

Public Document Pack

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



**Belfast
City Council**

2nd December, 2015

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Wednesday, 9th December, 2015 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest
- (d) Dates and Times of Future Meetings (Pages 1 - 2)
- (e) Request to present to Committee - NI Water (Pages 3 - 4)
- (f) Request to present to Committee - Ulster University Centre for Economic Policy (Pages 5 - 8)

2. Presentation

- (a) BCCM - Future Resource Request (Pages 9 - 12)

3. Business and Economy

- (a) Cathedral Quarter BID - Update and Request for support (Pages 13 - 16)

- (b) Start-up and Social Enterprise Support (Pages 17 - 22)
- 4. **City Centre Regeneration and Infrastructure**
 - (a) Transfer of DSD Regeneration powers (Pages 23 - 30)
- 5. **Tourism, Events and International Relations**
 - (a) Cultural Framework - Draft Action Plan 2016-2020 (Pages 31 - 50)
 - (b) Bid for 24 Hour World Endurance Championship 2017 (Athletics) (Pages 51 - 54)
 - (c) Request for Council support - Chinese New Year 2016 (Pages 55 - 56)
 - (d) Nashville Visit and Action Plan (Pages 57 - 60)
- 6. **Operational Issues**
 - (a) Go Ultra Low City Scheme Ecarri bid (Pages 61 - 66)



Subject:	<i>Schedule of Meetings 2016</i>
Date:	<i>9th December 2015</i>
Reporting Officer:	<i>Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive</i>
Contact Officer:	<i>Louise McLornan, Democratic Services Officer. Ext. 6077</i>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
	To advise the Committee of the dates and times of the meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee during 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
	The Committee is requested to approve the schedule of meetings for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee during 2016.
3.0	Main report
	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that the monthly meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee is normally held at 5.15 p.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.</p> <p>However, due to holiday periods and the timing of the monthly Council meetings and, in order to assist with the decision-making process, it has been necessary on occasions to move some of the meetings to later in the month.</p> <p>Accordingly, the following dates have been identified for meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for the period from January to December, 2016:</p>

	<p>Wednesday, 13th January</p> <p>Wednesday, 10th February</p> <p>Wednesday, 9th March</p> <p>Wednesday, 13th April</p> <p>Wednesday, 11th May</p> <p>Wednesday, 8th June</p> <p><i>No meeting in July</i></p> <p>Wednesday, 10th August</p> <p>Wednesday, 14th September</p> <p>Wednesday, 12th October</p> <p>Wednesday, 9th November</p> <p>Wednesday, 7th December</p> <p>(All meetings will commence at 5.15 p.m.)</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None associated with this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>



Subject:	NI Water – Request to address the Committee
Date:	Wednesday, 9th December, 2015
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Louise McLornan, Democratic Services Officer

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
	To advise the Members that a request to present to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee has been received from NI Water.
2.0	Recommendations
	That the Committee accedes to the request from NI Water and invites them to present to a future meeting.
3.0	Main report
	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>A request has been received from NI Water to present to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. The Committee is reminded that NI Water presented an update to the Members in September 2014 and that a commitment was given on that occasion that NI Water would undertake to present to all 11 Councils once a year to update the Members on NI Water’s activities within their respective areas.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>

	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None.



Subject:	Request to present to Committee – Ulster University Centre for Economic Policy
Date:	9 th December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Claire Patterson, Business Research & Development Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	Members will be aware that in March 2015, the Council agreed to contribute to the work of the Ulster University Centre for Economic Policy which has the potential to enhance significantly the Council's ongoing analysis and monitoring of the city economy and to support the underpinning evidence base for the Belfast Agenda.
1.2	As the Committee has agreed to hold regular 'strategic' sessions, it is proposed that Committee receive an economic briefing and presentation from the Ulster University Centre for Economic Policy. This will help to contextualise the ongoing work on the Belfast Agenda to build economic growth and to help take forward previous considerations on the impact of 'global megatrends' on Belfast and the region.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to receive a presentation from Neil Gibson, Ulster University Centre for Economic Policy

