

Public Document Pack

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



**Belfast
City Council**

HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet both online and in-person in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Wednesday, 10th January, 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. Restricted Items

- (a) City Imagining Investment Programme - Cultural Multi Annual Grants (Pages 1 - 86)

3. Request to Present

- (a) Translink - Weavers Cross / Belfast Transport Hub (Pages 87 - 90)

4. Regenerating Places & Improving Infrastructure

- (a) Future City Centre Update (Pages 91 - 102)
- (b) Responses from Department for Infrastructure (Pages 103 - 112)

5. **Positioning the City to Compete**

(a) Major Events Update (Pages 113 - 126)

(b) Update on Draft Tourism Strategy Consultation Response (Pages 127 - 136)

6. **Strategic and Operational Issues**

(a) Notice of Motions Update (Pages 137 - 144)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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Subject:	Translink Request to Present on the Belfast Grand Central Station
Date:	10 th January 2024
Reporting Officer:	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager, City Regeneration & Development

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 or Summary of main Issues
	To request that the Members of the CG&R Committee receive a presentation from Translink at the January Special Meeting on the Belfast Grand Central Station.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Agree to receive a presentation from Translink on the Belfast Grand Central Station at the Special Meeting of the CG&R Committee. ii. Agree that the invitation for the presentation is to include all Members of Belfast City Council.

3.0	Main report
	<p data-bbox="272 226 448 253">Background</p> <p data-bbox="165 327 209 353">3.1</p> <p data-bbox="272 327 1469 560">As an NI Executive Flagship Project construction commenced on the the new transport hub, Belfast Grand Central Station in 2020 and is due to be completed in 2025. This £250m investment will be the main transport gateway to Belfast combining rail, bus and coach connections into a modern facility, and will open up a major transport led regeneration project in the Weavers Cross regeneration opportunity. The key benefits of the scheme</p> <ul data-bbox="272 629 1458 1480" style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration: Designed to be a multi modal transport hub with 26 bus stands, 8 railway platforms, cycle and taxi provision for enhanced comfort and capacity to attract even more people to choose greener, active travel for a healthier city. • Enhanced passenger capacity: Belfast Grand Central Station will cater for around 20 million passenger journeys each year. • Commercial Business & Investment: At the heart of a dynamic new ‘Weavers Cross’ mixed-use development, boasting a range of commercial opportunities to support the local economy and provide sustainable end use jobs. • Regeneration: The station investment is the catalyst to reconnect and reinvigorate adjacent Sandy Row and Lower Falls neighbourhoods. • Public Realm: A new accessible civic space, named Saltwater Square, inviting more people to access and enjoy the area. • New Gateway: To attract and welcome visitors worldwide providing an excellent first impression to NI – including relocation of the Enterprise Train. • Job Creation: Providing over 400 jobs during the construction phase with the added commitment to education and skills training for apprenticeships and new entrants opportunities for local people. <p data-bbox="165 1536 209 1563">3.2</p> <p data-bbox="272 1547 1469 1780">To date the construction works have largely been contained to within the site boundary, however throughout 2024 and 2025 the construction works will include utility diversions on the surrounding streets, public realm and junction improvement works on Great Victoria St, Grosvenor Road, Durham St, Sandy Row, Glengall St and Hope St as well as rail works to transfer the rail network into the new Belfast Grand Central Station.</p> <p data-bbox="272 1850 544 1877">Request to Present</p> <p data-bbox="165 1906 209 1933">3.3</p> <p data-bbox="272 1906 1469 1984">Translink have requested to present an update on the Belfast Grand Central Station works to the January Special Meeting of the CG&R Committee. This presentation will include the</p>

	wider benefits of the new integrated transport hub, an update on the construction works to date and information on the planned road works as referred to item 3.2 of this report. Translink will also be presenting the mitigation measures that will be implemented to facilitate these works. The mitigation measures and implementation plans are currently under development in conjunction with Translink and DfI.
3.4	Translink have requested that this presentation is restricted until they commence their wider public communication and engagement plan.
3.5	Given the wide-reaching impacts of the wider Weavers Cross and Belfast Grand Central Station works, and the pending Streetworks it is recommended that invitations to this presentation are widened to include all Council Members.
3.6	Officers have requested that the presentation is shared with Members at least one week in advance of the Special meeting.
4.0	Finance & Resource Implications
	There are no finance or resource implications associated with this report
5.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
	There are no Equality or Good Relation Implications/Rural Needs Assessment requirements associated with this report
6.0	Appendices
	None

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Subject:	Future City Centre Programme Update
Date:	10 January 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration & Development
Contact Officer:	Deirdre Kelly, Programme Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" 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/Summary of Main Issues										
1.1	To update the Committee on positive activity and messaging aligned to the five pillars of the previously agreed Future City Centre Programme.										
2.0	Recommendation										
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note the update as set out within this report and Appendix 2. 										
3.0	Background										
3.1	<p>The City Growth and Regeneration Committee at its meeting on 8 November 2023, approved the revised Future City Centre Programme and monitoring framework. Members will recall that the Framework (attached at Appendix 1) is supported by eight programme objectives, measured by 14 strategic indicators and underpinned by work within five thematic pillars, as below. The programmes of work and activities included in each pillar are not exhaustive and many involve other partners but they are intended to reflect the broad range of activities that are ongoing and are managed and reported via programme and project management arrangements for the various strands:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #2c5e8c; color: white;">Regeneration & Connectivity</th> <th style="background-color: #2c5e8c; color: white;">Business & Investment</th> <th style="background-color: #2c5e8c; color: white;">Animation & Distinctive Offering</th> <th style="background-color: #2c5e8c; color: white;">Clean, Green, Inclusive & Safe</th> <th style="background-color: #2c5e8c; color: white;">Vulnerability</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major regeneration schemes BRCDD projects including Belfast Stories City Centre Living / Houseing-led regeneration Connectivity and Active Travel Connected spaces & places Vacant-to-Vibrant capital grant programme Matchmaking service to address vacancy A Bolder Vision Preservation of built heritage Environmental improvements Cathedral Gardens redevelopment Waterfront promenade framework </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business support programmes Attracting new-to-market brands City Investment Service Business tourism - conference subvention Night-time economy Business premises for cultural organisations/creative industries Test trading at markets Positioning the city to compete Maximising international opportunities in FDI, trade and education Smart Belfast programme Belfast Smart District </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 Year of Culture Projects Cultural animation activities and events, pop-up activities 2 Royal Avenue programming UNESCO City of Music/ music strategy implementation Meanwhile uses Lighting Interventions Night-time economy Food and drink tourism City Hall exhibition including Augment the City experience Street dressing/ street art Annual events programme City markets Belfast HUB-IN at Maritime Mile Belfast Stories visitor attraction </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced city centre cleansing regimes and tackling graffiti City centre cleanliness charter Safer Neighbourhood Officer city centre patrols ASB Officer advice/guidance Imagining use of open and civic spaces (support retail/hospitality sectors). Support the provision of parklets and greening the city initiatives. EVC strategy Tourism Accessibility Programme Green Tourism Accreditation </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue multi-stakeholder approach to support alcohol and drug addiction; and rough sleeping. Delivery of Complex Lives (whole systems and people-centred approach) </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="background-color: #2c5e8c; color: white; padding: 5px; font-size: small;">Cross-cutting enablers: Local Development Plan; Digital innovation; Inclusive Growth; Sustainability & Resilience; Development of a robust evidence base providing objective data on the above indicators and measures - to be used to inform the development of future actions; Taking an 'evidence led approach' by utilising best practice and corporate membership of IPM; and Legislation - Reform of licensing</p>	Regeneration & Connectivity	Business & Investment	Animation & Distinctive Offering	Clean, Green, Inclusive & Safe	Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major regeneration schemes BRCDD projects including Belfast Stories City Centre Living / Houseing-led regeneration Connectivity and Active Travel Connected spaces & places Vacant-to-Vibrant capital grant programme Matchmaking service to address vacancy A Bolder Vision Preservation of built heritage Environmental improvements Cathedral Gardens redevelopment Waterfront promenade framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business support programmes Attracting new-to-market brands City Investment Service Business tourism - conference subvention Night-time economy Business premises for cultural organisations/creative industries Test trading at markets Positioning the city to compete Maximising international opportunities in FDI, trade and education Smart Belfast programme Belfast Smart District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 Year of Culture Projects Cultural animation activities and events, pop-up activities 2 Royal Avenue programming UNESCO City of Music/ music strategy implementation Meanwhile uses Lighting Interventions Night-time economy Food and drink tourism City Hall exhibition including Augment the City experience Street dressing/ street art Annual events programme City markets Belfast HUB-IN at Maritime Mile Belfast Stories visitor attraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced city centre cleansing regimes and tackling graffiti City centre cleanliness charter Safer Neighbourhood Officer city centre patrols ASB Officer advice/guidance Imagining use of open and civic spaces (support retail/hospitality sectors). 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Regeneration & Connectivity	Business & Investment	Animation & Distinctive Offering	Clean, Green, Inclusive & Safe	Vulnerability							
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3.2	As previously reported to Members the Future City Centre has emerged as a priority area within the “Our Place” theme of the Belfast Agenda. Community Planning has provided the vehicle to anchor core city centre governance structures (Future City Centre Leadership Group and Strategic Leadership Group (Complex Lives)).										
3.3	At their meeting in September 2023 the All – Party Working Group on the City Centre had agreed the need to amplify any positive messaging in relation to the city centre, whilst simultaneously seeking to ensure that the various issues are dealt with via the appropriate governance structures and the short, medium and longer term plans, projects and initiatives are brought forward working in partnerships with the wide range of public and private stakeholders. At the meeting of the working										

