

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 13th May, 2015

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor Alderman Spence;
Aldermen Kingston and Stalford; and
Councillors Craig, Dudgeon, Hanna, Howard,
Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAteer,
McDonough-Brown, Newton, Ó Donnghaile
and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Mrs. S. Toland, Lead Operations Officer; and
Miss L. Francey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported from Councillors Attwood and Beattie.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 22nd April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 5th May.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Presentation

Department for Social Development - Capital Funding Projects

The Committee was reminded that, at its last meeting, it had requested that a presentation be sought from the Department of Social Development (DSD) on Capital Funding Projects for 2015/16. The Chairperson advised the Members that Mr. Mark O'Donnell, Director of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Directorate, was in attendance to provide the Committee with an update.

Mr. O'Donnell explained that the DSD and the Council had been working together closely on a number of projects, particularly for continuity purposes, as regeneration powers would transfer from DSD to the eleven new Councils on 1st April, 2016. He provided examples of the Lagan Weir footbridge and the Girdwood Park Infrastructure which were due to be completed by the end of 2015 and which would

become Council assets from April 2016. Mr O'Donnell outlined a list of projects which would be taken forward in 2015/2016.

A number of Members expressed concern that funding for certain projects across the City would no longer be available. It was explained budget constraints had been the main cause of that and the Department had been required to take a risk-adverse approach in deciding which projects to pursue.

The Chief Executive advised Members that a paper would be brought back to the Committee at a later date with more detail on the transfer of regeneration powers from DSD.

Noted.

Belfast Agenda - Business and Economy

Business Improvement Districts (BIDS)

The Director of Development provided the Committee with an update on the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) process and highlighted the key issues which the Council might need to consider in readiness for a potential positive BID ballot. The Members were reminded that the Department for Social Development (DSD) had invited applications from areas which were interested in taking forward development work on a BID and had appointed a consultancy team – Mosaic Partnership and Place Solutions – which would deliver a “BIDs Academy” to guide successful applicants through the development process required to bring a BID to the stage of running a ballot.

He advised Members that three areas in Belfast had been successful in their applications to DSD to create a BID, namely Belfast City Centre, the Cathedral Quarter and the Lisburn Road. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, it was now unlikely that the Lisburn Road BID would be taken forward, although this had not yet officially been confirmed.

He explained that Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) had carried out a survey of businesses in the proposed BID areas and that the issues which had been identified had been marketing and promotion, safety and security and the removal of litter. They had also established a BID Team which would be responsible for taking the BID to ballot stage.

During discussion, a number of Members asked whether charities and the Council itself would be liable to pay a BID levy, the Director of Development undertook to provide this matter.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to receive a presentation from the consultancy team which had been appointed by DSD to carry out the BIDs Academy, and that the BIDs representatives in Cathedral Quarter and City Centre be invited to attend at a future meeting.

It was also agreed that a more detailed report on the topic, including resource implications, would be submitted to a future Committee meeting.

Regeneration

City Centre Regeneration Strategy – Framework for Car Parking

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **Members will be aware of the importance of the city centre to Belfast’s prosperity and as a driver of the regional economy. City centres are where investment impact can be maximised, where rates are generated and where momentum can be built to support growth in the surrounding neighbourhoods. The draft Belfast City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan has been produced as a framework for change through which the new council, with its place-shaping powers and greater responsibility for planning and regeneration, can achieve its bold vision for a thriving city.**
- 1.2 **As a result of Local Government Reform the Department for Regional Development (DRD) transferred all its off-street car parks (excluding Park and Ride/Park and Share) to councils on 1st April 2015. The Council is therefore now responsible for the operation of 30 car parks which were previously operated by the DRD.**
- 1.3 **The City Centre Regeneration Strategy & Investment Plan considered access, traffic flows and car parking provision in the city and identified that there were significant opportunities for improvement; such as the consolidation of car parking provision and the real time provision of information about parking availability. To address these issues the Council will need to engage with a wide range of stakeholders, together with Transport NI and the DRD, to develop and implement a city centre parking strategy.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 **Members are asked to consider this report and agree to the commissioning of a strategy and action plan aimed at improving city access, traffic flows into and around the city, and city centre car parking within the context of the emerging City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan. Members should note that the public consultation on the draft**

City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan closes on 28 May.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