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>The Ulster University Centre for Economic Policy is an independent economic research centre focused on producing evidence based research to inform policy development and implementation. It engages with all organisations that have an interest in enhancing the Northern Ireland economy and its work is relevant to Government, business and the wider general public. The Centre’s Advisory Board includes Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Department of Enterprise, Trade & Industry (DETI), First Trust Bank, Ulster University, Department for Employment & Learning (DEL) and Department of Finance & Personnel (DFP). Belfast City Council is the first local government member.</p>
3.2	<p>The Centre has developed a macroeconomic model for Northern Ireland providing a comprehensive set of economic data and forecasts which will help assess the impact of potential policy initiatives on the Northern Ireland economy and contribute effectively to the policy debate. The Centre has also developed a Skills Barometer for Northern Ireland which will assess the current and emerging skill needs by sector as well as forecasting future skill needs in Northern Ireland.</p>
3.3	<p>Other projects include an Air Connectivity Study, Corporation Tax, the Cost of Doing Business and defining the characteristics of innovative and high growth firms. Committee also received a report in November 2015 outlining the Centre’s recent work to assess the economic impact of the development of the Ulster University campus in the city centre. This work considered the economic impact in terms of the physical capital build, the university’s purchase of goods and services and student spending power.</p>
3.4	<p>It is proposed that this presentation and briefing will outline the work of the Economic Policy Centre as well as an economic overview and forecast for Northern Ireland and what this means for Belfast.</p>
	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.5	<p>Members will be aware that in March 2015 Council agreed to be represented on the Board of the UU Economic Policy Centre and to contribute £25,000 per annum for a two year period.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.6	<p>There are no equality and good relations implications.</p>

4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None

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Subject:	BCCM future resource request
Date:	9 December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development,
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce the presentation to this committee by Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM), setting out their proposed priority actions for the financial year 2016/2017 - Outline the associated financial contribution requested from the Council towards the operational costs, in line with Council priorities for city centre regeneration.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the proposed future role for BCCM, as set out in a recent independent review - Agree the priority actions for the organisation for the coming year, in line with Council priorities for city centre regeneration, and agree that Council officers should work with BCCM staff to agree specific activities to deliver on these priorities - Agree the financial contribution of £190,000 for core funding for the financial year 2016/2017, subject to approval of the requisite budget in the estimates in January

	<p>2016, and subject to agreed actions being undertaken and targets met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agree a contribution of £30,000 towards the employment of a BIDS Development Officer from Economic Development Unit estimates, subject to BCCM finding the match funding from other sources.
3.0	Key issues
3.1	Members will be aware that the Council has supported BCCM since its establishment. The organisation performs a range of operational functions that contribute towards City Centre vibrancy, safety and security and public space management.
3.2	BCCM is funded from a range of sources, but its key funding partners are Belfast City Council, Department for Social Development and the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce.
3.3	BCCM provides services within a defined boundary in the City Centre area, stretching from Shaftesbury Square to the end of Royal Avenue/York Street. A section of that area is now part of the boundary for the Belfast One Business Improvement District (BID), which will be operational from April 2016. The BID focuses on providing additional services to businesses located within the agreed boundary. Work is currently underway to define the services the BID will support. However, it is important to note the BID services must be <u>additional</u> to those already provided by statutory partners, as established by defining a baseline of current service delivery. BID partners are of the view that Council support for BCCM – although a discretionary activity – would constitute existing baseline services and therefore, there is an expectation the Council would continue to resource a similar level of service provision in the City Centre. The BID will then plan its activities to operate in addition to these core services. This approach is consistent with how BIDs are developed in other areas.
3.4	<p>At present, BCCM's work is focused round three key themes, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Economic Performance: addressing issues such as reducing vacancies, supporting additional city animation and liaison with traders on key city events – Safer City: this work includes the City Centre Beat initiative and the retail crime scheme – Public Space Management: involves activities to maintain high quality public realm such as liaison with Belfast City Council's Cleansing Services on City Centre street