	<p>group in December 2023 a presentation was delivered in respect of this which aligned to the five pillars of the Future City Centre Programme and picked up on key highlights with the city centre retail market landscape, footfall, and media on activities under each of the FCC pillars (noting that these are a combination of Council led, partner and stakeholder led, and public and private sectors initiatives).</p>
4.0	Main Report
4.1	<p>Work is ongoing around the development of the Future City Centre Monitoring Dashboard, aligned to the FCC framework which was noted and agreed at City Growth and Regeneration Committee in November 2023. It is planned that this will be presented to the Committee in Q1 2024.</p>
4.2	<p>In the interim and pending presentation of the FCC Monitoring Dashboard and by way of an update aligned to the vision, objectives, pillars and strategic indicators of the FCC programme Appendix 2 has been collated providing supporting evidence on positive activities aligned to the five pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration and Connectivity • Business and Investment • Animation and Distinctive Offering • Clean, Green, Inclusive and Safe • Vulnerability
4.3	<p>In addition to this Members will note that City Centre footfall increased by 7.5% from September – November this year compared to 2022. For the same period average weekly footfall was 703,349 an increase of approx. 50,000 from last year (654,083). Footfall figures are one of the strategic indicators identified for the FCC Programme and provide a measurement of vibrancy or pedestrian activity measured using 6 fixed location cameras in the city centre. Council have further access to data on city centre visitors which has found the city centre is attracting more visitors from Belfast communities, areas within a 2km radius have an average increase of 80% more visits. However there is evidence based on September – October 2022 to the same period in 2023, that there has been a significant negative decrease on the visitors coming from outside of the Belfast City Council area to the city centre.</p>
4.4	<p>As reported to the City Growth & Regeneration Committee in November 2023, to support the wider vacancy programme and to complement the Vacant to Vibrant capital grant scheme, officers are also delivering a ‘Matchmaking’ service, with the assistance of a commercial agent, Frazer Kidd. A general market commentary was included in the report to Members in November 2023 which noted a number of new retailers / occupiers including some that are first to Region and Island brands for Belfast. Officers are continuing to build on existing market commentary and intelligence through continued engagement with the commercial agent, with positive forecasting in future development</p>

	of vacant units in the primary retail core such as Donegal Place, Castle Lane and Arthur Street expected to come forward in 2024.
4.5	Members are asked to note Appendix 2, which highlights a summary of activity and media reports across the various FCC pillars including Council commencing procurement to seek a private sector partner to take forward £630m housing led regeneration opportunity, design team appointed for Belfast Stories, jobs announcements across private sector, and launch of the Innovation Challenge Fund. Member are asked to note that as well as the report on the FCC Monitoring Dashboard, a paper on the Belfast Regeneration Tracker is also scheduled for Q1 2024 which will detail market activity across all asset classes retail, residential, leisure, offices etc.
5.0	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None
6.0	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs implications associated with this report.
7.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Future City Centre Framework Appendix 2 – Future City Centre Update (media and communications)

FUTURE CITY CENTRE PROGRAMME

Vision				
<i>A vibrant, unique and thriving place where people spend time, live, work, visit and invest.</i>				
Programme objectives				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase footfall levels, dwell time and consumer spend through a unique retail mix and leisure experience which creates more reasons visit the city centre. • Increase visitors to the city from beyond the council boundary through the development of a unique cultural offer, use of the riverfront and vibrant night-time economy. • Ensure that the city centre is connected and accessible to facilitate travel from neighbouring communities and those from outside Belfast 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a lively, clean, green, attractive and safe city centre to welcome people of all ages and backgrounds. • Increase the number of people living in the city centre through housing-led regeneration. • Tackle rough sleeping by addressing the complex needs of vulnerable individuals. • Sustain existing and attract new businesses to the city centre to increase the number of employee jobs. • Build on our reputation as a unique destination for investment, innovation, tourism and development. 		
Strategic indicators				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Footfall levels ✓ Dwell time ✓ Number of unique visitors ✓ Catchment area (visits from areas outside the city) ✓ Rates income (domestic/non-domestic rates) ✓ Perception of cleanliness and safety ✓ Air quality within the city centre 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of employee jobs within the city centre ✓ Value of development (Regeneration tracker) ✓ Vacancy rate (number of vacant properties) ✓ Independent retailers (number and proportion of all retailers) ✓ Consumer spend (retail and leisure sales) ✓ Value of tourism ✓ City centre living population 		
Programme pillars				
Regeneration and connectivity	Business and investment proposition	Animation and distinctive offering	Clean, Green, Inclusive & Safe	Vulnerability
Short, medium and long-term workstreams / actions				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major regeneration schemes • BRCD Projects including Belfast Stories • City Centre Living / Housing-led regeneration • Connectivity and Active Travel • Connected spaces and places • Vacant-to-Vibrant capital grant programme • Matchmaking service to address vacancy • A Bolder Vision • Preservation of built heritage • Environmental improvements • Cathedral Gardens redevelopment • Waterfront promenade framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business support programmes • Attracting new-to-market brands • City Investment Service • Business tourism - conference subvention • Night-time economy • Business premises for cultural organisations and creative industries • Test trading at markets • Positioning the city to compete • Maximising international opportunities in FDI, trade and education • Smart Belfast programme • Belfast Smart District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 Year of Culture programme • Cultural animation activities and events, pop-up activities • 2 Royal Avenue programming • UNESCO City of Music / Music strategy implementation • Meanwhile uses • Lighting interventions • Night-time economy • Food and drink tourism • City Hall exhibition including Augment the City expanded reality experience • Street dressing and street art • Annual events programme • Bids for major events • City markets • Belfast HUB-IN at Maritime Mile • Belfast Stories visitor attraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced city centre cleansing regimes and consideration of approach to tackling graffiti • City centre cleanliness charter • Tackling dereliction • Safer Neighbourhood Officer city centre patrols • ASB Officer advice and guidance • Imagining use of open and civic spaces (particularly to support retail/ hospitality sectors) • Support the provision of parklets and greening the city initiatives including Grey-to-green • EVC strategy • Tourism Accessibility Programme • Green Tourism Accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue multi-stakeholder approach to support alcohol and drug addiction • Continue multi-stakeholder approach to address rough sleeping • Delivery of Complex Lives (whole systems and people-centered approach)

Operational performance measures

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of residential units / city centre residents • Number of residential units under construction / planning applications granted / competed • Number of PBMSA units under construction / planning applications granted / completed • Number of journeys into the city centre by sustainable transport • Glider usage / passenger numbers • Modal shift away from private cars • Vacant units / persistent vacancy / vacancy rate • Number of heritage assets on Heritage at Risk NI (HARNI) Register 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new companies supported in the city centre • Number and levels of investment • Investors supported / engaged • Employee jobs in city centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footfall metrics • Demographics of visitors • Purple flag accreditation • Tourism visitors (overnight stays) • Average stay per visitor (duration) • Hotel occupancy rates • Visitors' perception/ satisfaction • Audience numbers and geography • Retail proposition • Attendance at arts / cultural events • Belfast Residents Survey capturing perception of satisfaction with city living • New to market brands (including retail, leisure etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness index • Satisfaction/perception of cleanliness • Vacant and derelict sites • Perception of safety in city centre – during the day and after dark (by different groupings) • Crime statistics (including hate crime) • ASB incidents (within city centre) • Alcohol enforcement • Perception that city centre is shared (by different groupings) • Air quality within the city centre • Number / usage of parks or green spaces within city centre • Number of businesses with Green Tourism accreditation • Accessibility baselines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic homelessness / rough sleeper count • Drug overdoses • Numbers receiving alcohol/ drug addiction support
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Cross-cutting enablers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Local Development Plan ➤ Digital innovation ➤ Inclusive growth ➤ Sustainability and resilience ➤ Development of a robust evidence base providing objective data on the above indicators and measures – to be used to inform the development of future actions. ➤ Taking an 'evidence led approach' by adopting best practice and corporate membership of IPM ➤ Legislation - reform of licensing
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Belfast
City Council



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Future City Centre Update (Media & Communications)

