE AND IMPACTS

- + Strengthening Belfast's attractiveness and lifestyle proposition through new cultural infrastructure, celebrating former slipway site
- + Sydney Opera House effect: Bold aspiration for iconic city-defining asset which substantially improves tourism visitation
- + Public sector addresses key market failure relating to significant site remediation costs, supporting investment at Titanic Quarter

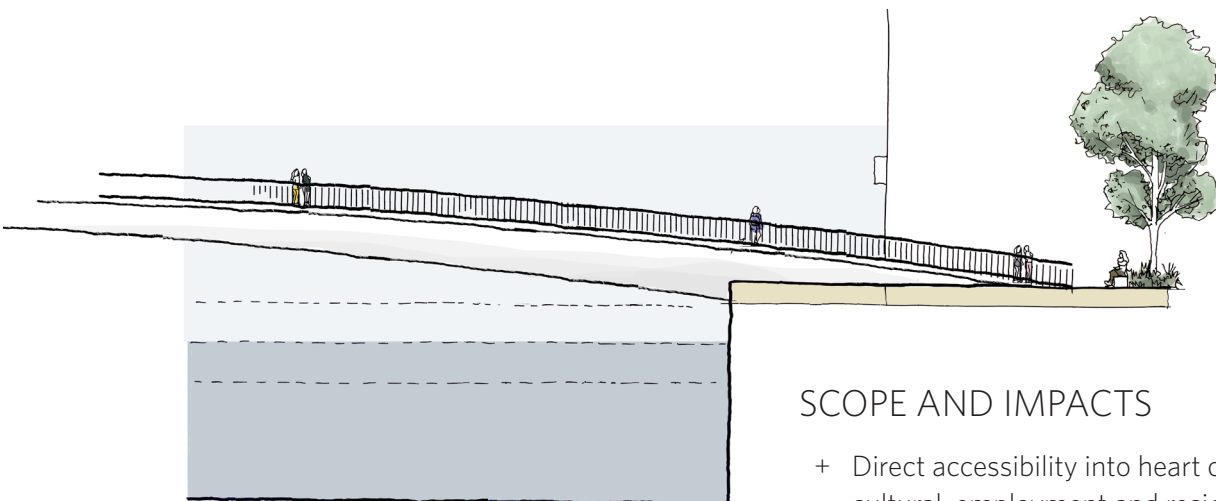
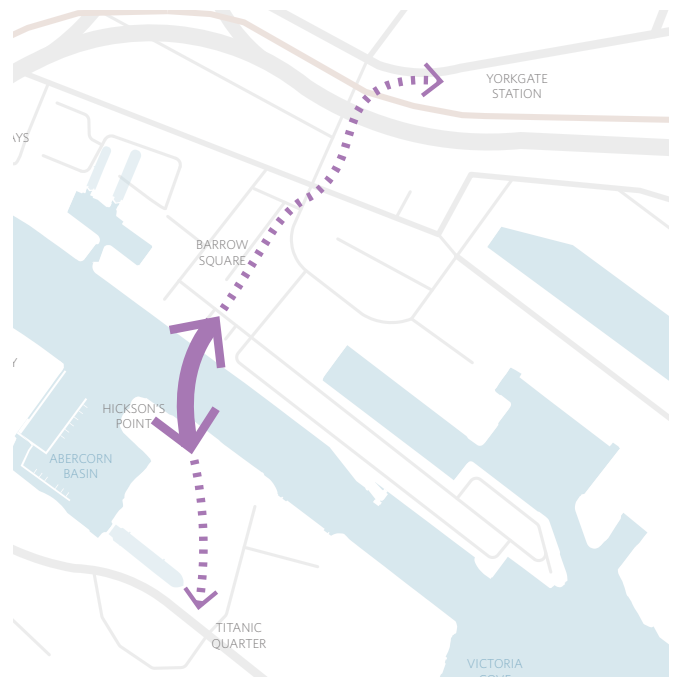
Harbour Loop

INFRASTRUCTURE + CAPITAL PROJECTS

New pedestrian and cyclist bridge directly connecting Titanic Quarter to North Belfast, driving footfall and catalysing investment across the Harbour while enhancing the waterfront experience for all users.

DESIGN CONCEPT

- + New footbridge that ties into the waterfront promenade and connects with the wider transit network
- + Statement swing bridge design to maintain sailboat access to the marina
- + Placemaking on bridge landings on both sides of the river including shelter and restrooms



SCOPE AND IMPACTS

- + Direct accessibility into heart of Titanic Quarter's cultural, employment and residential offering
- + Significant land value benefit to Clarendon Dock, Sailortown, North Belfast and Titanic Quarter
- + Sustainable connectivity with Yorkgate Station and wider active travel potential
- + Extended 'footfall loop' exposing City Quays, Sailortown, TQ and Odyssey to significant new passing trade

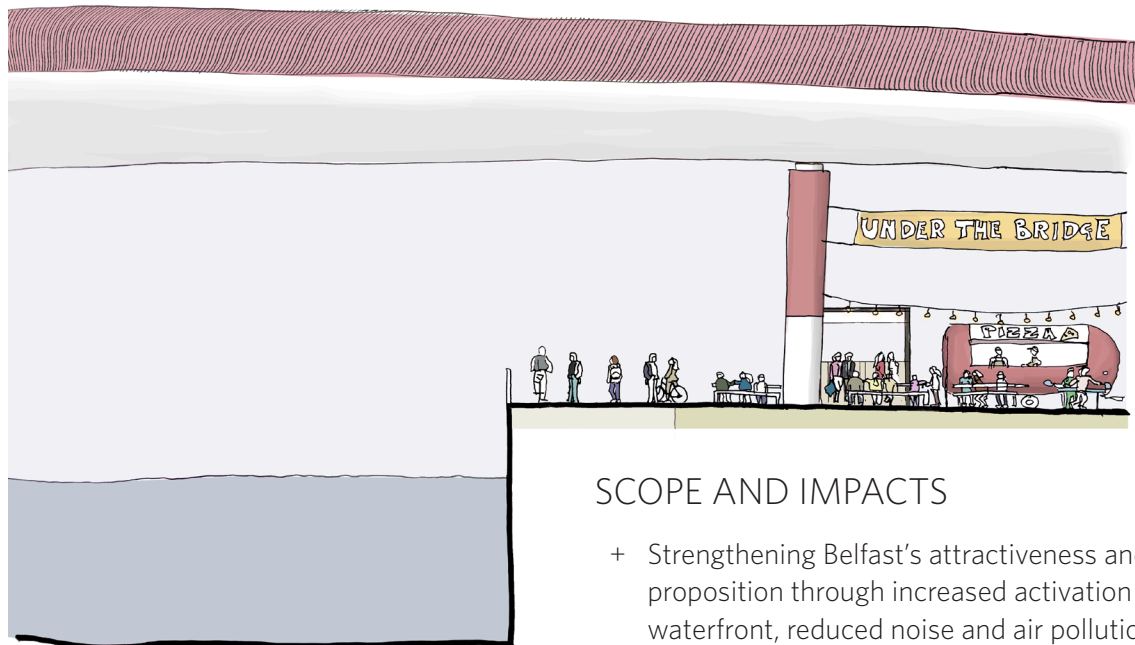
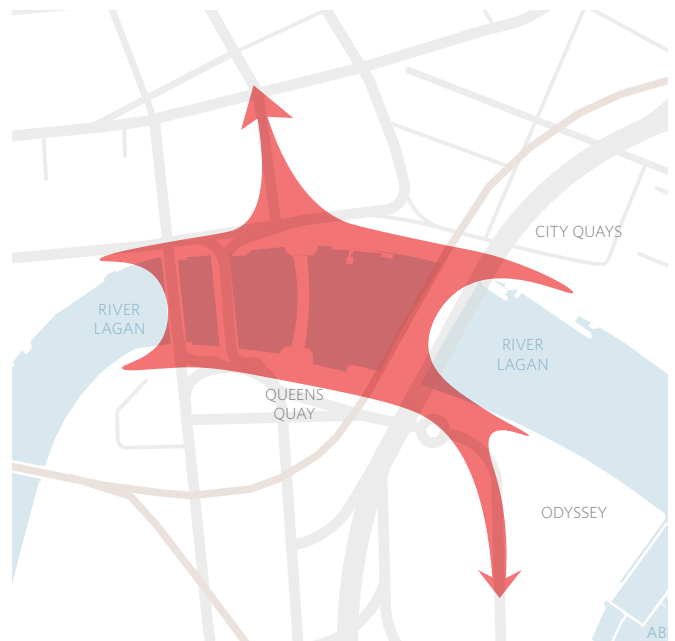
Gateways

PROMENADE + CONNECTIONS

Transforming the gateway to Belfast Harbour, leveraging untapped commercial potential while addressing congestion, noise, pollution and severance to create a series of new riverfront destinations.