	<p>cleansing regime and services, representing business interests on transport issues and working to address access barriers into the City Centre.</p> <p>3.5 In recognition of the need to look at their future operating strategy with the introduction of the BID, BCCM recently commissioned an independent review of the organisation. The report looked at how similar City Centre management services operated in those cities that also had Business Improvement Districts. It suggested that BCCM should focus on the following priority areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead on the strategic development of the City Centre, liaising with partners such as Belfast City Council, DSD and private sector partners 2. Promote and assist with BIDs in the City Centre 3. Provide ongoing operational support to established BIDs on a contractual and non-contractual basis, acting as a co-ordinating forum as well as providing an evaluation framework 4. Provide support and services for other non-BID and partnership organisations such as the Chamber 5. Identify areas of the City Centre outwith the defined BID area and develop proposals for the continuation of services in these areas such as business liaison, festive lighting and promotional banners. <p>3.6 The BCCM Board has recently endorsed this approach and on this basis, the organisation is currently working on its business plan for the coming financial year. It is in the process of working with partners to secure the resources to deliver key services in line with the priority areas identified above.</p> <p>3.7 Given the success of the Belfast One BID, BCCM considers there are opportunities to develop additional BIDs. In particular, it considers that a BID would support the development of the main office area to the rear of City Hall – the Linen Quarter. This is in line with Council plans to support additional investment in that area through the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (CCRIS). BCCM is, therefore, asking that the Council provides support towards a dedicated member of staff for the coming year to undertake this activity. It is recommended that the Council provides up to £30,000 towards the costs in the coming financial year, subject to BCCM finding the match funding from other resources.</p> <p>In recognition of the ongoing operational support role for BCCM in the delivery of City</p>
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3.8	<p>Centre support services, and taking account of the BID requirement to focus on additional activity, it is also proposed that the core funding for BCCM should remain at £190,000 for the coming financial year, subject to approval of the requisite budget in the estimates in January 2016 and subject to agreement with BCCM on activities to be undertaken that will help deliver on council priorities for city centre regeneration.</p>
3.9	<p>Members have already been advised that the BID intends to focus over half of its efforts and resources on city marketing. While this is not an area in which BCCM is operational, it may align with some of the activity currently undertaken by Visit Belfast. In this context, it will be important to consider how these activities can be complementary, in order to avoid duplication and maximise the impact of the investment. These discussions will be undertaken with both the BID and Visit Belfast in the coming months.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Resource Implications</u> It is proposed that core funding of £190,000 is provided to BCCM for the coming financial year, along with £30,000 one-off support towards BID development activity in other areas of the city. This funding has been set aside by the Council within its Economic Development Unit budget estimates for the coming financial year.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u> No specific equality or good relations implications. BCCM's work will include activities to support access to the city centre for all</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices - Documents Attached</p>
	<p>There are no appendices.</p>



Subject:	Cathedral Quarter Business Improvement District – update and request for support
Date:	9 December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development,
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to advise members of a funding request received from Cathedral Quarter Trust (CQT) to support the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) in the Cathedral Quarter.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the request for support received from Cathedral Quarter Trust for resources towards the development work on the “Destination CQ” BID – Agree to allocate £10,000 from existing budgets towards the activity, in the current financial year, subject to CQT attracting match funding from other funders – Agree that the bid ballot should be run by a third party – Electoral Reform Services – on behalf of the Council. All costs associated with the ballot will be paid by the BID.

3.0	Key issues
3.1	<p>Members will be aware that the first Business Improvement District (BID) in Belfast was approved in late October 2015 and will be operational from April 2016. The “Belfast One” area includes the majority of the primary retail core in the city centre, from City Hall to Castlecourt. Work is also under way on a second BID, namely “Destination CQ”. This covers the Cathedral Quarter area of the city – around 600 properties in total. The draft business plan for Destination CQ was launched in late November 2015. The ballot will open on 3 March 2016 and will close on 14 April 2016. If the ballot is successful, it is likely that the BID will be operational from Autumn 2016.</p>
3.2	<p>The Destination CQ BID anticipates generating an annual income of around £300,000 from the BID levy. The draft business plan contains a range of priority actions under four themes of Create, Celebrate, Invite and Inspire. The main driver is to maintain and develop the vibrancy of the city’s cultural district.</p>
3.3	<p>While the development work on the Belfast One business plan was undertaken by a dedicated BID Development Manager, the work in Cathedral Quarter is being undertaken by Cathedral Quarter Trust alongside its other priority activities. The lessons learned from the Belfast One exercise include the need for dedicated resources in order to secure business buy-in to the process. In September this year, CQT asked the Council for a sum of £29,000 towards a similar resource but the Council was not in a position to provide that level of funding at the time. The Trust has now submitted a request for £10,000 towards this development work, and is seeking match funding support from both Department for Social Development (DSD) and Tourism NI (£30,000 in total being sought).</p>
3.4	<p>The funding from the Council would be used to cover staff costs for a full-time BID Development Manager for a period of six months as well as some overheads associated with the project.</p>
3.5	<p>According to the legislation, the BID ballot is to be carried out by the local authority, or an agent acting on their behalf. For the Belfast One BID, this work was carried out by Electoral Reform Services (ERS), who have also undertaken this function for many of the BIDs elsewhere. It is proposed that ERS will be appointed to carry out the ballot for the Destination CQ BID. If agreed, ERS will be appointed by CQT and the costs will be met by CQT from any income that they receive.</p>