Regeneration & Connectivity

- Council seeks development partner to boost city population through £630million housing-led regeneration opportunity
- Design team appointed for Belfast Stories project at prominent Royal Avenue site
- Work begins on £175m “Loft Lines” Titanic Quarter housing project
- Southern Great Victoria Street’s regeneration is continuing with the installation of six new murals, including one paying homage to Good Vibrations founder Terri Hooley
- Award winning Belfast Entries programme nears completion with the final phase on reopening Sugarhouse entry
- Four Belfast based businesses, including street / skateboard wear retailer Sole.io Ltd and artisan baker ‘The Hundredth Monkey Bakery’, are set to benefit from Belfast City Council’s pilot capital grant scheme, ‘Vacant to Vibrant’ – helping to revitalise Belfast city centre
- Two Bolder Vision initiatives are poised to transform critical parts of the city to make them safer, greener and more accessible, including secured cycle parking.
- Translink names MRP as master-development partner for the transformational Weavers Cross Regeneration Scheme in Belfast
- Belfast’s £200m ‘Grand Central Station’ expected to be completed in 2025



Business & Investment

- Belfast welcomes U.S. Special Envoy to Northern Ireland and Senior Business Delegation
- US delegate trip sees \$50m investment for NI
- Belfast tech company wins £3M investment from Maven Capital
- Public Private Partnership: Belfast City & Region Place Partnership paves the way for collaborative growth
- AI company invests £11m in new centre in Belfast River House
- Major jobs announcement by EY kicks off Northern Ireland Investment Summit
- Queen's University to create 220 jobs with £100m investment in student homes
- Environmentally friendly 'hometel' with 175 rooms opens in Belfast city centre
- Planning: Four new hotels being created to meet market demand
- Lord Mayor meets with business leaders to discuss next steps for city centre
- Nihon Cyber Defence expands Belfast operation with new HQ



Animation & Distinctive Offering

- Belfast 2024 set to deliver city's 'biggest ever creative and cultural celebration'
- Belfast set to be UEFA Euro 2028 host city as UK & Ireland win historic bid to stage tournament
- Titanic Belfast reports busiest summer since opening with 7.5m visitors to date
- 158 Cruise ships visit Belfast in 2023, making it a record year', resulting in £20m passenger spend in the local economy
- Belfast makes National Geographic Traveller's 'Cool List 2024'
- Belfast listed in UK's 'Top 10 Best Cities' for 2023
- Belfast wins three major international awards including 'world's best conference destination'
- Titanic Distillers have invested almost £8m to convert Pumphouse into what is hoped to become one of the Region's newest tourist attractions
- Aussie café chain opens second site in Belfast creating 20 new jobs
- NI's first Pret à Manger store to open next week
- "Let it Glow" Belfast prepares to switch on for festive season on Saturday 18 November
- H&M confirmed as new tenant at Belfast city centre development The Keep



Clean, Green, Inclusive & Safe

- Belfast #CircleCity campaign launches with new colourful bins to boost recycling on-the-go
- Council continues to transition fleet vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil fuel (HVO)
- New 10-year Belfast Tree Strategy to connect city's residents to nature takes root
- Translink's late night "Nightmovers" Christmas services returns to Belfast in December
- The Errigle Inn, Granny Annies and Ten Square Hotel have scooped top honours at this year's 'Belfast in Bloom' competition
- A new £100,000 Challenge Fund competition has opened for Belfast's digital and creative companies, aimed at animating the city's Maritime Mile.
- Council led "Groove in the City" , grand finale taking place in the grounds of City Hall
- Belfast Harbour begins work on £3million first phase of City Quays Gardens
- Council led Planning application agreed which will see Belfast City Centre to get two new water refill stations



Cross-cutting enablers

- Belfast region secures £3.8 million funding for wireless innovation
- Belfast City Council has announced proposals for a Smart District that will harness digital innovation to support the transformation of Belfast city centre.
- Consultation on pavement café licensing scheme closes soon
- Belfast Lord Mayor celebrates 23 Belfast Residents who have completed a tailored Council Tech Employment Academy
- Belfast has received an A rating for its climate action work for the second year in a row and is the only city on the island of Ireland to receive the top grade



Belfast City Council: Inclusive, sustainable growth



(L-R) Anselmy McWilliams, Head of Programmes (City & Growth Deals) with Tourism NI; Paul Crowe, Director at TODD Architects; Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Ryan Murphy; Mark Cousins, Filmmaker and Creative Advisor to Belfast Stories; Robert Greenwood, Partner and Director at Snhetta.

One big theme drives all our work in 2024, and that's *inclusive, sustainable growth* for Belfast.

Belfast City Council's role has developed significantly over the last decade. While we remain the civic leader, responsible for creating local ambition, inspiring civic pride, and instilling confidence in both our city and the wider region – and our core business is still delivering excellent, value for money services that make life better for all our residents – we're now

We're a place shaper, creating a more connected, liveable, greener, and more vibrant Belfast through A Bolder Vision, the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, our Future City Centre Programme, planning committee decisions and physical investment, and working with others to maximise the investments which will shape our city for

election, our elected members remain passionate about building an inclusive, united, diverse, and welcoming city which recognises the interdependence of health, environment, and economy; offering opportunities, and a fantastic place to put down roots, for all ages.

We're realistic too, about the challenges we face. For example, 9,385 people are living in housing stress, 15.8% of our working age population have no qualifications, 58% of that same population travel to work by car or van – and 22% of Belfast children are living in low-income households.

So it's vital that everything that we do seeks to redress that balance and helps to alleviate the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis.

We're rolling out several game changers for the city.

The £1 billion Belfast Region City Deal will create up to 20,000 new and better jobs over the next decade, strengthening our region's offer in fast growing sectors including life and health sciences, the digital and creative industries and advanced manufacturing.

This programme of investment is also supporting next generation digital capabilities and boosting tourism through world-class visitor attractions including Belfast Stories, a 5,000m² state-of-the-art, interactive, and world-class visitor experience celebrating the many stories of our city. Designed by Oslo-based Snhetta in partnership with Belfast's TODD Architects, it's set to open by 2029 on Royal Avenue and will highlight and connect to existing cultural and visitor experiences, including those in our neighbourhoods.

The Belfast Region City Deal will also



Subject:	Correspondence Received from Dfl
Date:	10 th January 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration & Development
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager, City Regeneration & Development

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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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 or Summary of main Issues
	To update Members of the City Growth & Regeneration Committee on responses received from Dfl in relation to the Dfl Autumn Statement presentation in November 2023, and in relation to Committee responses to Dfl consultation on proposed traffic restriction schemes on Sorella St, Dunville St and Belmont Church Road.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Note the response received from Dfl following questions raised by Members at the Special meeting of the CG&R Committee in November 2023 in relation to the Dfl Autumn Statement Presentation

	<p>ii. Note the responses received from Dfl in relation to the Committee responses to the consultation on proposed traffic restriction schemes on Dunville St, Sorella St and Belmont Church Road as agreed at the December 2023 meeting of the CG&R Committee.</p>
3.0	Main report
	<p>Dfl Autumn Statement Responses</p> <p>3.1 At the Special Meeting of the CG&R Committee in November 2023 Members received a presentation on the Autumn Report from Dfl. A link to the meeting presentation and subsequent minutes are attached here for information.</p> <p>3.2 During discussion Members raised a number of queries with Dfl committing to respond to Members on any queries that were not answered at the meeting. The formal response from Dfl is as attached within Appendix A of this report and as shared on the Mod.gov Members portal on the 6th December 2023.</p> <p>Dfl Consultation Responses</p> <p>3.3 At the December 2023 meeting of the CG&R Committee Members received a paper relating to Dfl consultation on a number of schemes including a proposed cycle path on Montgomery Road and proposed waiting restrictions on Belmont Church Road, Dunville St, Sorella St and Suffolk Road. Following conversation Members comments were incorporated within the Council consultation responses in relation to these schemes, and the responses were submitted to Dfl subject to Council ratification in January 2024.</p> <p>3.4 Subsequent to this Dfl have responded via email to the request for Dunville, Sorella and Belmont Church Road.</p> <p>3.5 In relation to the request to introduce Residents Parking Schemes on Dunville St and Sorella St the department responded:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“In response to your request for these areas to be considered for the introduction of a residents only parking scheme, I can advise that currently only one residents’ parking scheme is in operation within Northern Ireland, and this is located at Rugby Road / College Park Avenue, Belfast. The Department has subsequently carried out</i></p>

3.6	<p><i>a review of residents parking schemes and the draft report on this review has been prepared for Ministerial consideration.</i></p> <p><i>The draft review report sets out the lessons learnt from the Rugby Road scheme in Belfast, and the other schemes that did not make it to implementation and, when approved, will be used to establish the policy for such schemes going forward. The report will be made public when it is finalised, and the Department will then consider requests for residents parking schemes in light of the recommendations from the review.”</i></p> <p>In relation to the Council request to extend the proposed parking restrictions at the Belmont Church Road / Upper Newtownards Road junction to include the introduction of a similar restriction on Belmont Church Road to Belmont Road the department responded:</p> <p><i>“In your response you have requested that the department give consideration for the introduction of further restrictions along Belmont Church Road.</i></p> <p><i>The overuse of yellow lines can be problematic within residential areas as they do not discriminate between visitors, residents and service vehicles and may not therefore be appropriate or welcomed by some residents. Consideration must also be given to the possible transfer of the parking further along the street. We therefore only introduce them where there is a history of either traffic progression or road safety issues.</i></p> <p><i>To sustain commercial viability, it is essential to permit parking adjacent to shops and business premises. It is considered that the extent of the current waiting restrictions on this stretch of Belmont Church Road is adequate and assists with the traffic management and progression in the area, therefore, we have no plans to introduce any further restrictions in this area.”</i></p>
4.0	Finance & Resource Implications
	There are no finance or resource implications associated with this report
5.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
	There are no Equality or Good Relation Implications/Rural Needs Assessment requirements associated with this report
6.0	Appendices

**DFI Roads
Eastern Division**



Department for

Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Eilish McGoldrick
Belfast City Council
City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Annexe 7
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Upper Newtownards Road
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ
Telephone: 0300 200 7899
Email: Eastern.Secretariat@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference:

Our reference:

Date 4 December 2023

Dear Eilish

DFI SPECIAL PRESENTATION TO CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

I refer to the meeting of the Council's City Growth and Regeneration Committee held on 22 November 2023 at which the Department was invited to present the Annual Report 2023 to Council.