DESIGN CONCEPT

- + Activation under motorway through street food market, public events and exhibits, and play park
- + Art and lighting for day and night enjoyment
- + Mitigate water and noise pollution from M3 with SuDS and an acoustic barrier
- + Boat access points for the ferry, water taxis, and small boats to access Belfast City Centre.



SCOPE AND IMPACTS

- + Strengthening Belfast's attractiveness and lifestyle proposition through increased activation the City Centre waterfront, reduced noise and air pollution, improved safety
- + Enabling works to unlock major development sites at Queens Quay, Odyssey Quays and wider City Centre regeneration
- + Improved active travel and public transport access to Harbour and movement across East and West Belfast

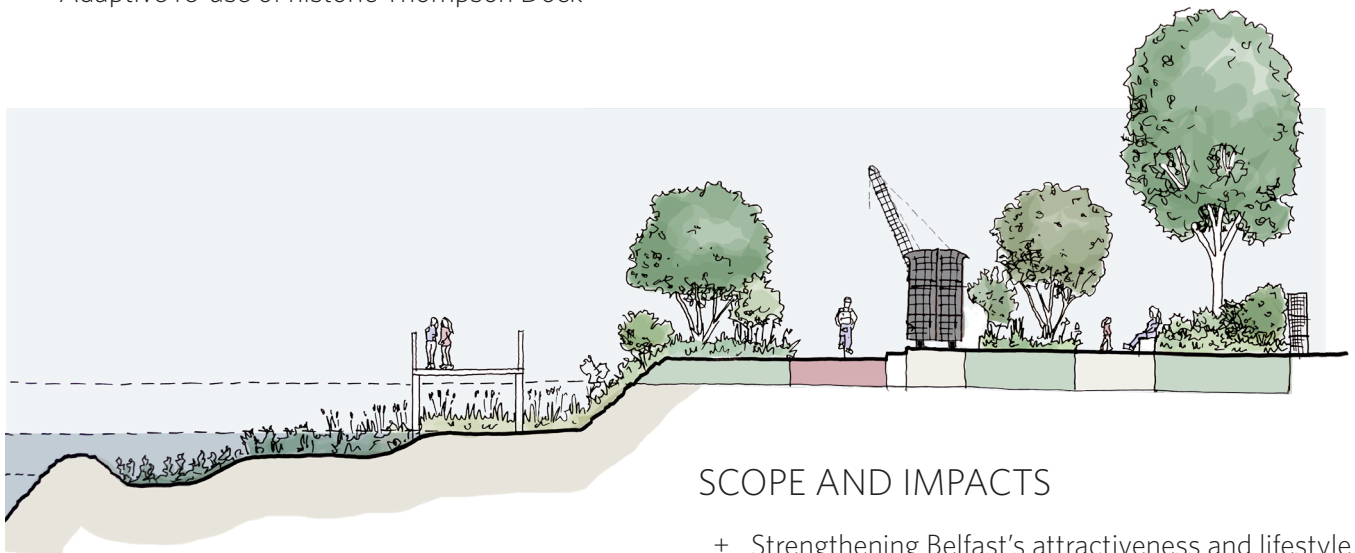
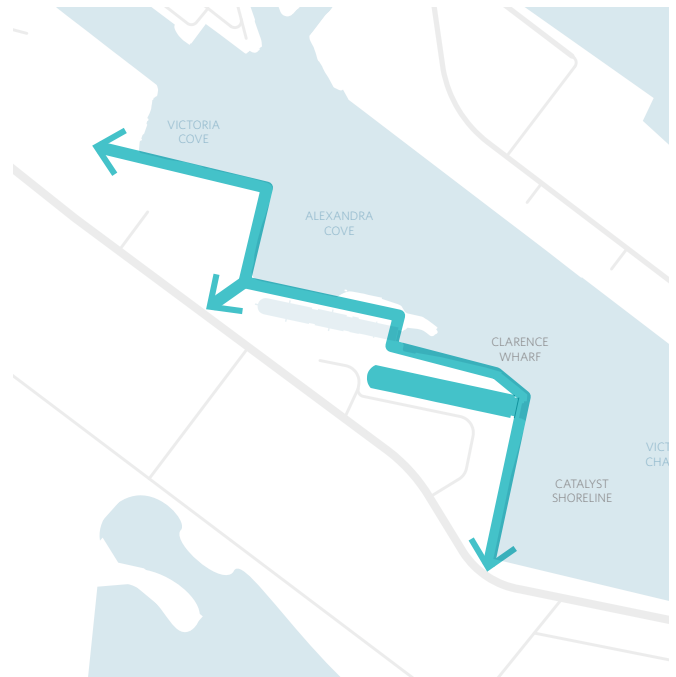
Thompson & Alexandra Docks

PROMENADE + CONNECTIONS

Enhancing harbour heritage, improving marine ecosystem, and strengthening connectivity and wayfinding to establish the Harbour's northern docks as a compelling tourist attraction and cultural destination.

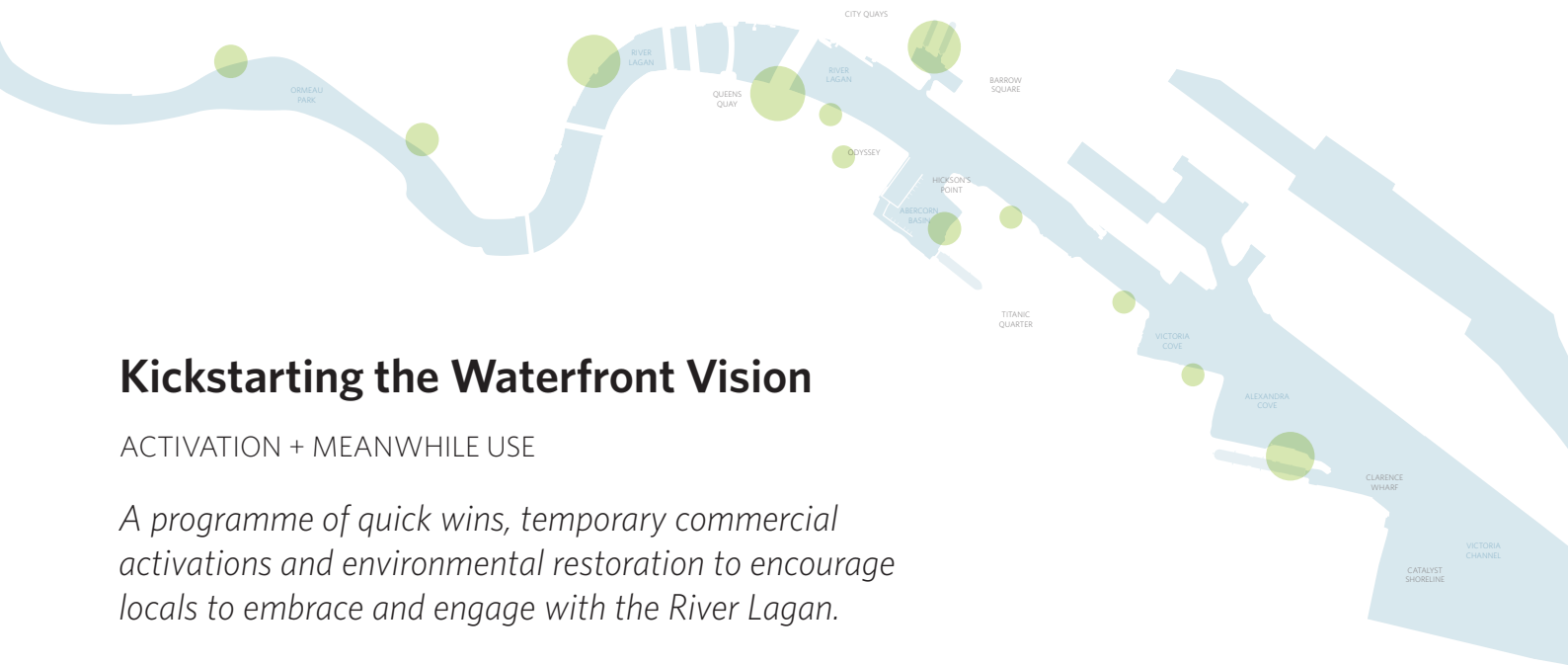
DESIGN CONCEPT

- + Improve existing connection and access along promenade and to Queen's Road
- + Activation of public realm surrounding the docks to support heritage attractions
- + Ecological enhancement along shoreline creating a linear park
- + Adaptive re-use of historic Thompson Dock



SCOPE AND IMPACTS

- + Strengthening Belfast's attractiveness and lifestyle proposition through new cultural infrastructure, celebrating port and heritage and access to restored natural spaces
- + Extending Titanic Belfast experience to support higher tourist volumes and extended length of stay
- + Strengthening case for longer-term TQ residential development east of Queens Road and workspace tenant interest in Catalyst