Transport NI biannual surveys would indicate Belfast currently has more than enough car parking serving the City centre, estimating in excess of 10,000 publicly available off-street parking spaces (Urban Strategies 2014). In addition, an earlier study indicated that parking provision in Belfast city centre was significantly greater than in other UK similar cities, such as Dublin, Manchester, Bristol or Edinburgh. However, supply is fragmented being made up of large numbers of low capacity surface car parks with no real time information for drivers on availability. This means free spaces can be hard to find which adds to traffic congestion and creates a barrier to visitors accessing the City centre. Furthermore a large area of the city centre is being taken up by unattractive surface car parks which should be put to better use.

3.2 It should be noted under Local Government Reform on the 1st April the DRD transferred all its off street car parks (excluding Park and Ride/Park and Share) to councils. The Council therefore is now responsible for the operation of 30 car parks previously operated by the DRD. 15 of these car parks are within the City Centre, most of these are located around the inner ring road. It is estimated the Council now operates around 13% of the off street car parking spaces in the City Centre.

3.3 Recognising the importance of appropriate car parking for cities, the draft Belfast City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan includes a proposal for the Council, together with Transport NI and the DRD, to develop and implement a city centre parking strategy as a matter of high priority. As a result of the analysis carried out by Urban Strategies and the consultant team, it proposes that this should involve the consolidation of car parks and real time advertisement of parking availability as well as being set within the context of alternative transport provision in the city, such as the Belfast Bike Share Scheme and Rapid Transit.

3.4 To support the City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan; a city centre car parking strategy is likely to consider:

3.5 Traffic Flows

Despite the improvements that have been reported in relation to the Belfast On the Move project, there are still concerns raised about congestion into and around the city. A car parking strategy can help to reduce congestion in several ways. Firstly, it can provide alternatives to driving into the city by providing parking outside of the centre that is near to alternatives means of accessing the city core such as public transport, park & ride, cycling etc. Secondly, it can ensure parking is located in the right places to meet demand and minimise journey times by directing drivers efficiently into and out of key areas. Finally, it has been reported that there is ample parking in the city centre and the actual problem is caused by a lack of information about current parking availability. This causes significant additional traffic as drivers travel around the city centre searching for a space. A strategy that includes better signage and live information about parking could significantly reduce unnecessary traffic.

3.6 Underdeveloped areas

Much of the city centre feels incomplete, as development is interrupted by vacant sites, many of which are utilised as surface car parks. The clustering of these sites creates large, undefined areas around the edges of the centre. New growth in the city centre needs to expand into these areas and connect them to the core.

3.7 Need for green space

The centre is lacking in green space. Rationalising parking into fewer larger capacity sites will open up land for development. There is a great opportunity to provide a sizable new open space in the north end by reclaiming the parking area around St. Anne's Cathedral for green space and linking it to Buoy's Park and Writer's Square. Such a large open space could be used for events, festivals and celebrations.

3.8 Improve accessibility to the City Centre

Car parking can be perceived as a barrier to outer Belfast and Northern Ireland residents accessing city centre shopping. Anecdotally, drivers report that they cannot find a space and businesses have raised the apparent problem of adequate parking to serve city centre retail. Quantitatively, there is more than enough parking with excess of 10,000 publicly available off-street parking spaces in and around Belfast City Centre in addition to extensive on-street parking and numerous private car parks. However the provision of these spaces is fragmented into numerous low capacity surface car parks owned and operated by a range of stakeholders with inconsistent pricing and information. Therefore while occupancy of the total available spaces may be relatively low

parking spaces can be hard to find which can lead to significant volumes of traffic searching between car parks and increasing city centre traffic levels.