3.6	<p><u>Resource Implications</u></p> <p>CQT estimates that the development costs for the period between January 2016 and the operation of the BID will be around £30,000. It has made a request to the council for a contribution of £10,000 towards these costs. This funding is available within current Development Department budgets.</p> <p>The BID expects to lever an annual income of £300,000 through the levy payments.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.7	<p>No specific equality or good relations implications.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices</p>
4.1	<p>There are no appendices.</p>

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Subject:	Start-up and Social Enterprise Support
Date:	09 December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Colin McCabrey, Economic Development Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of the report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Update Members on the transfer of local economic development functions from DETI/Invest NI to the Council under Local Government Reform (LGR) – Provide an overview of the proposed way forward for the delivery of business start and social entrepreneurship support
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the work undertaken to date to develop a regional business start programme and secure ERDF funding for this programme – Approve the recommendation to extend the delivery of the Regional Start Initiative until October 2016, or until the new regional business start programme is operational, whichever is earlier – Note the work undertaken to develop a pipeline of support from start up through to business growth, incorporating specialist support for social entrepreneurship – Approve the proposal to develop a programme of activity for social enterprises start-up

	support, to be met through the transferring budget.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Transfer of functions update</u></p> <p>As Members will be aware a number of economic development functions transferred from DET/INI to councils in April 2015. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enterprise awareness (with a particular focus on under-represented groups and targets of areas of disadvantage) – Start a business activity (referred to as Go For It programme) – Social enterprise (referred to as the Social Entrepreneurship Programme - SEP) – Youth enterprise.
3.2	<p>As a result of this transfer, councils are now responsible for the associated job creation targets identified by the Northern Ireland Executive. For the current financial year this equates to a target of 325 jobs promoted for the Belfast City Council area. The primary mechanism for the council to achieve these targets is through the Go For It programme. There are currently no additional targets for councils in relation to social entrepreneurship and enterprise awareness. The budget transferred to council to deliver the associated functions and targets is £411,984 in the current financial year. This allocation will be used in its entirety for the delivery of the transferring functions.</p>
3.3	<p>To allow for a period of transition, it was agreed that Invest NI would develop a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with all councils to continue the delivery of the Go for It and Social Entrepreneurship Programmes (SEP) until the conclusion of their contracts. Since April 2015, there have been over 330 business plans created and 264 jobs promoted in Belfast through the Go for It programme.</p>
3.4	<p>Whilst there was no opportunity to extend the SEP beyond its contract end date of July 2015, there has been a level of flexibility with the Go For It programme, with potential for an extension until October 2016. Currently the contract has been extended until March 2016, pending a decision from councils as to the content and format of a regional business start programme to replace this initiative.</p>
3.5	<p>The eleven councils recently commissioned an appraisal and business case to inform future business start support. The recommended approach was the creation of a single regional contract building upon the existing Go for It programme with some enhancements</p>

	<p>such as additional workshops and 1-2-1 mentoring. It may be possible to secure ERDF funding for this programme, and, if successful, this will lever up to 80% of match funding towards eligible costs associated with this programme. Councils are collectively developing a funding application to Invest NI to support this new programme; however it is expected that the decision on this funding will not be made until April 2016, at the earliest.</p>
3.6	<p>If the funding application is successful, a subsequent procurement exercise would need to be undertaken to appoint a delivery organisation for the new programme. The timescale for this means that a new council-led business start programme is unlikely to be operational until summer 2016, at the earliest. In the interim period, it is proposed that councils continue extending the current RSI contract until the new programme is operational. The benefit of this approach is that it will ensure continuity of service provision pending the implementation of the new programme.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Social Entrepreneurship</u></p> <p>The social economy sector is strong in Belfast and the city is home to over one third of all social enterprises across the region. Social enterprises contribute towards the overall economic performance of the city, as well as helping achieve wider social and environmental objectives. Social enterprises operate on a similar business model to private businesses; however the principal difference is how these organisations use their resources to address societal and/or environmental inequalities and challenges as opposed to an operating for a profit motive alone.</p>
3.8	<p>Whilst responsibility for social entrepreneurship has transferred to councils through LGR, the development of social economy policy and a number of key initiatives aimed at developing the sustainability and growth of the sector has been retained by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI). Initiatives supported by DETI include support for Social Enterprise NI (SENI), the representative body for the sector.</p>
3.9	<p>DETI, in partnership with DSD and Invest NI, also manage a £4million pilot project, funded by the Northern Ireland Executive's Delivering Social Change Framework. Through this programme, 11 social enterprise hubs have been developed in the 9 Social Investment Fund (SIF) zones, of which 4 are located in Belfast. The hubs offer support for new and emerging social enterprises, providing locations where social economy businesses can operate on a 'test-trading' basis, with capacity building and training support also provided. The timeframe for the pilot project is 2 years and it is understood that funding for these projects is expected to conclude between April and June 2016, with no opportunity for</p>