A number of action points were raised in advance by Councillors Micky Murray and Sammy Douglas which were not addressed at the meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to respond to each of the action points raised by the Councillors:-

Councillor Micky Murray

Orpen – What is the most recent update on the traffic management survey, when will the details be shared with elected members and what are the plans going forward? -

With regard to Orpen Park traffic calming alterations, there has been one objection to the formal consultation which to date has not been resolved. This involves the ability for the resident to assess their property with the revised traffic calming in place.

As such, we are currently reviewing the scheme design to establish if there is a viable solution. Unfortunately, we currently have no timescale on when this matter will be concluded.

Flags – We’re seeing an increase in flags being erected where they aren’t wanted by local residents, what are the Department doing to remove these from their property?

- The problem of illegal flags and emblems on street furniture is a persistent one that requires a comprehensive and lasting solution.
- Article 87 of the Roads (NI) Order 1993 makes it an offence to attach unauthorised signs or advertisements to structures such as lamp posts. One of the Department’s primary considerations is the safety of the public and where unauthorised flags or attachments pose a hazard to road users, the Department will seek to remove that danger. Where there is no such danger, the Department will liaise closely with other key stakeholders and seek to provide a solution.
- Our approach to date recognises that the health and safety of our staff and contractors is of paramount importance. For this reason, we will always consult with partner agencies when considering whether to remove any attachments from our equipment and infrastructure.
- The Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition, which was established as part of the Fresh Start Agreement, was tasked with exploring and finding consensus on a range of issues, including the flying of flags. The report was published but failed to recommend any workable solutions.

Belfast Cycle Network – Can we get an update on where the Department are with the Belfast Cycle Network rollout, including updates on the short-term goals, have these been delivered, are they close to being delivered, and what is the time frame for delivery. Also, do the envisage the medium/long term goals being started/delivered on time? –

- The Department published ‘Making Belfast an Active City – Belfast Cycling Network 2021’ in June 2021, which demonstrates how it envisages a change for cycling in Belfast over the next ten years.
- The Belfast Cycling Network Delivery Plan was published in March 2022. This sets out plans for the implementation of coherent, connected and safe cycling routes for everyday cycling in the city over the next ten years. Funding of this and other programmes will of course be subject to future budget settlements.
- The key to implementation will be through consultation and the Department would appreciate the continued support from Assembly Members to ensure we achieve this vision, to benefit all of Belfast’s communities.
- Officials are currently working on plans to implement a number of schemes on the delivery plan.
- Montgomery Road consultation is live and designs nearing completion on West Belfast Greenway phase 1a and Colin Paths (Lagmore Avenue). Designs on most schemes on short term list progressing, apart from a small number likely to be impacted by Eastern Transport Plan considerations.
- In July 2023, a pedestrian and cyclist safety improvement scheme was completed at the A55 junction with the Cregagh Road, providing improved access to the Connswater Greenway and Cregagh Glen. The scheme is an important link

within the Connswater Community Greenway route as identified in The Belfast Cycling Network Delivery Plan.

- With regards to Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle bridge there is a gap in funding for this project. The Department is working closely with the BRCD team to address the funding issue. It is hoped that the Department will be in a position to commence a market engagement exercise with suppliers in the coming months with the aim of proceeding to procurement later in 2024, subject to resolution of the funding issue.
- The Outline Business Case approved by DoF is being updated to reflect the increased cost. A design and build approach is being adopted and the programme is on target for appointing a contractor at the end of 2024. Design and construction is expected to take 18 - 24 months from award of the contract.

Lagan Valley Regional Park – The Department recently reduced their funding amount to LVRP, which in turn has decreased the services LVRP are providing on behalf of the Department. Can the Department provide information on the work they've carried out in LVRP in this financial year and what they see their responsibility is within the boundaries of LVRP. –

Councillors were advised that this work does not involve DfI Roads.

Finaghy Bridge – Update on works to the bridge.

The barriers are put in place after the Selby rail crash and are designed to prevent vehicles accidentally entering the rail line. The Department accepts that they are not aesthetically pleasing and are prone to vandalism. They are functional and structurally sound and replacement, for aesthetic reasons, would cost in the region of £630k. Given the current financial pressures this is not a priority for the Department. We will, however, engage with community groups who wish to use art to improve the appearance of the barriers.

The Department is content in principle with the barriers being painted subject to our conditions being met including formal council approval of the painting plan and NIR approval. Health and safety of the artists and road users is of paramount importance and would need to be well planned to include temporary traffic management arrangements. Public liability insurance will also be required to indemnify the Department against third part claims.

Councillor Sammy Douglas

Under the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 DfI must develop sectoral plans for transport which set a minimum spend on Active Travel from the overall transport budgets of 10%. Could you please update us on the proposed expenditure for the next financial year on Active Travel and planned projects?

Unfortunately, we are not in a position to give any sense of likely budgets for next year. The Department is anticipating a significant overspend this year following a like for like 14% cut in resource budget. Similarly, the current capital budget is under significant pressure and we are currently having to consider savings across all planned spend for the remainder of 23/24 which makes predicting future years very

challenging. It is worth observing that, in addition to our duty to spend on active travel, about 95% of the remainder of the Departments spending is also on things we are required to do by law which significantly limits our room for manoeuvre.

That said, we are working to expand our delivery capacity to increase spend on Active Travel in line with the Act. We hope to issue a NI wide Active Travel Delivery Plan for consultation in the first half of 2024 – this will include details of a wide range of projects that are proposed over the short medium and long term, subject to budget being available. We have also taken a decision to make more use of consultancy support in order to generate better progress on existing schemes including those contained in the Belfast Cycle Network.

Sustrans runs the Active Schools Travel programme on behalf of DfI and the Public Health Agency. Getting young children walking and cycling to and from school is an essential, part of the Active Travel policy. Can DfI confirm its ongoing full financial commitment re revenue and capital, for this vital programme; including on-road cycle training and capital works linked to infrastructure around schools?


Unfortunately, due to the current significant overspend which we are likely to still be facing next year we are not in a position to give any sense of likely budgets for next year. We value the Active Travel Schools Programme and it was one of the few areas of discretionary spend that we prioritised with some degree of protection from cuts this year. We agree that working to support active school travel is an important and valuable part of active travel delivery and remain committed to it as part of our portfolio of work in this area.

The Glider has been a great success for Belfast and much of that was due to the dedicated team that delivered the project. Can the Department confirm that a similar, dedicated team is or will be put in place to deliver the next North / South phase?

At the moment the BRT 2 project has funding shortfall of about £100 million. As such we are considering if and how we can proceed to deliver elements of the scheme, for example the introduction of bus priority measures and new halts. At the moment, internal delivery capacity is one of the issues we are factoring into our deliberations – within TRAM Group alone in the Department there are about 450 vacant posts but only 38 of those are currently funded. We would however agree that a dedicated delivery team will be needed for the project to proceed in any material form.

The Highway Code has recently been revised updated in GB. When does DfI intend updating the Code in N Ireland, given the importance of the changes that will help with the development of Active Travel?

The Department has recently commissioned an internal exercise to fully review the NI Code and consider the changes that are needed to it, whether to align with the GB changes (although this is not essential) or otherwise. The feedback from the internal review will inform the development of a consultation document to engage with the public and wider stakeholders on the potential changes and seek their views on them. We hope to bring this forward next year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DES MCFARLANE', enclosed within a faint, light-colored rectangular border.