- 3.9 Rationalisation of parking into larger capacity multi-storey car parks accessed from the Inner Ring Road would open up development sites, create a much more coherent system and reduce congestion.**
- 3.10 The potential benefits of new technology and improved information systems**
In the short term, the coordinated_advertisement of parking availability to visitors to the centre would greatly improve the city centre experience. There are opportunities to harness new technology by providing information in real time about what parking spaces are available where.
- 3.11 The potential to develop a unified city ‘app’ that markets and promotes the city centre has already been used in other cities. This would provide information on parking together with a range of other topics including public transport, events, sales, as well as coupons, booking opportunities, etc.**
- 3.12 In addition there are other emerging technologies that can support similar smart information systems e.g. the pay and display machines used both on and off street have inbuilt computers connected to the internet with integrated ticket printers and can be easily fitted with touch screen displays. Some cities are using these machines to signpost visitor information or offer promotional coupons.**
- 3.13 The development and implementation of a City Car Parking Strategy will require a time frame of at least five years given the potential requirement for capital investment. Therefore, in the interim it is proposed that the Council should develop an action plan to address the shorter and medium term issues including:**
- engage key stakeholders including current parking providers and the DRD to develop a parking strategy for the city centre,**
 - develop and implement a costed improvement plan for city centre parking provision, management and enforcement,**
 - Progress the use and improvement of parking information systems and contribute to the development of a “city app”,**
 - Deliver the off street car parking functions and review its effectiveness to identify improvements to deliver on the ambitions in the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Investment**

3.14 Financial & Resource Implications

The cost of developing a parking strategy and action plan is likely to be in the region of £50k and will be met from existing budgets.

3.15 Equality or Good Relations Implications

Equality and good relations issues will be considered in the development of the strategy and improvement plan. It is noted that the Shadow Council had previously passed a motion in relation to child and family friendly car parking provision which will be considered in the development of the strategy.”

The Chief Executive explained that the report was about a much wider issue than car parking alone, in that the Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan would seek to bring everything together to attract more people into the city centre. She indicated that it would seek to, amongst other things, link cycling routes throughout the City, consider the issues which inner City communities faced and create more green spaces within the city centre.

During discussion, a number of Members raised concerns that these plans might discourage car users from utilising the city centre. The Chief Executive advised Members that that was not the case and that the overall agenda would seek to attract more users in general into the city centre, by looking at traffic flow, car parking availability, public transport routes, cycle routes and pedestrian access.

A Member raised the issue of residents-only parking schemes for certain areas of the City which were regularly filled with commuters cars during the working week, and suggested that the Council should consider supporting such schemes if they were to be introduced.

In response, it was agreed that the Lead Operations Officer/Head of Environmental Health would circulate further detailed information on the issue of city centre car parking to the Committee.

The Committee agreed to the commissioning of a strategy and action plan aimed at improving city access, traffic flows into and around the city, and city centre car parking within the context of the emerging City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan, on the condition that the scope of the consultancy work would be agreed and circulated in advance.

Tourism & Events

Events and Festivals Update 2015

The Director of Development provided the Committee with an update on the programme of council-funded and part funded events and festivals which would take place between June 2015 and March 2016:

Event	Details	Date(s)
June		
Belfast Photo Festival	A Public and vibrant hub of photography celebrating cultural diversity and identity through events / exhibitions for young people aged 8-16. Artwork from workshops bringing together south Belfast schools / ethnic minority community groups will be exhibited, encouraging participation, skills, inclusion and exploring / highlighting common values within the community.	04/06/15-30/06/15
UK National Piping Championships, Stormont Estate	Only in its second year this Royal Scottish Pipe Band championship attracted 12,000 people in 2014.	13/06/2015
Ciclovía 2015	This is an international movement which promotes the closure of streets within cities in order to facilitate walking and, in particular, cycling on certain days in city centres. It is proposed that an event to promote the movement takes place in Belfast on Sunday 14 June to mark the start of Bike Week in the Botanic Avenue/Dublin Road Area of the city.	14/06/2015
Belfast Urban Ballet	Belfast Urban Ballet will be a new event for the Belfast summer calendar, building on the past two decades of Beat's parade innovation and international connections. It will be a festival of street bands and urban carnival choreography with dance and music performances in the streets and public city-centre spaces. Delivered by Beat Initiative.	20/06/2015
July		
Community Together Arts and Culture Festival	A Community based Festival of Culture and Arts relating to to the community. Community led encouraging all members of the community young and old to take part in all events. A show case of local talent and abilities from both young and old and culture awareness.	01/07/2015
Belfast Tall Ships	500,000 are expected to attend 'the event of the year.' Total cost of the project is £2.3 million inclusive of Council support of £1.3 million.	2 to 5 July
Tullycarnet Action Group Initiative Trust (TAGIT)	Through feedback and surveys from the community, TAGIT aim to have a 5 day festival, that will include all members of the Tullycarnet and Ardcarne communities. TAGIT aim to promote Health and Well Being, Education, Intergenerational activities, Cultural/ Heritage and strengthen Neighbourhood cohesion, for all residents.	08/07/2015-12/07/2015
August Féile	August Féile is Ireland's biggest Community Arts Festival/Summer School. This ten day festival presents a wide range of arts and cultural activities, including music concerts, comedy, exhibitions, discussions, debates, youth & literary events, dramas, family, outdoor and community events, street performances, carnival parade, sports, tours and walks	31/07/15-9/08/15