	<p>extension at this stage. There has been some work done to evaluate the impact of these links, but this information is relatively limited at this point.</p>
3.10	<p>Over the past number of years the Social Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP) has been the regional support initiative to support the creation of new social enterprises. The programme recognised the need to develop early stage social enterprises by building their start up capacity and their operating models. In the period 2012-2014, 98 groups from the Belfast area accessed support. Since the conclusion of the SEP in July 2015, start up support for social economy sector has been mainly provided through the social enterprise hubs project detailed above.</p>
3.11	<p>In recent years, a growing number of community and voluntary organisations have been transitioning or developing social enterprise trading arms. This situation is reflective of a changing funding environment where levels of grant funding are diminishing with a move towards service commissioning. This changing environment is driving increasing levels of demand for social enterprise start up support, with groups keen to explore whether this model can work for them.</p>
3.12	<p>To support the needs of the social economy sector, it is proposed that council efforts should focus on supporting new and emerging social enterprises within the city. This can be achieved through the development of a specialist support programme, specifically aimed at the pre-start and start-up stage of a social enterprise's life cycle. The proposed intervention will aim to stimulate levels of early stage social entrepreneurial activity through awareness raising events and will also provide tailored 1-2-1 support for new social entrepreneurs and transition groups – those moving from a funded model towards greater sustainability. The types of support available will include ideas generation, development of governance structures, business planning and social impact measurement. It is expected that up to 50 social entrepreneurs or groups will be supported through this activity through 1-2-1 and group based workshops/events each year.</p>
3.13	<p>Recognising that, once established, social enterprises operate as per normal commercial models, it is proposed that support for existing social enterprises will be delivered through mainstream economic development provision. However it is acknowledged that specific marketing and promotional activities will need to target this sector and encourage engagement.</p>

3.14	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The cost associated with existing and future business start activity will be delivered within existing Economic Development unit activity and the transferring budget of £411,984.</p> <p>The proposed social entrepreneurship programme is expected to incur an annual cost of £50,000 per annum or £150,000 over a three year delivery period. Due to the timescales involved in procuring a delivery agent for this initiative it is intended this programme will not be operational until the 2016/17 financial year. The budget for this programme will be met through the transferring budget.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.15	<p>Each of the programmes referred above will be equality screened. The initiatives will be designed and delivered to remove barriers to participation, in particular by persons from under-represented groups or living in areas of deprivation.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None

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Subject:	Transfer of DSD Regeneration Powers
Date:	Wednesday 9 December 2015
Reporting Officer	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, Programme Manager (ext 6202)

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is provide Members with an update on the status of the proposed transfer of Urban Regeneration and Community Development powers, and associated budgets, from the Department for Social Development (DSD) to Council in April 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to note the contents of the report including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the decision taken by Full Council on 1 December 2015, to call for the NI Assembly to undertake an early review of the decision taken by DSD not to transfer regeneration powers in April 2016; (ii) the urgent meeting requested between a all-party deputation from the Council and the Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey MLA, to examine all what alternative arrangements could be put in place to enable the Council to utilise key regeneration functions on behalf of DSD in the event of the non-transfer of these powers; (iii) correspondence to be issued to DSD seeking agreement permitting the use of/transfer of assets at nil cost to the Council to enable physical regeneration projects to happen at both a city and neighbourhood level. (iv) the work underway by the Council to support and stimulate the further development and regeneration of the city including the lobby for greater devolution to city-regions.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	As Members will be aware in April 2016, the Council was due to become the regeneration authority for the city and to inherit additional powers and budgets from the Department for Social Development (DSD). This would have included an enhanced responsibility for, among other things, leading both citywide strategic urban regeneration and smaller scale area-focused neighbourhood regeneration activity through the utilisation of comprehensive development powers. The Council