DES MCFARLANE
Divisional Roads Manager

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Subject:	Major Events Update
Date:	January 2024
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Kerry Mc Mullan, Tourism and Events Development 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	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of the Maritime Festival Developmental plans • Activity delivered as part of a Christmas programme in November - December 2023 • An update on St Patrick's Day Celebrations 2024 • Request for funding to support Seachtain na Gaeilge
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the contents of this report on the Maritime Festival • note the contents of this report on recent Christmas activity • note the update on St Patrick's Celebrations arrangements

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Belfast Maritime Festival 2023</p> <p>The purpose of this part of the report is to provide Members with a summary evaluation of the 2023 Maritime Festival held on 9th & 10th September. The report will also give consideration to options for the 2025 Belfast Maritime Festival Programme.</p> <p>This year's 'Belfast Maritime Festival' was held on 9th & 10th September 2023 in the Titanic Quarter with a programme that stretched from Queens Quay to HMS Caroline / Titanic Distillers and Sailortown. The aim was to create an inclusive Maritime event that appeals to all demographics celebrating all that is good and creative about Belfast in neutral accessible locations in the city, highlighting our current tourism, heritage, culture and maritime offering and showcasing our existing landmarks in conjunction with partner organisations and stakeholders.</p> <p>The 2023 festival aimed to meet the development objectives set out in the Connected by Water strategic recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Festival Ready for Investment - A Festival with Diverse Appeal - A Giant Opportunity - A Distinctly Belfast Experience - A Festival Belonging
3.1.1	<p><u>A Festival Ready for Investment</u></p> <p>This years festival carried a budget from the financial reserve from 2022, in addition to the approved 2023 budget. The festival was successful in receiving TNI International Events funding to the value of £60,000. In addition to this, the event received a small income from food traders and sail training opportunities resulting in a top line budget of £409,630.00. The event was coordinated and implemented under a governance structure consisting of 3 subgroups – Marcomms, Production / Logistics and Creative. Each subgroup reported into a Programme Board with senior representatives from Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour and Maritime Belfast Trust. All groups met on a monthly basis opening the opportunity to increase partner circle and reach, with the aim to strengthen both the commercial and creative festival profile.</p>
3.1.2	<p><u>A Festival with Diverse Appeal</u></p> <p>The brand identity chosen for the 2023 event was determined in line with the TNI International Events Funding criteria and agreed TNI / BCC / VB brand playbook targeting <i>Active Maximisers</i>: Young families wanting inspirational and educational experiences for their children and <i>Culture Connection Seekers</i>: lovers of the arts, history and the outdoors.</p>

Visit Belfast and BCC Corporate Communications developed a regional and out of state campaign, with the initial press release issued to the public on 24th July 2023 with Visit Belfast hosting the festival landing page for all collateral and content relating to the festival and promoting any shared marketing opportunities for partners and stakeholders. The campaign was rolled out on Outdoor, Radio, Digital channels and Social Media platforms, promoting visitbelfast.com as the call to action with the following statistics recorded:

	Format	Adult Coverage	Frequency	Impacts
ROI Maritime	Outdoor	724,000	4	2,896,000
	Radio	917,000	4.2	3,868,000
	Total	1,591,260	6	6,764,000
NI Maritime	Radio	674,260	4.1	2,778,149
	Radio Social	-	-	31,968
	Competition	-	-	2,081
	Total	674,260	4.1	2,812,198
Totals	Radio	1,591,260	4	6,646,149
	Outdoor	724,000	4	2,896,000
	Radio Social	-	-	31,968
	Competition	-	-	2,081
	Total	2,315,260	4	9,576,198

In addition Cool FM hosted a competition on their website for 4 weeks, with a reach of 32,000, an entry page reach over 2000 and 724 entries.

The Maritime Festival Landing Page had 9,535 visits, with the Maritime Festival events page having 7,320 visits totalling 16,855 visits.

The Organic Social Media:

Facebook

Impressions:58,811

Engagement: 2,214

Video Plays: 3,296

Twitter

Impressions:26,016

Engagement:398

Video Plays: 2,104

Instagram

Impressions:7,096

Engagements: 15

Campaign Video Ad

A Social Media Video was created, utilising video content from previous Maritime Festival, to promote this year's Belfast Maritime Festival. The video was shared organically as well as

set-up as an advert across Facebook & Instagram (via TNI social media profile's) and Visit Belfast's Twitter and TikTok Ad account. The advert targeted all of Northern Ireland and Dublin corridor audience.

Total Video Ad Campaign Results:

Impressions: 2,667,646

Engagements: 165,060

Video Plays: 920,509

Visit Belfast Dedicated sponsored E-zine to NI and ROI database

NI E-zine sent: database 37K

ROI E-Zine sent: database 13K

NI E-zine Open rate: 25.6% Click through rate: 4.6%

ROI E-zine Open rate: 18.4% Click through rate: 2.1%

Our corporate communications ran a local campaign for T sides with Translink targeting 464,030 people and digital hubs displaying 100,800 ad plays. The festival was also advertised online with Belfast Telegraph and Daily Mirror/Belfast Live online.

Belfast Telegraph

Total Impressions 72,001

Total Clicks 113

Click Through Rate 0.19%

Daily Mirror/Belfast Live Online

Total Impressions 60,010

Total Clicks 113

Click Through Rate 0.19%

The festival brand Identity chosen was a reflection of the overall programme and the programme was coordinated to maintain a family friendly audience, as well as expanding the appeal to a broader audience demographic.

The festival incorporated a trail experience with a Kids' Zone in Queens Quay, offering creative and educational workshops, showcasing little creatures and sealife from the region, sensory play and interactive activity of various art forms.

The vessels berthed (Granuaille, Gunilla, Leader and Harbour Pilot) at the festival were in situ at Queens Quay and Abercorn basin for the public to get onboard. Sailability (Accessible Sailing) and Brian Bow provided sail opportunities during the festival and Belfast

Yacht club displayed the Titanic Model. There was a 'have a go' water experience on hydrobikes for the public to try.

The Arc came alive with local talent providing circus and street theatre on the hour every hour. We programmed live sketch drawings of the event from local artists for those that wanted a calm relaxed experience watching the artists at work.

Hamilton Dock was a showcase of the community codesign photography exhibition that captured raw images of Belfast making up 8 displays that spelt out 'Maritime', providing an excellent photo opportunity for the festival and complementing the overall theme. Hamilton Dock offered the opportunity to catch site of a rare SS Nomadic Lifeboat for the duration of the festival, along with wooden boat demonstrations, oar making, weaving and rope making.

The Titanic Slipways hosted new additions to the festival, including Science Street for curious minds, the Belfast Bazaar selling quirky Belfast local craft and produce and popup street food selling cuisine made from locally sourced ingredients. The trail ended at HMS Caroline & Titanic Distillers with theatre and trad trails.

There was a full diverse music programme across the entire site showcasing Belfast's local musicians with busking at the Lagan footbridge, local bands at the Soundyard and Hamilton Dock, Trad Trails at HMS Caroline and Titanic Distillers and headline acts on the main stage compared by BBC Radio 1 presenter Gemma Bradley.

There was a 'Sail back to Sailortown' evening music event in St Joseph's Church and 2 evening Tours of the Antrim side of the river each day, as well as tours of the Templemore Baths. We worked with bars and restaurants in the area to highlight the extended evening offering as part of the overall festival.

3.1.3

A Giant Opportunity

Key findings from the Economic Impact Report and Visitor Survey from the 2023 Maritime Festival show a growth in out of state visitors, overnight accommodation and economic return from the 2021 event. The increase is expected as we recover from the effects of Covid.

The report findings for the event include:

- An attendance figure of 80,000
- 41% of Visitors from elsewhere in NI (32,800)
- 10% of Visitors from GB & ROI (8,000)
- 14% of visitors were staying in accommodation (11,200)
- The estimated direct spend was £1,326,839.26
- 74% gave the festival an overall rating of 8-10, including 25% who rated it as 'Extremely Good'

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 97% of visitors said that the Maritime Festival improves Belfast’s reputation as a host for events like these; and improves the reputation of Belfast as a place to visit • 97% agreed that there should be more events like this in Belfast <p>This years programme increased the creative ambition and programming by introducing the uniquely Belfast Experience and aligning with our 10 year Cultural Strategy in engaging local suppliers, talent and produce with approximately 70% of festival participants from the Belfast area, with 20% from elsewhere in Northern Ireland.</p>
3.1.4	<p><u>A Distinctly Belfast Experience</u></p> <p>The event location lends itself to the many heritage assets on the Maritime Mile and the overall programme worked complementary to the in situ existing asset provision and tourism infrastructure, encouraging visitor attendance. The heritage sites were given the opportunity to share marketing opportunities, additional programming or discounts as part of the overall event programme.</p> <p>To progress the event towards the next iteration in 2025, consideration is required for the strong creative direction and theme at the onset of the new festival planning cycle. The creative subgroup formed under the Maritime Governance Structure, will consider measures to address the wider programming.</p>
3.1.5	<p><u>A Festival Belonging</u></p> <p>Maritime Belfast Trust successfully engaged the local community to deliver the photography codesign piece for 2023. The festival offered sail training opportunities to develop and upskill the community and highlight the potential for future careers in the industry with a positive social impact. Sailability provided accessible sailing throughout the duration of the event.</p>
3.1.6	<p><u>Maritime Festival Development for 2025 Delivery</u></p> <p>Belfast 2024 will review commissions within the 2024 programme, that could potentially lend itself to the overall 2025 Maritime Festival through feedback and participation with large scale programming interventions. Any potential codesigns or programme pieces created locally will be carried forward to the Maritime Programme Board for recommendations.</p> <p>The Maritime Programme Board debrief was held in early December 2023 and a number of event developmental actions were agreed for progression ahead of the 2025 event. It was agreed to establish the financial model based on biannual delivery, while researching more potential avenues to increase revenue/sponsorship. The initial delivery structure will include a planning session with partners to establish the date, footprint, the wider programme and composition of the delivery structures. The festival identity will remain for 2025, with the ambition for a marketing lead and a central</p>

marketing budget to exercise greater lead - in time. Officers will continue to work with the industry to highlight an extended evening / weekend programme, while highlighting offers and discounts available for the festival.