August		
Belfast Pride	The organisers wish to increase the scale and impact of the event and regard it as an opportunity to promote Belfast as a modern, tolerant and multi-cultural cosmopolitan city.	01/08/2015
Colin Summer Festival	A week long community festival that will cater for all ages that will include a community carnival and fun day, art workshops, cultural food tasting and craft fair, inter-generational trips, all ability sports days, Family walks, trips and visits to parks and museums for families.	03/08/2015-08/08/2015
New Lodge Summer Festival	A week-long summer festival in the New Lodge area to promote the arts and culture and bring positivity to an area at a time when tensions can arise with an increased risk of anti-social behaviour - organised by Ashton Community trust.	06/08/2015-14/08/2015
Caribbean Week One Love Festival	Caribbean based festival with activities including story-telling/ Caribbean folklore, dub-poetry/ workshops and Caribbean influenced music & other performing arts. This event will highlight the growing Caribbean community and showcase the Caribbean's history, culture and ability to contribute positively to enriching community spirit and tourism in Belfast.	10/08/2015-16/08/2015
Eastside Arts Festival	EastSide Arts Festival and Summer School 2015 will be a community-led exploration and celebration of the rich artistic and cultural heritage and identity of East Belfast designed to present a positive image of, and animate the arts in, East Belfast and promote social cohesion and regeneration.	19/08/2015-31/08/2015
Brian Friel Festival	An international destination multi-arts and multi-disciplinary festival celebrating Ireland's greatest playwright of past 50 years in theatre, readings, talks & discussions, music, dance, food and leisure. The leading play is Friel's most popular play Dancing at Lughnasa in its 25th anniversary year to be produced by the Lyric Theatre Belfast. Five mini-Belfests will come into existence responding to the themes and concerns of this one signature play: (1) Amongst Women talks & discussions programme (2) Dancing Cranes outdoor dancefest (3) New Norths: Trade-Contemporary music from Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia and the Baltic (4) The Kitchen Table Foodfest (5) Michael's KiteTanica Kite flying mini-fest	26/08/2015-31/08/2015
Belfast Mela	The Belfast Mela is NI's largest festival of world cultures held annually in Botanic Gardens. Attracting up to 30,000 people, the festival is an iconic highlight in the region's festival calendar, showcasing music, dance, crafts and food from over thirty nations across the globe.	30/08/2015
September		
The Community Festival at Skainos	This is a weekend festival, to be held in the Skainos Centre in East Belfast. It will bring a wide range of activities to inner East Belfast residents of all ages and will also encourage residents from other parts of Belfast to visit the area and celebrate its cultural identity.	01/09/2015
Bounce! - Arts Festival	Bounce! Arts Festival 2015 will showcase new work by disabled and deaf artists, celebrating and inspiring talent and artistic excellence. Showcasing artistic excellence, with challenge, warmth and a quirky sense of fun, Bounce! is the first and still the only festival of its kind on the island of Ireland.	03/09/2015-06/09/2015