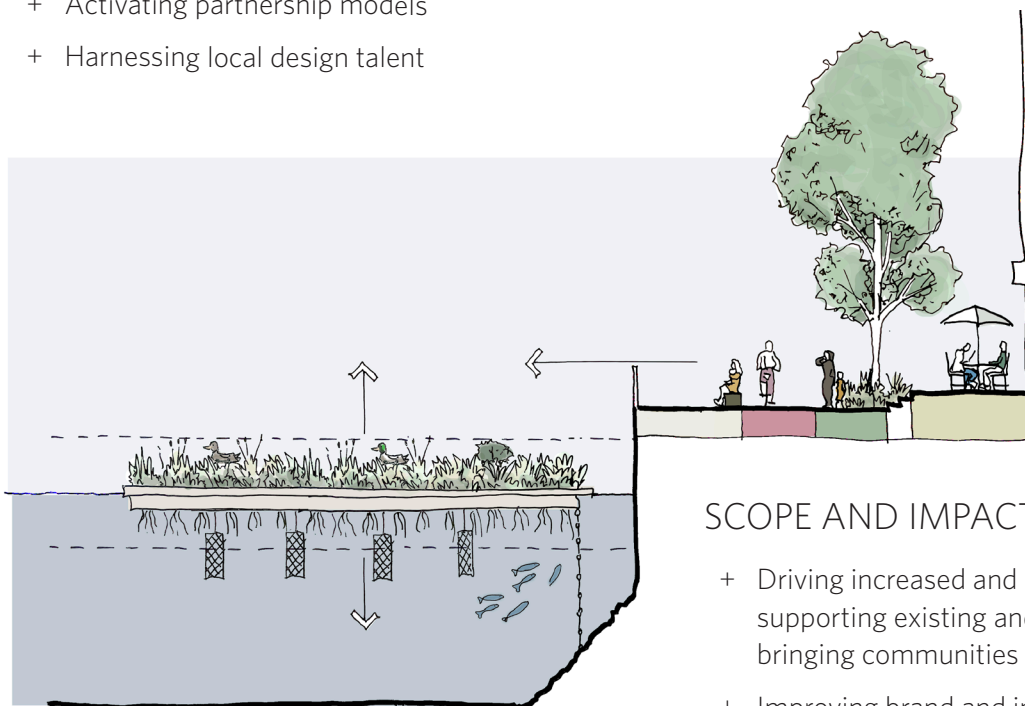
Kickstarting the Waterfront Vision

ACTIVATION + MEANWHILE USE

A programme of quick wins, temporary commercial activations and environmental restoration to encourage locals to embrace and engage with the River Lagan.

DESIGN CONCEPT

- + Pop-up Food+Beverage in areas of future permanent activation
- + Ecological enhancement, including SuDS, shoreline restoration, oyster beds, etc, to begin ecosystem services
- + Exhibits, events, and festivals to celebrate local heritage
- + Dispersed and flexible interventions
- + Activating partnership models
- + Harnessing local design talent



SCOPE AND IMPACTS

- + Driving increased and extended visitation supporting existing and meanwhile businesses, bringing communities back to the river
- + Improving brand and image and demonstrating viability of long-term use
- + Improvements capitalised into land value and final development
- + Testing of design treatments and promenade enhancements within a limited area as a quality benchmark

PROJECT LEAD + DESIGN



ENGINEERING



ECONOMICS



DOCUMENT ISSUE

September 15, 2023

Illustrations and photographs are credited to Schulze+Grassov, unless otherwise noted.



Subject:	Night-time Economy Notice of Motion
Date:	11 th September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Damien Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Jamie Uprichard, Business Research and Development Manager

Restricted Reports											
Is this report restricted?	Yes	No	X								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Information relating to any individual Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) Information in connection with any labour relations matter Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 											
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table> <tr> <td>After Committee Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>										
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>										

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Night-time Economy Notice of Motion which is recommended for closure as part of the quarterly NoM update.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the update on action in relation to the Notice of Motion on Belfast City's Nightlife and Night-time economy; and • Agree that members engage with the newly appointed Night Czar through the City Centre All-Party Working Group.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>At the City Growth & Regeneration Committee meeting on 4th October 2021 Councillor de Faoite raised a Notice of Motion focussed on Belfast City's Nightlife and Night-time Economy which sought to deliver two specific actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a roundtable engagement event which seeks to identify the main challenges facing the city center's evening and nighttime economy (ENTE) and opportunities for the future; and • the establishment of an ENTE 'coordinator'.
3.2	<p>At a meeting of the City Centre All-Party Working Group (CCAPWG) on 26th January 2023, members welcomed Amy Lamé, London's Night Czar, who provided an overview of her background, role and collaborative approach to ensuring London thrives as a 24-hour city. Ms. Lamé outlined the challenges that she had faced, including changing perceptions of the city at night, ensuring women felt safe in London at night, addressing issues relating to nighttime workers and improving nighttime transport links. Members heard that key to addressing these challenges was working in partnership with the nighttime industries, local authorities, the Metropolitan Police, Transport for London and the general public.</p>
3.3	<p>At the same meeting members also received a presentation from the council's Director of Economic Development who provided an update on council related work which was assisting with the revitalisation effort of the night-time economy following the Covid pandemic. This included a presentation on case studies and best practice from other cities and information on Belfast's Purple Flag status. (Purple Flag is an internationally recognised accreditation for excellence in the nighttime economy and helped to create safe and thriving locations at night for all users).</p>
3.4	<p>Belfast City Centre First Achieved Purple Flag Status in 2020, just prior to the lock down and more recently Belfast City Council had joined the Steering Group that was seeking re-accreditation. Membership of the group included representatives from the following organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast One BID; • Linen Quarter BID; • Destination CQ BID; • Belfast City Council; • Belfast Chamber of Trade & Commerce; • PSNI; • SOS Bus; • Value Cabs; • Hospitality Ulster; and • Translink.

3.5	As part of its recent application for Purple Flag status the Steering Group undertook a self-assessment evening in September 2023 which identified the main challenges facing the city's nighttime economy and a number of areas of improvement in relation to the Purple Flag themes. Belfast City Centre's Purple Flag status was successfully re-certified in January 2024 (following an assessment conducted by assessors in November 2023).
3.6	The CCAPWG received a presentation from Chris McCracken, Managing Director of the Linen Quarter BID (on behalf of the Purple Flag Steering Group) at its May 2024 meeting. Mr. McCracken updated the working group on the latest status and outlined the next steps of the process, which included addressing a number of recommendations within the assessors' feedback report (attached at Appendix 1). It was agreed that the CCAPWG would be used to collate and direct Members' feedback to the ongoing work of the Purple Flag Steering Group.
3.7	<u>Night Czar</u> On 11 th June 2024, Belfast's three BIDs (Linen Quarter, Belfast One and Destination CQ) announced the appointment of Michael Stewart as Belfast's city centre's first Night Czar. The role reflects a previous Purple Flag recommendation and will focus to enhancing, coordinating, leading and advocating for the city's night-time economy. The Night Czar position follows appointments in cities such as London, Manchester, and Edinburgh and is an honorary role attracting remuneration of £12K per year which is jointly funded by the three BIDs.
3.8	Following discussion at the May CCAPWG, it was recommended that the Night Czar should be invited to future meetings to engage with elected members. It was proposed that the working group would enable ongoing political engagement to ensure that elected representative's feedback could be provided and discussed (as suggested by best practice from other cities).
3.10	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> There are no additional financial implications attached to this report. Finance and resource implications are considered by Committee when taking decisions on the specific Notices of Motion and Issues Raised by Members.
3.11	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	Appendix 1 - Purple Flag Assessor's full renewal report

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Assessor's full renewal report

2023

Page 85









*Excellence in managing the
evening & nighttime economy*

Contents

Purple Flag assessor full renewal report	1
Purple Flag summary chart	11
Assessors conclusions	12
Need help?	14

Purple Flag assessor full renewal report

Details of entry		Overnight assessment
Location of entry Belfast	Date of assessment Fri 24th November	Night of the week Friday
Name of assessors Julieta Cuneo – Liam O'Hare	Times covered (<i>tick or colour circles</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Entrant's presentation ● Early evening: 5–8pm ● Late evening: 8pm–11pm ● Night: 11pm–2am ● Late night: 2–5am 	Anomalies Damp, cold, windy, Black Friday shopping night, City Hall Night market trading.
Author of report Julieta Cuneo – Liam O'Hare		Members & roles of local partnership present Eimear McCracken – Belfast One/Purple Flag Co-ordinator Chris McCracken – Linen Quarter BID Manager Lawrence Tingson – Linen Quarter BID Damien Corr – Destination CQ BID Manager Alan Crowe – Belfast One BID CEO Sgt Dave McKinley – PSNI Con Owen Kelly – PSNI BID funded officer Ex Insp David Gibson – PSNI (retired in October '23 but has been a huge supporter of Purple Flag since 2018) Clare Guinness – CEO of Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce Lesley-Ann O'Donnell – Belfast City Council, Culture and Tourism Manager Emma McCausland – Director of ValuCabs
Date of report 12.12.2023		