The potential to deliver evening events will continue to be explored with the development of partnerships with hospitality and tourism business / offerings and products in the locality. Through the delivery structure, there will be consideration for wider programming and how the local cultural and creative sector can be engaged at an earlier stage in order to create something new and a unique offering for the festival. There will be a continued focus on the opportunity for skill building, through developing the existing sail training programmes, education and codesign pieces.

3.2 Christmas Programme 2023 Evaluation

In 2021 and 2022 and largely as a result of Covid, the City Events Team adopted a different approach to the Christmas programme which replaced the traditional switch-on ceremony. The programme consisted of a combination of creative initiatives such as street performance, projections, music, window dressing and lighting installations, utilising local artists, creatives and designers to create an authentic and engaging experience for all throughout the festive season. In 2022, 2 Royal Ave hosted an uplifted events programme 'Winter's Den'.

A decision to revert to the traditional format of the Christmas Lights switch-on at the front of City Hall was taken on 4th October 2023. The 'Let's Glow Belfast' Christmas Lights Switch-On event successfully took place on Saturday 18th November 6.30pm-7.30pm, with a celebration of local music, theatre and dance, compered by the Cool FM Breakfast Team (media partnership) with Lord Mayor and special invited guest Dáithí Mac Gabhann officially switching on the lights.

Due to the nature of the t-shaped event site comprising Donegall Square North and Donegall Place (Fountain Lane and Castle Lane cross), a busy city centre with live traffic and heavy pedestrian footfall, it was necessary to close roads to facilitate event infrastructure installation and de-rig. The City Events Team engaged extensively with stakeholders such as Translink, MarketPlace Europe, DfI, public hire taxi and the business sector, as well as with internal council units, to coordinate the build, event delivery and de-rig with as minimal impact as possible to normal business. Various road closures and suspensions were in place 2am Saturday 18 through to 5am on Sunday 19 November.

In excess of 10,000 citizens and visitors gathered to enjoy the event. The event was free and ticketed via Visit Belfast. There was an initial release on the morning of 8 November, with

Members further requesting a second release to accommodate those who couldn't secure tickets during the morning release. The City Hall Christmas Market opened at 12 noon the same day.

The geographical breakdown of tickets booked through Visit Belfast revealed 53% Belfast postcodes and 45.5% Rest of NI postcodes. Less than 0.5% were Republic of Ireland or Rest of UK postcodes and less than 1% were unknown.

Marketing and Communications Activity

Council operated a digital campaign with online advertising to promote the Let's Glow Belfast Christmas Lights switch-on event taking place on 18th November, as well as Winters Den season in 2 Royal Avenue. Council directed people to www.belfastcity.gov.uk/christmas URL, where the 18th November event information was displayed prominently on the page.

Bauer NI were the official media partner and offered a strong package across Cool FM and Downtown from 1 Nov – 18 Nov, including promo trails, competition package, live reads, 2 interviews with Lord Mayor, and outdoor broadcast with Downtown's Neal McClelland. Pete, Paulo and Rebecca from Cool FM's Breakfast Team were comperes on stage at the event.

Visit Belfast offered box office and visitor servicing, as well as related marketing activity such as digital screen display and social and digital campaign.

The event was featured on the front cover of City Matters, circulated to just under 160k homes w/c 6th November and full event details of the switch-on and Winter's Den were highlighted on page 4 and in the What's On section.

A press release was issued 2nd November to promote the event. From 2 Nov – 25 November, media coverage was secured on Belfast Live, Belfast Telegraph, NewsLetter, Belfast Media Group, Yahoo UK, 4NI, Belfast Times and Planet Radio. In addition the media partnership with Bauer NI included coverage across Cool FM and Downtown.

Christmas Market

The Christmas Market ran this year from Saturday 18th November to Friday 22nd December. The opening weekend welcomed approximately 63,000 people. Market Place Europe Limited (MPEL) has held the Continental Markets contract for the past 18 years and were awarded the contract for the next 3+2 years. Changes to the contract this year include a larger seating area and food court area and an enhanced Christmas experience with themed and animated walkways. There was over 100 stalls and the new contract also set out the requirement for 40% local traders and 60% continental traders. There was a Santa's Grotto supporting the Lord Mayors Charity and a return of free school educational tours, which was extended this year to **Page 120** hours childcare and youth service providers.

MPEL also ran the Jolly Big Business Boost offering a free chalet to a young business. When the Continental Market trades at the front of the city hall the footfall increases into St Georges Market and throughout the city Centre. This year the market was the busiest ever.

3.2.1 Alignment to the Cultural Strategy

The 'City Imagining Strategy' approved by Council has a focus on supporting developing local arts and cultural organisations, through funding, commissioning and capacity building. In this regard, Oh Yeah were engaged to arrange a performance by FYA Fox, who is a graduate of their creative talent development programme; Lyric Theatre were invited to show an extract of their upcoming Christmas production Hansel and Gretel; DU Dance were engaged to choreograph a dance piece by their youth performance group 'Belfast Boys' and Fortwilliam Musical Society were invited to produce a medley of singalong Christmas favourites. Also on the bill were leading NI soul band Manukahunney and by invitation of Lord Mayor, St Patrick's Primary School choir. Meet and greet performers were also engaged from 4 local companies.

Following on from 2022's model of uplifting the Christmas programme in 2 Royal Avenue, the Winters Den opened on Saturday 18th November and continues to Sunday 7th January 2024. The Winters Den season features a selection of free entry festive activities. Belfast based design agency UsFolk were re-engaged to provide artwork for Winters Den, comprising decoration inside the building, an AR interactive game and animation. The Winter's Den footfall from 18th Nov- 13th December is 30,255.

- Opening weekend footfall 4919 (3353 18th & 1566 19th) with outdoor animation provided by Firepoise and Play Make Believe, with live music and a twilight market inside.
- UsFolk animation projections in situ 1st Dec-2nd Jan 2024. Very well received by the public and building users evidenced by feedback online
- 37 funded workshops/events, supported by 27 external events/markets/performances. All events advertised as part of Winter's Den are free to the public.
- 27 community groups and 14 schools engaged including 15 community/school musical performances
- 9 markets including approximately 140 makers/groups/artists (Potters Markets, Twilight Markets, BCC Pop up Markets and the Big Art Sale)
- Collections for Cash for Kids, Stuff a Bus and Community Search and Rescue
- Santa's Post Office (Belfast One BID) opened 18th Nov- 17th Dec and remains very popular
- Venue dressed by MayWe including a living 12ft tree that will be replanted in January, an art installation by local artist Elaine Taylor and themed with cut out stands and a supporting AR trail by UsFolk.
- Lord Mayor in attendance at Dog Fashion Show and Jingle and Jazz events.

3.2.2 Let's Glow Belfast Christmas Lights Switch-On 18th November - Socio-Economic Survey results

- A total of 118 face-to-face interviews were conducted with visitors to the Let's Glow Belfast event. A further 137 interviews were completed online by visitors who had booked tickets to the event. 255 interviews were completed in total. The overall estimated direct spend for the Let's Glow Belfast event was £193,950.
- 50% of survey respondents were from the Belfast City Council area, and a further 45% were from elsewhere in Northern Ireland. A small number of visitors were from GB (1%), ROI (1%) and outside the UK and Ireland (2%). 6% of survey respondents were staying in accommodation away from home.
- The total average spend per group was £86.20. 78% ate out during the event.
- 75% of survey respondents attended the event with children.
- 46% said they had no preference on when tickets became available, with 28% preferring them to be released in the morning and 24% after work hours.
- Over half (52%) said they preferred the setup for this event, while 40% would prefer a ticket free event with entertainment hubs and a parade at various sites across the City Centre.
- 51% gave the Let's Glow Belfast event an overall rating of between 8 and 10, including 19% who rated it as '10 - Extremely good'. At the other end of the scale, 14% gave it a rating between 1-3.
- 90% thought that events like these encourage people to come to Belfast, while 93% of those living in Belfast said that events like these improve their sense of well-being and community.
- 62% of respondents living outside NI confirmed that the event makes them more likely to visit Belfast again, while 75% commented it makes them more likely to recommend friends and family to visit Belfast.
- 92% agreed that there should be more events like this in Belfast.
- 94% said that they felt safe during the event.
- 83% of respondents stated the Let's Glow Belfast event improves the reputation of Belfast as a place to visit; 80% said it improves Belfast's reputation as a host for events like these.

3.3 **Festive Lighting Scheme**

The Switch On event marked the turning on of the festive lighting scheme throughout the city centre, comprising a number of cross street features and pole mount features. In liaison with Facilities Management, the lighting of the City Hall façade also took place the same evening. Belfast Christmas Market.