Belfast Tattoo 2015	This is a new large scale event in the city which celebrates its Ulster-Scots culture and has taken place in the Odyssey Arena over the past two years.	04/09/2015- 05/09/2015
BBC Proms in the Park, Titanic Slipways	11,000 people are expected for the BBC managed live concert, on the Titanic Slipways, to mark the Last Night of the Proms series.	12/09/2015
Belfast's Autumn Fair, Botanic Gardens	A two day horticultural and family friendly event in Botanic Gardens organised in conjunction with BCC Parks and Leisure.	12/09/2015 – 13/09/2015
Culture Night	Writer's Square will be the focal point for community-led performances and activities, and a hub of outdoor activity and media attention on Culture Night Belfast (CNB) 2015. Community activity will be supported by complimentary programming and services to ensure an encouraging, welcoming and lively atmosphere for all ages.	18/09/2015
BabyDay	BabyDay will be an extraordinary day that will capture the imagination of the whole city. With art in the streets, music in the air and families everywhere, there'll be a real festival feel and Belfast will be one big bundle of joy!	27/09/2015
October		
Draw Down the Walls	Golden Thread Gallery will present Invisible Barriers: Moving Images, a programme of films in unusual and surprising sites across North Belfast. This will include art films, mainstream movies and community-authored productions, inviting audiences to imagine a city without barriers.	01/10/2015
International Cinemagic Festival	Cinemagic will use film, television and digital technologies through screenings, workshops and other participative opportunities to educate, motivate and inspire young people.	09/10/2015 – 04/11/2015
Belfast International Festival	This is an international multi art form festival taking place in venues across the city.	16/10/2015 – 01/11/2015
Nine Nights	In 2015, ArtsEkta will present a large scale multi-artform outdoor arts spectacle to tell stories from age-old Indian folklore. Nine Nights is being artistically produced in partnership with Walk the Plank, an internationally renowned theatre company credited with major cultural events in Northern Ireland such as landmark UK City of Culture event The Return of Colmcille. The free evening show will play out to audiences in Autumn 2015 and light up Belfast City Centre in a way you have never seen before.	24/10/2015
Halloween Metro Monster Mash, Titanic Slipways	An evening of family fun and entertainment culminating in a massive fireworks display at the Titanic Slipways.	31/10/2015
November		
Christmas Lights Switch-on, City Hall	A one hour family orientated event, at City Hall, to mark the start of the Christmas festivities	14/11/2015

December		
BBC Sports Personality of the Year, Odyssey Arena	Thousands will be able to avail of tickets for this iconic award ceremony, which will be staged in the Odyssey Arena and managed by the BBC.	20/12/2015
March 2016		
Belfast Children's Festival	Belfast Children's Festival is an annual international festival for children aged 0 - 14 years and their accompanying adults. Events take place both in and out of school time for schools, groups and families to attend. Young at Art is a leading arts charity presenting a wide range of arts events and activities all year round for children and young people in Northern Ireland. Their annual Belfast Children's Festival is back for the 18th year to light up the city with a colourful array of art and performance to inspire joy, creativity and curiosity.	01/03/2016
St Patrick's Day, City Centre parade and Custom House Square	Now in its ninth year the Council organised celebration incorporates a parade and live concert from Custom House Square.	17/03/2016
Circuit of Ireland Rally, City Hall and Titanic Slipways	Three days of international racing that is part of the World Rally Championships, which starts from Belfast City Hall.	24/03/2016 - 26/03/2016 -
TBC		
Lord Mayor's Event, venue tbc	Details of this annual event are tbc with Lord Mayor, Cllr Arder Carson. Over the last three years previous Lord Mayors have staged: a multi-cultural event, a live music day and 'come-try-it' sports show-case.	tbc

The Committee agreed to package these activities together and brand the collective programme of activity in order to raise their profile and promote awareness of the Council's investment, which would become part of the promotional activity around the creation of the new Council.

Sister Cities Management

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Members will be aware that one of the key commitments in the Council's Investment Programme 2012 - 2015, is that the Council will work with city partners to promote Belfast proactively on the international stage to attract trade and investment, increase visitor and student numbers and build the networks necessary to support growth.**
- 1.2 Over the past two years, work has been undertaken to develop and deliver an International Relations Framework and Action Plan that seeks to shape how city stakeholders can work**

together in a stronger and purposeful way, to maximise the economic impact for Belfast as a whole.

1.3 This framework and a two year action plan were agreed by Members at the August 2013 Development Committee. An update report was presented to the Development Committee on 17 February 2015. The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to explore opportunities and implications of putting in place partnership-based management arrangements to guide and support the respective work programmes to oversee and support the formal Sister City Relationships with Boston and Nashville.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Members:

- Note and endorse the proposal to convene a steering group of relevant local partners to take forward opportunities for Belfast – Boston collaboration.
- Note and endorse the proposal to re-convene relevant partners from the Belfast – Nashville steering group to identify opportunities for collaboration between the cities.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

The current aims of the International Relations Framework are:

- To maximise economic return of development for Belfast.
- To increase the economic benefits of marketing Belfast internationally.