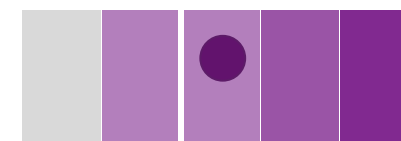
		<p>Michael Stewart – Director of CommonMarket/Ex Belfast Chamber President (2019 – 2021)</p> <p>Resilience and continuity Who is the delegated PF Co-ordinator back-up to cover absence or position change?</p> <p>The Purple Flag is funded by three BIDs affording Belfast unique resilience and continuity.</p>
<p>Documents reviewed (tick or colour circles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Entry form  Map of area  Purple flag area snapshot  Self assessment chart 	<p>Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attach the itinerary for the assessment. • To achieve an overall standard met no standards should fall within the grey shaded boxes and no more than one attribute in any theme must be below standard. • Please can you explain any significant differences in scoring between yourself and the centre e.g. if a town/city scores themselves “excellent” and you score a “standard met”, why is there such a margin? • Please show entrant’s and your recommended standards on the same chart: <p> Your recommended standards</p> <p> The entrant’s standards</p>	

Core agenda and attributes	Assessment	Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
<p>Wellbeing (welcoming, clean and safe)</p> <p>Threshold standard: per capita crime and anti-social behaviour rates that are at least average and show an improving trend, or how any declining trends are understood and being managed – taking both residents and visitors into account (see KPI’s).</p>						
<p>1. Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While KPIs showed an increase in crime figures across the board, the PNSI and BID-funded police service were confident in indicating the rise is due 				X	

Proportionate level of visible, effective policing and active surveillance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to a higher public confidence in reporting. No crime or ASB were observed while assessing the PF area. CCTV coverage is extensive, high quality and thoroughly monitored – 3 officers on duty the night of the visit. Both retail and Nighttime businesses are directly in contact via radio link. NTE business representatives highlighted a good working relationship and high level of collaboration with the PSNI. 					
2. Care Responsible guardianship, customer care and concern for community health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is strong communication among the PSNI, SIA and volunteer groups – Street Pastors, SOS Bus and Community Rescue Service (CRS) – all of which were present at the PSNI briefing session. The CRS runs a remarkable boat patrol service on Friday and Saturday night. It runs until 2am and they have intervened in 8 positive interventions this year. There is an intention of funding an extra service on Thursday night. During the assessment we encountered one incident involving an intoxicated individual. The scene was attended by a number of police and volunteer services. 					X
3. Regulation Positive and proactive licensing and regulation. Please reference here as to whether certified for the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the night of the visit a representative from the SIA was undertaking a check on licensed premises' security staff licenses and ability to manage potential conflict in a safe manner. Unlike England & Wales the licensing regime is ran by the police. And magistrates. A team were out on the night and were engaging with Bar operators. 				X	
4. Services Appropriate levels of public utilities including public conveniences or alternative schemes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the assessment we encountered 2 public access toilets, both paid with the possibility of using cash or card. Victoria Square's public toilets are open to the public until 9pm, even though the space qualifies as public realm and employs 24-hour security staff. 				X	
5. Partnership The active involvement of business in driving up standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership work among stakeholders is remarkable. This was evident from the relationship between representatives present at the visit, feedback from people encountered along the way and anecdotal evidence from the radio link and Retail Crimewatch services. 				X	
6. Perceptions				X		

A valid and positive presentation of the area to customers.

- While overall perceptions of safety were high there is a stark difference between different areas of the PF area, some of which feel disconnected and less looked after than others. However, plans for improvement and development were shared with the assessors.



Core agenda and attributes

Assessment



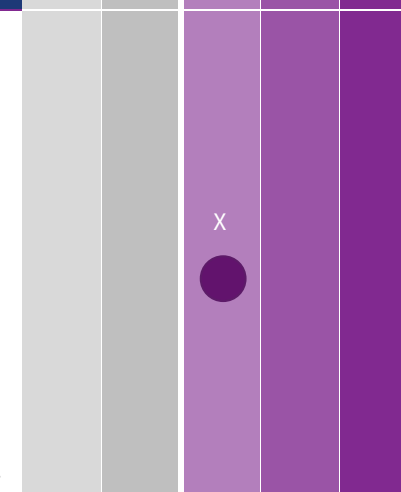
Movement (a secure pattern of arrival, circulation and departure)

Threshold standard: some form of appropriate late-night public transport provision (see KPI's) appropriate to each individual destination (size/location etc).

1. Public Transport

Safe, affordable, well-managed late night public transport.

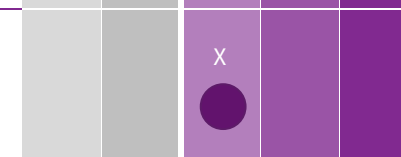
- The night of the visit coincided with the first night of the Translink Nightmovers service, a special late night bus service for the holiday season, already implemented in 2022. There is an intention to make the night bus service available throughout the year, currently stalled by the lack of central administration.
- While welcome, the Nightmovers service doesn't seem to be enough to provide for all nighttime users. A conversation with a nighttime worker revealed that the late-night bus routes didn't provide a solution to her late-night commute home and at £6 per journey very expensive.
- On the night of the visit taxis were widely available. However, it was a relatively quiet night. Representatives from Valu Cabs, a local taxi company, highlighted challenges in keeping up with the demand for services. Belfast like everywhere else is suffering from not enough drivers.



2. Car parking

An appropriate provision of secure late night car parking.

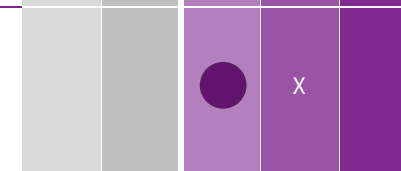
- There was an appropriate provision of late-night car parking across the PF area. It was also noted that On-Street parking is free after 18:00.



3. Pedestrian routes

Clear, safe and convenient links within the centre and homeward.

- Dublin road was well lit and easily navigable, linking well into Bedford st, Howard St and City Hall.
- Donegall Place and Royal Ave were bright and welcoming.



- The Entries linking Anne St to Hight St were really animated, colourful with lots of “Instagram moment” photo opportunities.
- Victoria Square was fully pedestrianised, well-lit and spotlessly clean.
- Linen Quarter was people friendly even with crowds spilling onto the streets at times it didn’t feel dangerous.

4. Crowd management

Measures to deal with overcrowding, congestion and conflict between those on foot and moving vehicles.

- The highest congestion points were in Cathedral District, the busiest NTE area. Plans for pedestrianization of the most popular crossings are on the way, but currently stalled due to lack of central administration.

5. Information

Provision of practical information and guidance to town centre users.

- There is good wayfinding signage throughout the PF area, including informative totems marking relevant historical points. Tourists are well catered for in this city and the information points are evenly spread with City Hall serving as an enormous beacon dominating the city centre as it does.

6. Partnership

Business, venues and transport operator commitment and participation to support the safe movement of people and vehicles.

- There was good evidence of a partnership approach between the three BIDs (Belfast One, Linen Quarter and Cathedral Quarter) The Venues had broad representation and the cabs appears to be very well coordinated.
- The PSNI who run licensing link well with community support services and the Guardians who are doing a great job despite dwindling numbers.
- The partnership on display that night really does beg the question, what exactly is the point of the inert executive.

Core agenda and attributes	Assessment	Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
A Broad appeal (a vibrant choice and a rich mix) Threshold standard: an evening and late night offer that is broader than youth-oriented and alcohol-based activity (see KPI's).						
1. Food and dining A choice of eating venues and a commitment to good food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There is a rich mix of independent and chain food outlets and food markets in the city, in addition to a seasonal Christmas market open at the time of the visit. Notable was the town centre options AMPM which was				X	

buzzing. Kelly's Cellars goes from strength to strength and seems to be expanding at every visit. The Garrick appeared busy and looked attractive.

- However, options were reduced to a handful after 11pm, something particularly noticeable at closing time, where we observed a high concentration of young people in Mc Donald's., manned by 2 security staff.
- We encountered one kebab shop and one small take away offering food and hot drinks until 2am.

2. Pubs and bars

Well-managed venues, to meet varied tastes, and offering more than just alcoholic beverages.

- There is a solid offer of pubs and bars, all of which appeared to be well managed. There was no congregation of people by the doors, an acceptable level of noise and the fronts and surrounding areas were pristine clean after closing time.
- Belfast has many great bars, we visited The Crown, Robinsons, the wonderful Bittles.
- Hellcat Maggie's affords its guests with lovely views across city hall and the night market.
- However, there seemed to be a lack of non-alcoholic options, such as shisha bars and ice cream parlours, open until late. The several food markets in the city also close down by 11pm.