	would have also been given responsibility for developing and delivering the successor programme to Neighbourhood Renewal and the allocation of a substantial revenue grant funding package.
4.0	Key Issues
4.1	On the 26 November 2015, the Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey MLA confirmed that the transfer of regeneration powers to councils as planned in April 2016 would now not happen (refer to Appendix1). This is the second time the planned transfer has been postponed with the original transfer scheduled for April 2015 as part of the wider Local Government Reform process. This time round, however, there is no future date set out as to when (or even if) these important functions would transfer back to local councils.
4.2	<p>The non-transfer of key regeneration functions, particularly Comprehensive Development Powers and the ability to acquire land for regeneration purposes, will seriously hamper the ability of the Council to take forward major investment, development and regeneration plans; unlocking and realising the potential of flagship schemes (e.g. North East Quarter, Northside) and reinvigorating key areas in the city (e.g. Linen Quarter, Cathedral Quarter, Western Quarter). It will constrain the ability of the Council to fully deliver Members' ambitions and priorities emerging from the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, support investment in the city centre which will grow the economy, create jobs and prosperity and improve quality of life for our citizens. It will also impact upon the ability of the council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the conditions and opportunities to invest in Belfast, supporting economic growth & prosperity • Provide the required level of confidence to investors considering developments in Belfast – investors want a one stop shop approach • Ensure a targeted and holistic approach is taken to addressing blighted areas and development sites across the city including the city centre which is the regional gateway • Ensure public spaces are managed and improved in a coherent way • Ensure greater alignment of physical regeneration with the emerging local development plan
4.3	It makes no sense that Councils are now charged with bringing forward local development plans and community plans, setting out a vision for their areas in terms of commerce, town and city centres, housing, accessibility, economic development and improvements in local neighbourhoods only to have a separate government department hold the powers for comprehensive development schemes as well as drawing up masterplans & delivering local projects driven by different priorities.
4.4	Members will be aware that Full Council, at its meeting on the 1 December 2015, agreed that a call be submitted to the NI Assembly (and Executive Ministers) to undertake an early review of the decision taken by DSD not to transfer regeneration powers in April 2016. It was also agreed that Council officers do their utmost to work around such a decision to the city's benefit.

4.5	<p>As instructed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee a formal request has been submitted for a cross-party delegation to urgently meet with the Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey, MLA. The purpose of this meeting is to explore what alternative arrangements could be possibly put in place to enable the Council to utilise regeneration powers on behalf of DSD (and incoming new Department for Communities) to ensure the continued development of the city over the coming months. The Council has been exploring a range of options including:-</p> <p>(i) Agency Agreement - Enter into an 'Agency Agreement' under section 104 of the Local Government Act 1972 which enables the Council to undertake regeneration powers on behalf of the department and access associated funding. This would require the consent of the Minister.</p> <p>(ii) Alternative partnership arrangements – entering into a partnership agreement with DSD utilising legislative vehicles such as e.g. a Memorandum of Understanding which could underpin a shared agreement and responsibility to deliver key development schemes based on the exercise of the statutory powers of each organisation.</p>
4.6	<p>Each option would require the agreement of the Social Development Minister and it is important that the Council proactively seeks to secure such agreement as it is of mutual benefit to both organisations. It is also important that the Council has an opportunity to work alongside DSD (and incoming new Department for Communities) and input into any processes put in place to determine the future allocation of both capital and revenue funding within Belfast. The Council would also seek to work with DSD and central government to ensure that major development schemes within the city come to fruition.</p>
<u>Asset Transfer</u>	
4.7	<p>In anticipation of transfer, the Council has already entered into various agreements and are currently in discussion with DSD in respect of certain DSD assets which are required to facilitate the delivery of a number of key regeneration projects contained within the Council's Investment Programme and/or City Centre Investment Plan.</p>
4.8	<p>To date the DSD has worked with the Council to facilitate projects involving land assets owned by the Department and have not sought market value for sites due to their pending transfer to Council under local government reform. The pragmatic approach taken by DSD has been to assist Council in bringing forward key projects and have permitted work to be undertaken on their land, by way of licence or similar legal agreement, in advance and in anticipation of transfer in April 2016.</p>
4.9	<p>It is important to note that investment decisions have already been made and projects are being delivered in respect of some assets which DSD own or have legal interest in, such as Girdwood and the Waterfront Hall. In other cases there are emerging council projects that affect DSD owned asserts such as proposed playground and leisure schemes across the city.</p>