3.2 The framework has the following objectives:

- To deliver increased economic return to Belfast through collaborative international promotion.
- To develop meaningful international partnerships and civic relationships to support Belfast's growth.
- To promote the attractiveness of the city for business, education and tourism.
- To create the optimum mechanisms for international promotion of Belfast.

3.3 Proposed Future International Relations Activity 2015 – 2016

The International Relations Programme for 2015 – 2016 contains activities which can deliver on the aims and

objectives set out in the International Relations Framework, across the priority target markets and areas of work.

In line with these aims and objectives, a series of proposed activities are set out below, focusing on the linkages with Boston and Nashville, currently the only two US-based sister city linkages that Belfast has in place.

3.4 Boston

- Members should note that the Mayor of Boston is in the final stages of setting up a Belfast – Boston steering group. This will comprise of 5 voluntary members chaired by a politician including two business, one clergy and one third sector representatives. This group will be confirmed by the end of May 2015.
- It is proposed that a similar steering group is established in Belfast, based on those currently active in Boston or those interested in developing further links, in line with the international framework objectives. Based on existing and potential opportunities for collaboration, the Belfast-based group may comprise relevant political representation (Chair and Deputy Chair of City Growth and Regeneration Committee), third sector representation, academic representation and faith-based representation. Consideration may also be given to business representation in order to explore economic linkages.

There are a number of partners who are already undertaking a range of direct engagements with Boston include:

- PSNI is hosting two Boston Police delegations in April and May this year to look at community policing and interface work. The delegates will meet with the Lord Mayor and party leaders during these visits.
- Belfast Youth Orchestra is planning a concert in Boston in July this year (The Council has agreed to commit £5,000 towards this with additional funding being sought from other sources).
- Rev Bill Shaw regularly hosts inward visits from faith/community organisations in Boston through links with the North Eastern University.

3.5 Nashville

Members will be aware that there has been a sister city relationship between Belfast and Nashville for some years. Activities of those partners working on Belfast – Nashville initiatives were previously co-ordinated through a steering group and the council's Tourism Development Unit historically provided the secretariat for this group, given the original focus on cultural linkages. Partners have been working independently on their linkages and there are a number of mature partnerships which continue to function without any requirement for city council support. There are a number of new potential opportunities for collaboration that have recently emerged. These include:

- In October 2014, Ross Graham from Generator NI met with the Sister Cities contact, Tracy Kane, as part of a music delegation to Nashville, sponsored by UKTI (UK Trade & Investment). Ross visited the Nashville Entrepreneur Centre to discuss opportunities for residencies for local artists and music businesses. This centre is just in its infancy and there is an opportunity to explore potential collaboration in the near future, particular with regards to connecting it with the proposed Belfast Creative Hub.
- Queen's University have active linkages with both Vanderbilt and Belmont Universities. In November 2014, twelve staff involved in international research activity took part in a visit to the city and a reciprocal visit is currently being planned.

There are ongoing linkages with the Belfast/Nashville Songwriters' Festival and these continue to develop year on year. The organisers for the festival are in regular contact with the Sister Cities office.

3.6 In order to identify the current status of links between organisations in Belfast and Nashville, it is proposed that a meeting is held to bring together those partners currently active in collaborative projects. The purpose of the meeting will be to understand the scale and scope of current linkages and to identify whether there is any added value in taking a wider perspective on those linkages, through a city partnership steering group.

3.7 Financial & Resource Implications

A budget of £150,000 has been set aside for the delivery of the Council's International Relations Framework and Action Plan.

3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The International Relations Framework has been equality screened.”

The Director of Development advised the Committee that the Sister Cities Steering Groups for both Boston and Nashville would be seeking representatives from the Committee. A number of Members outlined the importance of the linkages the Council had established with Nashville and it was suggested that that group be reconvened initially. In response to a Member's suggestion, it was agreed that the Director of Development would liaise with the Ulster Scots Agency and invite them to participate on that group.

A further Member pointed out that the linkages with Hefei should also be maximised and that the Council should seek to meet regularly with the new Chinese Consul General in Belfast.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. to convene a steering group for Belfast/Boston collaboration;
2. to re-convene the Belfast/Nashville steering group to identify opportunities for collaboration;
3. that both the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, or their nominees, be nominated to sit on both the Boston and Nashville steering groups;
4. that representation by other parties be considered as part of that process; and
5. that an update report on future relations with Hefei would be brought to a future meeting.