3. Late night venues

A late-night offer that complements the diverse appeal of the centre as a whole.

- During the visit we encountered a few late-night venues, located in different locations of the PF. They mostly seemed to cater to a very young audience except for one live-music venue, which was open until 3 but had stopped playing music by 2.30. Voodoo deserves special mention with a very strong music culture running through its program of events.
- The telegraph Building is a fine example of what to do with the abundance of buildings around the cathedral quarter. I went to a gig the night after the assessment where the Undertones had a sold-out event. Impressive place.

4. Early evening activity

An active early evening period, including late opening shops, sporting and leisure opportunities.

- The early evening period was busy and buzzing, with a wide variety of people around. This was probably increased by the fact that it was Black Friday, but overall, it felt that there was a healthy variety of retail and food options available, as well as the Christmas market.
- The retail offering was very impressive and late-night shopping was abundant with a strong representation from small independents.
- The Cinema in Castle Court was very impressive. Multi screens show Film as well as Sport, Opera, Concerts and plays. 9 screens showing 3 shows per

Page 93		<p>day. Very well managed by managed by Emma Robinson who explained the quirks of NI licensing by telling us that you need a ticket go get an alcoholic drink.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Hall had the late night market, which was a tale of two halves, Outside the hall the broad pavements allowed a parade of attractive huts all with retail late into the night; inside the city hall the ergonomics were far from satisfactory. Narrow walkways, too many food traders with nowhere to sit or stop. Prams and wheelchairs felt unwelcome or not considered and the journey around the grounds was not nice which is a great shame and a missed opportunity for the traders and City Hall. 					
	<p>5. Public buildings</p> <p>Creative and imaginative use of public/civic buildings in the evening and at night.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a remarkable amount of beautiful public buildings in the PF area and, following previous assessor comments, lighting has been expanded to highlight them, in turn contributing to enhancing public realm lighting. A highlight of the visit was 2 Royal Avenue, a former bank now turned into an ‘indoor park’ providing safe and free public space. It features a community library, café and event space that everybody is welcome to use. Works are underway to open a back entrance, thus connecting two parts of the PF area. Unfortunately, it is only open until 6pm. 			●	X	
	<p>6. Arts and culture</p> <p>A vibrant, inclusive arts and cultural scene.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arts and culture scene are thriving, with a full agenda of events and venues. This will be increased next year with Belfast 24, a city-wide cultural programme. We also observed several venues playing live music. We were told by Victoria Square manager Ryan Mc Avoy that there are Belfast School of Music concerts every day in November and December. 				X	●

Core agenda and attributes		Assessment				
Place (a stimulating destination and a vital place) Threshold standard: a mix of pleasing and functional spaces. A convenient and attractive destination at night (see KPI's).		Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
1. Location Appropriate location, clustering and capacity of venue types.					X	

- As we moved from the evening into the night the activity also moved towards Cathedral Quarter, where there is a high clustering and good mix of venues.
- The tide of trade is moving towards the Cathedral Quarter with its lack of residential property is allowing a buoyant nighttime economy not afraid to make a bit of noise.
- The street hosting the Duke of York pub, and the surrounding area was very colourful and attractive. Several high-quality bars in this area makes it an attractive and diverse destination area.
- The previous Golden Mile has seen better days but the Linen Quarter BID have used vinyl's imaginatively to bring old buildings back to life including murals . One notably of Terri Hooley which caught the eye but was not lit well, a missed opportunity.

2. Diversity

A successful balance of uses and brands.

- There is a good mix of restaurants, pubs and bars, and an incipient LBGTQ+ area. The Cathedral Quarter also hosts the new university campus, where we observed a late-night opening gym which someone was using. However, there didn't seem to be any non-alcohol related options available.
- The Grand Opera House is a very impressive building with a strong culture program bringing, music, plays, comedy and a bit of panto to the town centre.
- The Telegraph Building is delivering a strong live music program in a dramatic post-industrial space.

3. Clarity

Well-designed links and visible signs.

- Signage is good in terms of landmarks and highlighting of relevant historic spots, with informative totems scattered around the city. However, there seems to be a disconnect between the busiest hubs and other parts of the city. Apart from taxi stops, which are well spread, there wasn't signposting towards public transport.

4. Animation

Attractive, well-used public places, active streets and building frontages.

- There are a number of parklets and well-lit and set up public spaces across the city. Some areas are pedestrianised, and we observed groups of people making use of them while eating late-night takeaway.
- There is a high contrast between the busiest NTE spots and other parts of the city, which were very dark in comparison – i.e. the Golden Mile area and the stalled Tribeca regeneration project. Plans are underway to improve this.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Linen Quarter is home to a pedestrianised entertainment area that offers seating and performance space and a pétanque court that the public is encouraged to use. The area is inviting and well-lit but was not being used by anyone on the night of the visit. 					
5. Design Thoughtful and imaginative design for the night.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public art and interventions are scattered across the city. However, there are areas of improvement such as the murals in the Linen Quarter, which were very poorly lit. The Entries are a good example of thoughtful and imaginative design for the night, with artistic intervention and place-making interventions that helped made the narrow alleyways feel inviting and safe, even late at night when venues were closed. 				X	
6. Identity The appropriate use of natural and built features to reinforce appeal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings are in general well-kept and well lit, and they convey a sense of city identity. 				X	
Core agenda and attributes		Assessment				
The Policy Envelope (a clear aim and a common purpose) Threshold Standard: a momentum of collaboration between sectors, agencies, service providers and policy-makers (See KPIs').						
1. Data A sound statistical base for policy-making and action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The statistical base provided is good starting point, but there is plenty of room for improvement, for example by splitting footfall data by time of the day, collecting spend data and providing analysis of different demographics accessing the PF area at night. The perceptions survey is a good addition to the KPIs, but the lack of contextual information makes it difficult to understand how representative it is. 				X	
2. Strategy Positive strategic objectives and targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a strong strategic direction, with the council's Agenda 2023-2027 and the Future City Centre programme, backed by investment coming into the city and the expansion of the new university campus. However, the 				X	

focus seems at times too geared towards tourism over the local population: i.e. a total of 5 new hotels will be built in the near future.

3. Coordination

Public policy coordination and focus.

- Coordination among the membership of the PF is strong. Following previous assessor comments the group has incorporated a member of the City Council into the Steering Group, which facilitates decision making in a context of lack of central government.

4. Leadership

Clear responsibilities for policy and action.

- Leadership by the three city centre groups is strong and well-coordinated. The group manifested an intention to establish a Night Time Economy coordinator/ mayor, which would be a step forward and could strengthen leadership further once central government functions are eventually restored.

5. Partnership

Multi-sector endorsement and commitment.

- There is good representation of different sectors, including the police, Translink, the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and trade bodies, as well as the City Council, which is a welcome addition from the last assessment.

6. Community

A dialogue with consumers and residents.

- While partnership representation is strong it does feel like there is a lack of community and grassroots representation. It would be good to see the University/ youth representation involved, as well as representatives from communities that make use of the PF zone in a non-consumer capacity, such as night workers, religious groups, and minorities.

		X		
		X		
		X		
		X		

Purple Flag summary chart

Purple Flag core agenda		Significantly below standard	Below standard	Standard met	Above standard	Excellent Outstanding
1. Wellbeing	Welcoming, clean and safe.				X ●	
2. Movement	A secure pattern of arrival, circulation and departure.			X ●		
3. A broad appeal	A vibrant choice and a rich mix.				X ●	
4. Place	A stimulating destination and a vital place.				X ●	
5. Policy envelope	A clear aim and a common purpose.			X ●		

NOTE. All five Themes must be at least 'Standard met' if the area is to be recommended for a Purple Flag.

Assessors' conclusions

Recommendation



Purple Flag accreditation

- Standard met or exceeded on all five core agenda themes.



Not yet ready for Purple Flag accreditation

- Standard not met on one or more core agenda themes.

Any matters to be referred to accreditation panel before a final decision is made:

The only difference in scoring is related to the 'Diversity' entry, and it is due to the fact that, while it is true that the offer is diverse, there seems to be a lack of non-alcohol related venues, such as shisha bars, desert parlours and etc., to cater for those who can't or choose not to drink on a night out.