St Patrick's Day Update

At the SP&R Committee held in November, members requested a report be submitted to CG&R at the earliest opportunity to outline the challenges of the 2023 procurement process and an update on the award of the other elements of the St Patrick's Day programme.

Belfast City Council's previous model for the delivery of St. Patricks Day celebrations in Belfast, consisted of a Carnival Parade along a city centre route, followed by a free music concert for all ages in the city centre from 1.30pm-4pm. In 2021, a new approach was adopted for St Patrick's Day Belfast 2022 & 2023. Following an expression of interest, Council agreed to directly invest in the local sector through four Creative Development Awards. These projects then progressed from feasibility to pilot stage for the Festival in 2022. Following the delivery of the pilot projects in March 2022 an evaluation process was completed, with all four projects again supported in 2023.

2024 - 2026 Approach

A tender for a similar approach to the Expression of Interest was developed and as before, the alignment to the Cultural Strategy.

This resulted in four Lots being offered for:

- A Parade / Pageant
- City Centre Weekend Music Programme
- Cross City Music Showcase
- An "Open Call"

Tender issued 28th July 2023, closed 30th August 2023.

The outcome of this process was that one submission was received for Lot 3 only, which was subsequently awarded to Féile an Phobail. Lots 1, 2 and 4 received a Nil return.

Further to discussions with CPS, Beat Carnival and Tradfest were approached at the end of October to deliver the Parade element and City Centre Weekend Music Programme respectively. Tradfest subsequently to deliver Lot 2, and this was agreed at SP&R in November.

Lots 2 and 3 are being delivered by Feile and Tradfest respectively. With Beat declining the opportunity to deliver Lot 1 in mid November, Officers have taken forward the option to deliver Lot 1 (the Parade) in-house, due to timescales and the limited availability of organisations to provide assets. However, discussions have since taken place with a number of organisations on the provision of professional performance, community engagement, and parade assets.

	<p>Lot 4 sought to consider open call proposals. There was no response to this tender and subsequently council have received a request to support Seachtain na Gaeilge, a 17 day festival organised by Conradh na Gaeilge. The festival gives an opportunity to everyone to enjoy Irish, whether a fluent speaker, learner or someone with a cúpla focal, with a calendar of entertaining and fun events for every type of interest and every age group. Voluntary and community groups, local councils, schools, libraries, and music, sports, arts and culture organisations organise events for Seachtain na Gaeilge le Energia in their local area. In 2023, Belfast City held over 100 events during Seachtain na Gaeilge and held the flagship event, Spraoi Cois Lao, with over 5000 attendees from all cultures and backgrounds on the day.</p> <p>Members are asked to consider granting this via a funding agreement to the value of £50k for delivery in 2024, budgets will be sought from within current departmental allocation in repurposing the Lot 4 monies.</p>
<p>3.5</p>	<p>Major Events</p> <p>Members will be aware that at a meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 28 August 2019, a new ten-year cultural strategy for Belfast, <i>A City Imagining</i>, was agreed. As part of this strategy a new investment approach was approved and this model committed to a partnership approach to supporting the cultural sector, with the aim of sustaining and developing accessible cultural activity and infrastructure across Belfast and creating the conditions for long-term transformation. It was agreed that this partnership model should be applied to the direct delivery of City events by Council as well as funded programmes of activity.</p> <p>Supporting Belfast to become a recognised cultural destination through a coherent approach to events and festivals. This would include a range of approaches from bidding for major events to supporting local festivals and importantly creating a portfolio of Signature homegrown Belfast Events.</p> <p>Members should note that officers are reviewing this as an ongoing piece of work and will forward a report to committee in due course that looks at the implications of revisiting city events and associated resource implications.</p>
<p>3.6</p>	<p>Financial and Resource Implications</p> <p>The events budgets had been approved at the City Growth & Regeneration Committee on 8th March 2023, and this included Maritime, Christmas, St Patrick's Day Celebrations and the Events Development Fund.</p>

	<p>The Maritime Festival was delivered within budget.</p> <p>Seachtain na Gaeilge funding agreement to the value of £50k for delivery in 2024 will be sought from within current departmental allocation.</p> <p>Circa £123,000 was allocated to the Christmas Opening Event. However, the format change and necessary logistical arrangements resulted in a slight overspend on this figure; although it had been forecast that the return to the format would be circa £129k.</p> <p>Currently, there is no budget allocation for Halloween activity. All other expenditure is within existing departmental budgets and approvals.</p>
3.7	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessment</p> <p>None.</p>
3.8	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p> <p>None.</p>

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Subject:	Update on Draft response for DfE Tourism Strategy Consultation
Date:	10th January 2024
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Lesley-Ann O'Donnell, Senior Manager Culture, Tourism & 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	<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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>- Members are asked to approve the update of the draft response to include neighbourhood reference laid out in Appendix 1; and</p> <p>- Members are asked to note that the consultation response will be submitted in line with the deadline of 12th January 2024 as a draft response, subject to ratification by Council on 1st February and any further comments or amendments at Council will be forwarded to the Department.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Members will be aware that the Department for the Economy (DfE) opened consultation on their Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland on the 6th November the consultation period will close on the 12th January 2024
3.2	Members previously considered the draft response at the 6th December 2023. There have been ongoing discussions with key partners in the sector and Visit Belfast and the draft response has been updated to reflect these points.
3.3	A summary of the five questions posed and draft responses to each of these have been collated and are attached in Appendix 1. Members are asked to review the draft responses and confirm their agreement that this can be submitted to DfE as the Belfast City Council response to the consultation or to raise any other matters that they wish to incorporate.
3.4	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>No specific financial or resource implications.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The Department have conducted and published their EQIA as part of the consultation process.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Draft Belfast City Council Response to Consultation</p> <p>Members should note that there is a 1,000 character limit on responses</p>

1. What type of organisation do you represent?

- Central Government
- Local Government
- Voluntary & Community Sector
- Tourism Industry
- Private Sector
- Individual
- Other

If you have selected 'Tourism Industry' please specify below, which area of the Industry you represent:

- Attraction/Experience Provider
- Accommodation
- Transport
- Tour Operator
- Destination Management Organisation
- Food & Drink
- Other

If you have selected 'Other' Please specify below:

2. Thinking of the Vision, Mission and Strategic Aim, to what extent do you agree or disagree that they are the right Vision, Mission and Strategic Aim for the Industry?

Our Vision: Establish Northern Ireland as a year-round world class destination which is renowned for its authentic experiences, landscape, heritage and culture and which benefits communities, the economy and the environment, with sustainability at its core.

Our Mission: To support the tourism sector in building an innovative, sustainable and inclusive tourism industry for all people and places in Northern Ireland which enriches its people, its economy and its guests.

Our Strategic Aim: To increase the value of tourism to the Northern Ireland economy by 50-75% compared to 2019.

NB: Please note the 50-75% increase in the value of tourism expressed in the Strategic Aim is based on a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 4-6%. We are particularly keen to hear views on the quantitative aspect of this aim that balances ambition, realism and sustainability.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If 'Disagree or Strongly Disagree' Please Expand Below.

We welcome the need for a 10 year Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland, and whilst agree that the vision and mission effectively consider driving tourism forward, the strategic aim appears overly focused on a single statistic. To ensure sustainable growth it should recognise alignment with market needs and demands, encompassing a broader perspective and measurement for success better aligned to the mission.

Underpinning this approach presents a significant opportunity for better data sharing between and across government departments and local authorities. However clarity is sought on the measurement and value placed on metrics beyond traditional measures of economic impact such as visitor numbers, bednights and day spend.

We understand that targets are set at topline level but seek clarity on the role, partnerships and investment at local levels aligned to tourism product, infrastructure and capacity. Alongside this greater depth of modeling against the targets would be beneficial.

3. Thinking about the Themes and associated Indicators outlined in the Strategy, to what extent do you agree or disagree that they are the right ones to target future growth of the industry?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inclusive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Innovative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attractive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If 'Disagree or Strongly Disagree' Please Expand Below.

We are broadly in agreement that the themes are aligned with delivering the objectives of the strategy. Consideration could be given to the role of attractiveness as an underlying principle driving all themes to position Northern Ireland as an attractive place to visit.

Accessibility is an important theme to consider taking into account air access, ETA and enabling infrastructure. Strengthening the need for cross cutting collaboration with departments that have ownership of levers that will drive forward and enable change and growth.

There is a need to consider definitions of the terminology associated with innovation and sustainability in a tourism context to give clarity to industry on how they can work to deliver against these objectives. It is important to note that in order to deliver on innovation in particular having the processes and partnerships in place that can deliver timely action and decision making will enable the sector to take advantage of market trends.

4. What would you view as the five most important actions which could contribute to achieving the indicators outlined within the Strategy? Please note a number of these actions would be dependent on the Public Expenditure available and the wider political and financial climate.