Sports Personality of the Year - Update

The Director of Development reminded Members that, on 29th April, the BBC had announced that the City had been chosen to host the 2015 Sports Personality of the Year event, which would be staged at the Odyssey Arena, on Sunday 20th December.

He advised the Committee that while the event had been staged annually for sixty years this would be the first time it would be hosted in Belfast. The event would attract an audience in the venue of around 7000 people and would make a major contribution to the local economy. The event would also give the city the opportunity to present itself in a very positive light to an audience of over ten million viewers.

The Committee welcomed the confirmation of the event and agreed that a further report be brought outlining the Council's involvement and detailing activities which would take place in association with the BBC around the date of the event.

Operational Issues

Market Licence Request - 'Babyday'

The Director of Development stated that on 27th September, the Replay Theatre Company would host the world's first BabyDay to Belfast. That event would decorate the City with playful art and fill the streets with families, similar to Culture Night, but focus on activities for babies. He advised the Committee that BabyDay was one of the Council's nine flagship Creative Belfast projects and aimed to have an audience of at least 6,000 at City Hall, with participation from at least 10,000 residents across the city at community and cultural venues.

He reminded Members that anyone who wished to operate a market or car boot sale within Belfast must apply to the Council for permission and that an application had been received for a market to be held as part of the BabyDay festival at the City Hall. The event would be funded through the Creative and Cultural Belfast Fund and the Replay Theatre Company.

The Committee granted approval for a one-off market licence to Replay Theatre Company as part of the BabyDay event.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Social Clauses and Improving Economic Impact through Council Expenditure

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the monitoring and communication of both the social clause outcomes and economic impact of council expenditure.

2.0 Recommendations

Members are recommended to agree:

- (i) To a bi-monthly briefing to be included on the members portal on social clause employability outcomes.**
- (ii) For officers to update the baseline analysis of the local multiplier model, used to measure the economic impact of council expenditure.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Members will have noted that the papers outlined below were presented to Strategic Policy and Resource committee on 24 April 2015;

- **Social Clause Policy and associated staff guidance subject to further equality screening.**
- **Local Multiplier Model as an agreed methodology for understanding of the economic impact of council expenditure.**

The full reports which were presented to Committee.

- 3.2 As members will be aware the Local Multiplier Model, provides an economic methodology for measuring the economic impact of council expenditure. This involved analysing employee, supplier and grant expenditure and also incorporated a survey amongst each of these groups to understand how they further impacted the local economy through their spending decisions.**
- 3.3 The expanded council boundary from 1st April 2015 has increased the area through which 'local' (Belfast based) expenditure occurs, to reflect these boundary changes and more accurately measure local spend, it is recommended that an update of the baseline analysis used to inform the local multiplier model be undertaken. This would involve resurveying council suppliers and employees to obtain economic data to feed into the baseline for the multiplier model. If approved, this baseline will be used to analyse the impact of council expenditure from 2014/15 financial year onwards, however it is expected that this analysis would need to be repeated every 3 years to maintain the integrity of the calculation.**
- 3.4 In the discussions at committee members expressed a desire to be kept appraised of developments and an ambition for these combined initiatives to deliver even more for the citizens and ratepayers of Belfast. It is thus proposed that an update be posted on the members' portal on a bi-monthly basis the outcome of the employability related social clauses, as well as the wider employability initiatives. This will include an update on the four categories of employability against the specific projects of both the live and completed contracts.**
- 3.5 As previously highlighted to members central to this is the need to consider an optimal balance between the desire to increase employability and the number of local businesses accessing council procurement opportunities with the desire to create ever more efficiencies.**

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

The proposed re-baseline will be undertaken within approved budgets, from Economic Development Unit and Corporate Procurement Service.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications

No specific equality or good relations implications.”

The Director of Property and Projects reminded the Committee that the reports on both the Social Clause Policy and the Local Multiplier Model had been presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 24th April, and, while they had been approved by that Committee, the Council on 5th May had referred them back to the Committee for further consideration.

After discussion, during which the Director of Property and Projects agreed to brief any Party, who so wished, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Chairperson