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Guidance to applicant on any priority issues to address prior to purple flag renewal:

1. *KPIs on Crime and Disorder Anti-Social behaviour and Sexual Violence need to be addressed. While it is great to hear from the police that people are feeling better about reporting crime the assessors are less convinced and more work needs to be done to get the numbers down. They are too high.*
2. *It would be helpful to have figures broke down into NTE crime and domestic figures should be removed for clarity. It would be helpful to see figures on a month-by-month basis to target busy months.*
3. *A perception study needs to occur before the next assessment.*
4. *Relaxed licensing laws need to be analysed to see if they have had a positive impact, or not.*
5. *Belfast should have its next assessment on a busy Saturday, traditionally the busiest night of the week.*

Guidance to applicant on any general issues to address *(please note that any issues noted will be reviewed in the next interim renewal assessment):*

1. *There is a lack of representation and consideration towards the needs of night workers – we heard about issues with night transport, but no mention was made of other types of support available, such as mental health support for Hospitality workers, an issue that is becoming increasingly relevant.*
2. *It would benefit the Purple Flag to have the Victoria Sq. Dome open at night, even seasonally or occasionally for an “Belfast at night” experience*
3. *On another note, there is a variety of plans for growth and investment coming into the PF area, including more hotels, student accommodation and housing. This could present potential threats to existing venues related to noise complaints. It is recommended that plans are made to prevent this from happening.*
4. *Public transport is too expensive late at night. The executive when functioning again needs to address this and look at supplementing the cost of a single journey which at £6 is not going to encourage use and drive football into the town centre.*
5. *Belfast should consider integrating the Queens University area into PF, also Waterfront, Titanic & St Georges market if night events are happening there still.*

6. *The assessors would like to see effective VAWG policies for the licensed trade and buy in from the trade before the next assessment.*
7. *Belfast must engage with the executive as soon as they begin functioning as an administration again. An ENTE strategy should be developed which engages with all stakeholders and creates a common purpose and goals for everyone to work towards especially important if, and, when the executive makes apolitical decisions not to function again. The ENTE must not suffer this kind of stasis again.*

Specific policies and actions that are excellent or outstanding, and especially worthy of note:

The coordination between the police, volunteer groups and businesses are worthy of note. One representative from the hospitality sector highlighted that there is a good working relationship with the PSNI.

The Transformation of 2 Royal Avenue from a TESCO to a not for profit “indoor park” which the assessors assert must be brought into the early evening as it an exemplar project which can only get better with the development explained to us at our visit. The fact it closes at 18:00 falls outside the early evening provision which is a shame.

The assessors would like to acknowledge the outstanding achievements of the boat service.

Need help?

ATCM wants to help all those who are going for Purple Flag, or are thinking of it, to be as successful as possible. That way everyone wins. If you have visited the Purple Flag website or have attended an ENTE event and would like further support a range of workshops are also available for different stages of the application process.

Full details of all the workshops can be found by contacting the Purple Flag Team:

For further information contact the Purple Flag team:

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Karen Shields

ATCM and Purple Flag Membership Manager

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07826 323399



Excellence in managing the evening & nighttime economy





Subject:	City Centre Animation
Date:	09 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Damien Martin, Strategic Director
Contact Officer:	Lesley-Ann O'Donnell, Senior Manager Culture Tourism and Events

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

☐

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

☐
☐
☐
☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	<p>This report presents a number of proposals for increased animation opportunities within the city and for extended destination profile.</p> <p>Members are asked to provide approval to progress with an extended city centre animation programme to provide support for key stakeholder to deliver partnership initiatives</p>
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are asked to note the contents of the report, and agree the allocation of the following direct awards in relation to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast One - Busking activity – up to the value of £20,000 • Belfast One - Halloween activity – up to the value of £40,000
3.0	Background
3.1	<p>The 10 year cultural strategy – A City Imagining outlines a vision of Belfast as a city:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where everyone fulfils their potential • where everyone benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy • where everyone experiences good health and well being • that is welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all • that is vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable <p>Building on the community planning process, It acknowledges that change requires ambition, long-term commitment and a sustainable and adaptable approach building on the creativity and resilience in the very fabric of our city. A city imagining can be the catalyst for the urgency and agency required to encourage innovation, new connected thinking and greater collaboration.</p> <p>In response to ongoing significant regeneration efforts, aiming to drive increased footfall and activity within the city centre. It is essential to address the challenges that the city centre is facing while aligning with initiatives such as the UNESCO City of Music designation, Belfast 2024, Make Yourself at Home tourism strategy and the core principles of co-design and partnership working.</p> <p>As such the cultural unit have been working with city stakeholders to consider upcoming opportunities to continue to build and grow the positioning of Belfast as a welcoming and culturally vibrant destination.</p>
4.0	Main Report

4.1	<p>Whilst there have been a range of very positive developments and investments in the city centre, the economic environment is challenging and the impact of the dereliction associated with the Tribeca site continues to be felt.</p> <p>Initiatives have been put forward to work in partnership with 'Belfast One' to respond to the ongoing need for a continued programme of city centre activity to drive footfall and give additional reasons to visit the city centre and attract both residents and tourists.</p> <p>Officers have worked with stakeholders at Belfast One to identify the following proposals;</p>
4.2	<p>BuskFest - up to £20,000</p> <p>Objective: Increase footfall and create a vibrant atmosphere through Music further building on the work aligned to realising Belfast's UNESCO city of music status.</p> <p>BuskFest will bring musicians into designated areas of the city to perform live music, creating an engaging and lively environment for visitors. This initiative will support local artists and provide entertainment that encourages people to spend more time in the city centre. Belfast One would aim to run a competition and have 5-6 locations across the city for buskers to perform in over 4 weekends in through to November and in the run into 'Sound of Belfast' with the winner getting a recording prize and time on one of the local radio stations.</p> <p>This would build on previous success realised on activity delivered in 2018 and 2019 on the Great Belfast Busk Off.</p>
4.3	<p>Halloween 2024 – up to £40,000 (if both components progressed)</p> <p>Objective: Boost seasonal footfall and create a festive atmosphere.</p> <p>Belfast One has already committed to hosting 5 monsters in buildings across the city BCC are seeking to provide increased funding to enhance this to 7 creating a monster trail and placing monster eyes in trees on Donegal Place.</p> <p>These are attractive and award-winning outdoor attractions which have been on display in other cities including Manchester, London, Glasgow and Dublin with great success. Through an exciting primary-school competition to name each of the monsters, we can drive footfall from children and their families into the City Centre to visit the monsters to enter the 'Name the Monster' competition.</p>



4.4

The remaining funding would deliver in partnership with Belfast One a pumpkin patch in the grounds of City Hall over 2-3 day replicating the popular event to draw families and Halloween enthusiasts into the city. The event would be a free ticketed event and would encourage participants to take their pumpkins to designated design stations across the city to dress their pumpkins. This event creates stunning visual images in front of the City's main municipal building and demonstrate visually that the City is open for families and children.



5.0

Financial and Resource Implications

The cost of delivering the programme is up to £60,000.

This will be funded from existing budgets and, if all options are fully implemented, also from specified reserves.

6.0	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no Equality, Good Relations nor Rural Needs Implications associated with this paper.
7.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None

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Subject:	International Relations Activity Update
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, International Relations Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

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7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

☐
☐
☐
☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for council engagement in and attendance at a number of international profiling events in USA in early 2025 as well as support for the upcoming Friendship Four event.
2.0	Recommendation
	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the invitations for the Lord Mayor to attend the St Pat's for All event in early March 2025 as well the Nashville Peace Summit in late February 2025 and agree attendance at both events by the Lord Mayor and appropriate senior officers up to a total maximum cost of £12,000 • Note and approve the request for £15,000 financial support towards the Friendship Four event to take place in November 2024 • Note and approve the request for £10,000 financial support towards the touring route for 'The Agreement'. • Note the planned review of international opportunities and potential areas of interest aligned to city priorities and agree to receive a future report to consider how targeted international engagement activity can support and advance our key ambitions. • This will be developed alongside a paper for the committee setting out the principles that will underpin an updated international relations framework.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>St Pat's for All engagement – New York – early March 2025</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that Belfast City Council annually participates in the New York New Belfast Economic Showcase. This showcase event has been running for more than a decade, and for the last three years has been streamlined to focus solely on seeking economic opportunity within New York City and the wider East coast. Over 150 business, civic and political leaders gather to hear the latest Belfast developments and updates on trade and investment opportunities across key growth sectors as well as capital investment development and opportunities.</p>
3.2	<p>At this year's 15th annual event, the Lord Mayor took part in a number of side meetings with City and State political representatives. He was also invited to speak at a key focal point for LGBTQIA rights, the Stonewall Inn. This aligned with the Lord Mayor's inclusive city theme. The event was attended by many influential business, political, academic and civic leaders, including former City Council Speakers Christine Quinn and Corey Johnson, along with NY State Comptroller Tom Di Napoli.</p>