-
- Develop and deliver a bespoke Skills Action Plan
-
- Develop a Quality Employer Charter
-
- Develop a Tourism Employer Excellence Programme
-
- Build awareness in businesses of sustainability (green) practices
-
- Encourage and develop NI cross government collaboration
-
- Build awareness of, and support for, accessing sources of alternative funding
-
- Build awareness in businesses of innovation within the tourism sector
-
- Formally recognize/accredit businesses for demonstrating innovation
-
- Additional Data Collection and Robust Benchmarking
-
- Marketing Campaigns – Regional messaging across international campaigns
-
- Develop a NI Events Framework
-
- Support local events and festivals
-
- Support larger events that attract people from outside of NI
-
- Promote importance of Business Tourism and deliver on Business Tourism Strategy
-
- Deliver an annual tourism awards programme to recognise best practice in the industry
-
- Develop an air route development programme to improve connectivity with France and Germany
-
- Increased delivery of Travel & Tourism programmes in schools leading to increased qualifications
-
- Stronger connection between employers/delivery partners/programmes to support businesses to participate in opportunities
-
- Develop a bespoke Sustainability Accreditation Scheme and/or promote a framework to promote and recognize other quality assured sustainability accreditation schemes
-
- A Regenerative/Sustainable Tourism Development Programme similar to the EDP to support the development of new and enhanced sustainable tourism experiences;
-
- Promote the role tourism plays in sustaining other sectors, eg culture, arts & heritage and food
-
- Encourage and facilitate collaboration within the sector to share best practice/knowledge/networks
-
- More collaboration between councils to produce integrated tourism/destination plans at local level

5. What do you think your organisation, business or those you represent, could deliver to contribute towards the Tourism Strategy? This could be in general, or in terms of the specific Themes and Indicators set out in the Strategy.

Local authorities can provide a range of support roles by fostering inclusivity, embracing innovation, promoting sustainability and nurturing collaboration.

We aim to enhance visitor experiences through diverse offerings, implement innovative solutions for tourism development that prioritise sustainable practices and collaborate with stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to city tourism.

As outlined in Belfast's 10 year Tourism Plan, Make Yourself at Home, we are strongly positioned to deliver a people centred approach for visitors and citizens. We can play an important convening role and are well placed to advise on relationships, networks and local infrastructure. A core objective is to develop neighbourhood tourism and we would welcome recognition and support in the role that this can play in delivering a vibrant and authentic tourism experience complementing the collaborative approach to delivering city deal projects and maximising return on investment.

6. Based on your responses to the above questions, do you have any further comment on the Strategy as a whole? i.e. Is there anything missing? Is it taking the industry on the right path for current and future challenges/opportunities?

Councils are well-placed to work with DfE to advise on appropriate approaches based on knowledge, networks and insights. However, we note the importance of delivering regional growth by recognising the important role of Belfast as a gateway city generating over 50% of NI tourism.

We welcome the opportunity to consult and look forward to associated action and delivery plans that will identify timelines, associated resources, collaborative opportunities and ownership to deliver.

We welcome the importance placed on a data driven approach but urge clarity on consistency across reporting, access to real time data and usable dashboards that facilitate both regional and local insights.

Greater inclusion on the value of tourism segments and the opportunity that business tourism presents to drive seasonal and mid-week high value spend against the outlined targets could be considered.

The opportunity presented is exciting particularly if alignment with city and growth deals is fully maximised with the potential for transformative new product such as Belfast Stories to drive demand that will support place positioning and strengthen the broader industry opportunity.

7. In the event that we need to better understand some of the responses collected, would you be willing to be contacted by the Department for the Economy to discuss your responses in further detail? Please note that your responses are otherwise confidential.

Yes

No

If Yes, please provide:

Name: Lesley-Ann O'Donnell

Job Title: Senior Manager Culture, Tourism and Events

Name of Organisation (if appropriate): Belfast City Council

Email: odonnelll@belfastcity.gov.uk

If you have any concerns or questions at all about the Tourism Strategy, please do not hesitate to contact 02890529930 or tourismstrategy@economy-ni.gov.uk

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Subject:	Notices of Motion – Quarterly Update
Date:	10 th January 2024
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Jamie Uprichard, Business Research and Development 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

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)
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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	<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	This report provides a quarterly update on the Notices of Motion that the City Growth & Generation Committee is responsible for, in line with the agreement of the Strategic Policy & Resources (SP&R) Committee that all standing committees receive regular updates.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes the updates to all Notices of Motion that this Committee is responsible for as referenced in Appendix 1; and • Agrees to the closure of one Notice of Motion, as referenced in Appendix 1 and noted in paragraph 3.4 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, detailing the following:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Date received 2. Notice of motion title 3. Submitted by which Councillor 4. Council meeting date 5. Committee motion is referred to 6. Outcome of committee where Notice of Motion will be debated 7. Month it will be reported back to committee 8. Other action to be taken.”
3.2	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.
3.3	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: <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 Notice of Motion, there are sometimes additional actions agreed alongside the Motion. As these are not

3.4	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 2 - Notice of Motion has become Council policy or absorbed into a strategic programme of work. <p>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.</p> <p>There are presently 11 Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance for which the City Growth & Regeneration (CG&R) Committee is responsible for. Members are asked to approve the recommendation to close one motion (detailed below) and note status updates for the remaining 10 motions which remain open. Additional information is included at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Category 1 Recommended Closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late Night Public Transport (ID = 338).
3.5	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>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.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Notices of Motion Live Database – CG&R Committee</p>

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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
72	04/03/2020	Review of the Belfast Bikes Scheme	Cllr O'Hara	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R)	John Greer	As per committee's request a letter was sent, and a reply received, from the Department for Infrastructure advising that the operation of the Belfast Bikes scheme is a matter for council. This will now be considered as part of the rate setting process for 2024/25.
152	13/01/2021	Environmental Infrastructure in Council Car Parks	Cllr Heading	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R)	John Tully	The Climate team has developed a Belfast EV Strategy which will be completed and brought to SP&R Committee for approval in January 2024. A Belfast EV group will be established thereafter to support its implementation.
153	13/01/2021	Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme	Cllr McMullan	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R)	Cathy Reynolds	As previously reported, a visit from representatives of the Disability Motoring UK's Disabled Parking Accreditation scheme confirmed that all council off-street car parks meet their recommendations for blue badge parking bays. Nevertheless, officers are continuing to work in-line with the recommendations from the Audit.
208	04/10/2021	Belfast City Nightlife and Night-time Economy	Cllr de Faoite	Notice of Motion – straight to CG&R	John Greer	This action is being progressed by the City Centre All-Party Working Group and will be coordinated with the ongoing work of the Purple Flag steering group and other relevant partners. Preparations are underway to hold a roundtable event in February 2024.
217	01/11/2021	Tourism Street Signage	Cllr Long	Notice of Motion - referred by S&B Committee	John Greer	A review has been conducted to identify potential locations, ways of signposting visitors, and how this can be achieved within our existing programmes. A paper will be brought to a future meeting of CG&R Committee for consideration.
289	01/12/2022	Translink - Night-time provision of services	Cllr Lyons	Notice of Motion – debated at council	Cathy Reynolds	Following discussion at the CG&R Committee in Oct 2023 officers wrote to Translink also aligned to NoM #338 advising that the Committee was informed that Council officers had engaged specifically with Translink on this Motion and due to current budget constraints, no commitment on free public transport initiatives could be given. Consequently, the letter advised that the Committee would like to discuss how to progress this issue. Translink presented to the Special meeting of the CG&R

						Committee on 22 Nov 2023. Translink advised during Members' questions, that the Christmas Late Night service was a starting point which Translink would like to grow, develop and support in the future. The Translink representative advised that longer-term late-night services and funding options were being considered.
303	24/01/2023	Support the network of WW2-era Pillboxes	Ald Dorrian	Notice of Motion - referred by S&B Committee	John Greer	Research is being completed to identify appropriate locations and sites and whether they may fit into the wider tourism approach.
309	22/02/2023	Rent Controls	Cllr Beattie	Issue Raised in Advance (Special CG&R)	Nora Largey	DfC have confirmed by letter that they are unable to make changes relating to rent controls without a sitting NI Assembly and the NI Executive in place.
318	27/06/2023	Cathedral Quarter	Cllr Groogan	Notice of Motion – straight to CG&R	Cathy Reynolds	Officers have followed up with the Agents representing Castlebrooke, seeking an update on their arrangements to meet with Party Leaders and are awaiting a response.
329	29/08/2023	Street Art Walls	Cllr McKeown	Notice of Motion – straight to CG&R	John Greer	<u>New Update:</u> At a meeting of the Standards and Business Committee on 29th August it was agreed that this motion would be referred to the CG&R for consideration and action. The Culture Team are consulting with the street art sector and internally with other council departments with a view to bringing forward proposals to February committee.

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
338	11/10/2023	Late Night Public Transport	Cllr Murray	Issue Raised in Advance (CG&R)	Cathy Reynolds	<u>Recommend to close (category 1)</u> Officers wrote to Translink following the meeting of CG&R Committee in October 2023 outlining the Committee's concerns in relation to the potential for night-time services to be cut over the Christmas period for 2023 and to clarify Translink's plans for the Winter months. Translink presented to the Special meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 22 November 2023. The presentation included a video on the launch of the late-night service in the run up to Christmas and outlined the positive consultation which had taken place with stakeholders of the city.

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