3.3	On the back of this engagement, the Lord Mayor has now been invited to lead the 26 th annual “St Pat’s for All” Parade, assuming the role of Grand Marshall. The Parade attracts over 3,500 participants, and around 28,000 spectators. In addition to participating in the parade, the St Pat’s for All President and Board have offered to facilitate a wider programme of engagements around inclusive growth and neighbourhood regeneration, in line with Corporate Plan priorities. The Lord Mayor will also undertake a series of follow-up business meetings arising from the June 2024 New York New Belfast event.
3.4	<p><u>Reframing international and Sister Cities engagement activity</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been a formal Sister City with Nashville and Boston since 1994 and 2015, respectively. The objective of these agreements is to develop and deliver collaborative and mutually beneficial activity for each city in the areas of the economy (both business trade and investment), education (mainly through attracting international students and research partnerships), tourism development and cooperation in culture and music.</p>
3.5	Activity with both cities at civic level has been intermittent since the pandemic. This is due to a number of factors including changes in personnel; competing priorities and immediate funding and resource pressures on other issues. Despite this, organisational partnerships between educational establishments, business and community organisations have continued to strengthen. As we emerge from the recent economic shocks, there appears to be an appetite from both cities to re-engage, with the potential for renewed conversations across a range of areas for collaboration. Officers are undertaking a review of opportunities and potential areas of interest aligned to city priorities and a report will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee to consider how targeted international engagement activity can support and advance our key ambitions.
3.6	In the interim, the city of Nashville is currently making plans to visit Belfast with an economic mission from 29 September-4 October this year. The council is working with economic partners – in particular Invest NI – to ensure that a targeted programme of meetings and engagement is in place for each of the delegates. Updates on opportunities for engagement with elected members will be flagged once there is greater clarity around timings and attendees.
3.7	Given that 2024 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Belfast-Nashville Sister City link, the City Council in Nashville is planning a number of activities to mark the occasion. One flagship event is a Peace Summit which is being developed by Queen’s University Belfast and Belmont University (who have long standing connections and yearly joint work programmes)

	<p>and which will take place from 25-28 February 2025. The programme for this event is still being finalised but it is likely to involve recognition of the work on Civil Rights through storytelling, history, music, community, and building peace in Nashville and around the world. The event will focus on issues related to past, present, and future movements and the connections between Civil Rights and peacebuilding. Primary partners include Belmont University, Fisk University, and Queen's University Belfast. The Lord Mayor has been asked to speak at the event on the Belfast experience of peace building and community and place building. Nashville Metro Council through the Office of Mayor Freddie O'Connell, along with the Sister City Board have endorsed the invitation and have extended an offer to organise a series of wider business engagements. These meetings will provide a helpful re-introduction to some of the key local business partners, on the assumption that we have commitment from Nashville to engage in this area of work in the future. Our engagements with Invest NI have confirmed the specific opportunities for collaboration between NI and the Nashville/Tennessee area and they have committed to working with us on opportunities arising from the discussions.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Friendship Four</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that, since 2015, the Council has supported the work of the Odyssey Trust in developing and delivering the Friendship Four series. This tournament and wraparound activity have been an important element of the Belfast-Boston Sister City relationship and have been used as a platform to promote Belfast as a study, investment, and tourism destination.</p>
3.9	<p>In 2019, the Friendship Four was expanded to incorporate a Women's Tournament. Both events attract positive international TV exposure for Belfast in the United States and Canada, reaching over 150 million households.</p>
3.10	<p>The 2024 Friendship Four series is due to take place in November and is divided into two distinct parts, namely the delivery of the tournament (29-30 November 2024) and the Friendship Four Legacy Project (25-28 November 2024). This year's tournament will involve teams from Notre Dame, Harvard, Boston University and Merrimack College. It will attract over 1,000 overseas visitors to the city and account for over 3,000 bed nights to the Belfast economy. Each team will travel with 40-50 players and immediate staff members as well as 10 match officials, with typical homes crowds of 3,000 fans attending their respective games. It is estimated through the Tourism NI return on investment calculator that the visitor spend during the event will be £500K and the total direct economic spend will be in the region of £750K generated for the city over the event.</p>
3.11	

	<p>The Legacy Project will extend beyond the main sporting activities and will include a schools cultural exchange programme involving over 400 young people. The main tournament event will be used as a “hook” to draw out discussion topics such as confidence, resilience and self-esteem, mental health and wellbeing and diet and nutrition. It will also involve a two-day STEM conference focusing on science and youth empowerment through sport. Finally, the overall event will be supported through a large-scale volunteer skills development programme which will see the recruitment, training and development of 60 volunteers to support a variety of roles across the weeklong programme.</p>
3.12	<p>Alongside the main event, there will also be a series of side programmes involving representatives from business and educational, sports and cultural institutions. Building on previous programmes, collaborative arrangements have already been made involving student engagement and faculty collaboration across the key educational establishments in Belfast and this year’s programme will seek to support and enhance these. With the introduction of new teams this year, there are opportunities to provide additional opportunities, not just for university-to-university collaboration, but also for business-to-business collaboration. Several opportunities have already been identified by universities competing in the 2024 tournament around the areas of cyber security and AI, sports tech and data reporting and STEM.</p>
3.13	
3.14	<p>The event receives financial support from a range of partners including Tourism NI, the Department for Communities and the US Consulate alongside ticket income and corporate sponsorship. To continue this longstanding partnership, the event organisers are seeking a financial contribution of £15,000 towards the November 2024 event.</p>
	<p><u>The Agreement</u></p>
3.15	<p>The cultural unit have been engaging with The Lyric theatre in relation to a request to support the touring route for ‘The Agreement’ up to the value of £10,000. The Agreement is an award-winning play by renowned playwright Owen McCafferty. It examines the negotiations leading to the Good Friday Agreement revealing the drama behind this complex, pivotal moment for Northern Ireland.</p>
3.16	<p>The Lyric Theatre, Belfast and the Gate Theatre, Dublin are bringing this important work to audiences during Dublin’s Theatre Festival for four weeks from end Sept – Oct 2024.</p> <p>Other key partners in this initiative include Tourism NI and officers are in discussion on leveraging the opportunity this presents to host key ROI/International media and</p>

3.17	<p>stakeholders and further build on the destination reputation of Belfast and our artistic partners.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Members are asked to approve a maximum of £12,000 in support of both the Nashville Peace Summit and wider Sister City visit, as well as the New York St Pat's for All and wider inclusivity visit to New York, both city visits aligned between 25 February and 3 March 2025. Members are also asked to agree to a financial contribution of £15,000 towards the Friendship Four November 2024 event and £10,000 towards the touring route for 'The Agreement'.</p> <p>All above costs will be met within the existing budget for 2024/25.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no direct Equality or Good Relations implications associated with this report.</p>
3.18	
3.19	
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None



Subject:	Business Growth and Scaling support		
Date:	11 September 2024		
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development		
Contact Officer:	Margie McKay, Enterprise and Business Growth Manager		
Restricted Reports			
Is this report restricted?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?			
After Committee Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>	
After Council Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Some time in the future		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Never		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Call-in			
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 provide members with an update on the Enterprise and Business Growth support and provide additional information on new interventions that had been identified in the 24/25 workplan which was presented to committee in May 2024.		
2.0	Recommendations		
2.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note and approve the allocation of £20,000 from the existing 2024/25 Economic Development budget to support the Fintech Support Programme, in partnership with the Fintech Corridor Note and approve the allocation of up to £65,000 from the existing 2024/25 Economic Development project to support the Advanced Media Production (AMP) capacity programme in partnership with Digital Catapult Note and endorse the proposal to invest in a localised test trading pilot to support pre/early start businesses with a maximum budget of £20,000. 		

3.0	Main Report
3.1	At the May 2024 meeting of this Committee, members endorsed the Enterprise and Business Growth workplan for the 24/25 year. The report set out key priority areas of work for the 2024/25 financial year, aligning to the delivery of the targets under the “Our Economy” pillar of the Belfast Agenda.
3.2	The report provided plans for scaling support and innovation, focusing on key technologies and priority sectors including Fintech and Financial Services, Creative and Digital Life and Health Sciences, and Advanced Manufacturing. Since that time, we have continued to work closely with the City Innovation Team to develop and deliver on new interventions which build capacity among local businesses – including those aligned to the Belfast Region City Deal interventions. Through this work and engagement with stakeholders in the wider ecosystem including Digital Catapult, Ulster University, Queen’s University, and the Fintech Corridor we have identified two key projects which we consider have clear alignment to the overall plan and which can lever resources and support from other key organisations.
3.3	<p><u>Fintech Support Programme</u></p> <p>Working in partnership with the Fintech Corridor, the Fintech Support Programme will aim to address the issues and strategic objectives identified in the Fintech NI action plan. The Fintech Corridor was established in 2020 and is a cross-border cluster working with multiple Fintech companies, academic institutions, and development agencies along the Dublin to Belfast corridor. It supports local SMEs working in the financial services to utilise new technology to grow and scale and provides important networking opportunities for companies along the corridor as well as with international companies working in this space.</p>
3.4	Belfast City Council is seeking to support 40 Belfast based companies to provide new partnership and networking opportunities, mentoring to support business growth, scaling and access to finance, and to look at opportunities to support the skills development and pipeline into the sector.
3.5	The support programme will focus on addressing specific barriers to SME growth and will provide the tools to overcome these barriers including mentoring, education, and support to enable business and product development, route to market engagements enabling b2b opportunities for Fintech SMEs, facilitated networking and collaborative space to explore and develop innovation, future opportunity identification and shaping SMEs for a growth mindset.

3.6	<p><u>Advanced Media Production Capacity Programme</u></p> <p>Working in partnership with Digital Catapult, the Advanced Media Production (AMP) capacity programme will aim to address key barriers to growth and explore opportunities for creative digital SMEs to engage with large scale Advanced Media Production (AMP) facilities such as Studio Ulster. The AMP programme will support up to 50 Belfast based companies wishing to build capacity in the commercial use of, and access to, Advanced Media Production (AMP). Through this programme businesses will have the opportunity to gain valuable skills and learning linked to Advanced Media Production and Studio Ulster in particular, to apply this new understanding to offer potential new market opportunities and to develop a pathway for local SMEs to engage and benefit from large scale City Deal projects, Studio Ulster, in this case.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Test trading opportunities for growing businesses</u></p> <p>The May 2024 committee report provided an overview of the role which the Enterprise and Business Growth team takes in supporting businesses at all stages of their journey including improving start-up and survival rates of new businesses and encouraging a culture of entrepreneurship across the city.</p>
3.8	<p>The report outlined plans for continuation of our dedicated start up space at St George's Market. Since April this year, we have enhanced our promotion of this service and demand has grown for the offer as a result. Two stalls at the market are set aside for new traders and we rotate participation on a six-week basis in order to ensure that businesses get a feel for the retail environment – as well as ensuring that the opportunity is available to a growing list of interested businesses. Further to this, we have enhanced our stakeholder engagement, ensuring our services are accessible in all areas of Belfast and across all communities. Through this stakeholder engagement we have explored various opportunities with shopping centres and trading locations across Belfast to explore further opportunities for test trading. As part of this engagement, we have identified an opportunity to provide test trading to approximately 30 pre/early start businesses in a busy retail environment.</p>
3.9	<p>In order to pilot this approach, we have developed a partnership with the Kennedy Centre in West Belfast. Through this, we will provide space for approximately 30 traders over the duration of the pilot. If feedback is positive and this process successful, we would propose providing test trading opportunities across other retail locations in Belfast. Early discussions are already under way to identify viable opportunities. The pilot will include wraparound support being provided to the businesses through the established Go Succeed service and each business will avail of branding, marketing, and sales support. Following successful</p>

	<p>completion of the pilot programme, the Kennedy Centre has committed to a period of reduced costs on more permanent trading space within the centre. A maximum budget of £20,000 is proposed for this activity to include pilot development, recruitment and marketing, wraparound support for businesses, and evaluation of the pilot.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Financial & Resource implications</u></p> <p>The activities outlined within this report will be resourced through the existing Enterprise and Business Growth budget for 2024/25.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The unit is currently undertaking an equality screening on the overall work programme. This will ensure that due consideration is given to equality and good relations impacts throughout the delivery of the collective workplan.</p>
4.0	Appendices
	N/A



Subject:	Notices of Motion – Quarterly Update
Date:	11 th September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Damien Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Jamie Uprichard, Business Research and Development Manager

Restricted Reports											
Is this report restricted?	Yes	No	X								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Information relating to any individual Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) Information in connection with any labour relations matter Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 											
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table> <tr> <td>After Committee Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>										
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>										

Call-in			
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	No	

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Notices of Motion and Issues

	Raised in Advance allocated to the City Growth & Regeneration (CG&R) Committee.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes the updates to all Notices of Motion/ Issues Raised in Advance that this Committee is responsible for as referenced in Appendix 1; and • Agrees to the closure of seven Notices of Motion, as referenced in Appendix 1 and noted in paragraph 3.3 below.
3.0	Main report
3.1	At the SP&R Committee meeting on 25th October 2019 , members agreed “ <i>that this Council notes that other Councils produce a monthly status report in relation to Notices of Motion; and agrees Belfast City Council adopts a similar practice and produces a monthly Notice of Motion Update which will be brought to each full Council Meeting.</i> ”
3.2	<p>It was subsequently agreed that quarterly updates would be brought to the council’s statutory committees providing a regular update on the progress of each motion for which the committee is responsible for. At the SP&R Committee on 20th November 2020, members approved the arrangement for the future management of motions, which included recommendations that Notices of Motion could be closed for one of two reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 – Notice of Motion contained an action that has been completed. All Notices of Motion within this category contained a specific task that has since been complete. It is worth noting that, when Committee agree to action a Motion, there are sometimes additional actions agreed alongside the Motion. As these are not technically part of the Notice of Motion, they are taken forward through normal committee decision making processes. The Notice of Motion can therefore be closed, but additional actions related to it will continue to be progressed and reported to the committee. • Category 2 - Notice of Motion has become Council policy or absorbed into a strategic programme of work. These Motions did not contain a specific task that could be completed but rather they are more strategic in nature and require changes in Council policy and/ or strategy for long term outcomes. Those listed within this category have all been agreed by Committee and are now either Council policy or are currently being implemented through a Council strategy that is managed by a Standing Committee through the corporate planning process.
3.3	<p>There are presently 7 Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance for which the CG&R Committee is responsible for. Members are asked to approve the recommendation to close 4 motions (detailed below) and note status updates for the remaining 3 motions which remain open. Additional information is included at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Category 1 Recommended Closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme (ID = 153). • Belfast City Nightlife and Night-time Economy (ID = 208). • Belfast 2024 Animation Culture Night (ID = 381). <p>Category 2 Recommended Closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Infrastructure in Council Car Parks (ID = 152) which will now be considered as part of the council’s Low Emissions Vehicle Strategy.

3.5	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> There are no additional financial implications attached to this report. Finance and resource implications are considered by Committee when taking decisions on the specific Notices of Motion and Issues Raised by Members.
3.6	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	Appendix 1: Notices of Motion Live Database – CG&R Committee

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City Growth & Regeneration Notice of Motions

Notices of Motion and Issued Raised in Advance that remain OPEN

ID	Date	Notice of Motion	Proposed By	Referral Route	Lead Officer	Latest Status Update
217	01/11/2021	Tourism Street Signage (Enlightenment Period)	Cllr Long	Notice of Motion - referred by S&B Committee	John Greer	Officers have been working on an audit and resultant new approach to visitor attraction and wayfinding signage this is being considered within this work.
289	01/12/2022	Translink - Night-time provision of services	Cllr Lyons	Notice of Motion – debated at council	Cathy Reynolds	A letter was sent to the DfI Minister and the reply was presented to August's CG&R committee . The Committee noted the correspondence and officers are now investigating potential options with Translink and event organisers in relation to providing night-time services during festivals and event seasons in the city.
309	22/02/2023	Rent Controls	Cllr Beattie	Issue Raised in Advance (Special CG&R)	Nora Largey	Following the return of the NI Assembly a revised letter is being sent to the DfC Minister, whose departmental officials had previously advised that they were unable to make changes relating to rent controls without a sitting NI Executive.

Notices of Motion and Issued Raised in Advance recommended to CLOSE

ID	Date	Notice of Motion	Proposed By	Referral Route	Lead Officer	Update / Latest Status
152	13/01/2021	Environmental Infrastructure in Council Car Parks	Cllr Heading	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R)	John Tully	<u>Recommend to close (Category 2)</u> A draft Low Emissions Vehicle Strategy was presented to members at August's SP&R to seek agreement to progress its implementation on a phased approach. The paper sets out proposals to undertake a commercial assessment on council land assets (including car parks) with a view to bringing forward proposals for investment in EV infrastructure.
153	13/01/2021	Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme	Cllr McMullan	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R)	Siobhan Toland	<u>Recommend to close (Category 1)</u> A separate paper will be presented to members at September's CG&R meeting. CNS's Off-Street Car Parking team continue to work in line with the recommendations from the British Parking Association audit.
208	04/10/2021	Belfast City Nightlife and Night-time Economy	Cllr de Faoite	Notice of Motion – straight to CG&R	John Greer	<u>Recommend to close (Category 1)</u> A separate paper will be presented to members at September's CG&R meeting. Representatives from the Purple Flag Steering Group attended a meeting of the City Centre All-Party Working Group on 3 rd May and gave members an update on their recent re-accreditation. The application for this process included a presentation of the challenges posed in the city during the nighttime and evening hours. In addition, an update was also provided on the BID's recent recruitment of a Night Czar.
381	10/04/2024	Belfast 2024 Animation Culture Night	Cllr Groogan	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R) – referred to SP&R	John Greer	<u>Recommend to close (Category 1)</u> Members considered plans for Culture Night 2024 at the May SP&R Committee meeting and agreed not to develop an additional event for Belfast 2024. It was also agreed also that an allocation of £30,000 would be considered as part of the process to allocate from year end underspends to facilitate an engagement programme with the wider cultural sector, key funders, partners and other interested parties in relation to culture night from September 2025 and onwards https://minutes.belfastcity.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=78419

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