4.10	Again, as the transfer is no longer happening in April 2016, the Council is seeking to secure agreement with DSD which permits the use of/transfer of assets owned by the Department at nil cost to the Council to enable physical regeneration projects to happen at both a city and neighbourhood level. It is important to recognise that the lands held by DSD are for regeneration purposes.
<u>Continuing to Invest in the Regeneration and Development of the City</u>	
4.11	The new larger Belfast City Council remains committed to using its new powers to drive economic growth attract investment, create jobs and improve the quality of life across the city. Our plans include a physical investment programme valued in excess of £400million over the next number of years, with £185million of investment already completed or underway across Belfast. This includes key economic infrastructure projects such a, for example, £29.5m extension to the Waterfront Hall creating a world class conference centre, £18m investment in Girdwood Community Hub opening in January 2016, and a £9.1m Innovation Centre opening in summer 2016.
4.12	There is a momentum gathering pace across Belfast particularly in the property, hotel, office and student housing sectors, but we've got to harness it now. To ensure Belfast punches above its weight, we have to make it easy to do business in the city, develop key city infrastructure, maximise investment opportunities and connect local people to jobs and opportunity. It is important to recognise that delivering the outcomes set out within the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy can only be achieved in partnership and working jointly on key projects.
4.13	To this end strategic partnerships are being formed including a City Centre Development Board which is seeking to develop implementation and resource plans to deliver Members' ambitions for the city centre. Furthermore, a 'Belfast Strategic Issues Group' has recently been established, comprising of senior representation from Executive departments (i.e. Permanent Secretaries) and chaired by the Chief Executive of Belfast City Council. The core focus of this group is to encourage greater alignment and integration between policies, plans, programme and initiatives and where possible to support the delivery, in a holistic way, of key development schemes including critical city infrastructure projects.
4.14	A key lever for the Council is the recent creation of the £18.7m City Centre Investment Fund which will help incentivise private sector investment in the city address potential areas of market failure and enable key regeneration projects to happen through the potential targeted acquisition of strategic development sites. Work is also underway to develop a ' Place Positioning ' Strategy which will promote Belfast as a major tourism and investment location and seek to secure further foreign direct investment into the city.

<u>City-Region Devolution</u>	
4.15	<p>In February 2015, the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee considered a Notice of Motion entitled “City Growth”. The motion stated:</p> <p><i>...“Belfast City Council: notes that the RSA City Growth Commission recognises that major city regions, including Belfast, are the main drivers of economic growth; and that the British Government has undertaken ‘City Deals’ with 28 cities outside London, including Glasgow, to boost infrastructure investment, promote economic growth and create jobs.</i></p> <p><i>Accordingly, the Council will consider how the recommendations by RSA City Growth could be promoted to enhance Belfast’s position as a city region. The Council agrees to develop an action plan to seek to secure a ‘City Deal’ for Belfast which will support our ambitious plans, enhance the rate base, boost investment, promote economic growth, create jobs and ensure that the benefits of economic growth reach disadvantaged communities”....</i></p>
4.16	<p>The Council now intends to pursue an agenda for greater devolution to the city-region. This will seek to promote the role of Belfast (and cities) as economic drivers and major contributors to regional growth and prosperity. It will also seek to establish a differential relationship between Belfast, the NI Executive and central government.</p>
4.17	<p>There is a growing trend towards greater localism and place-based packages which involve the devolution of powers and budgets alongside new innovative policy, legislative and fiscal regimes which are empowering cities and local authorities to develop their area, improve public services, and boost the local economy. The associated introduction of new funding models such as City Deals is enabling cities such as Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, and Glasgow to unlock the development potential of their locality. It is also providing such cities with access to specified funding to invest in key growth areas, provide critical city infrastructure, deliver key regeneration and development schemes, and support specific programmes such as e.g. skills, employability and business start-up.</p>
<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u>	
4.18	<p>There will be financial/resource implications attached to the non-transfer of regeneration powers and budgets to the Council given the fact that these were being considered as part of the Council’s overall approach & funding towards the delivery of regeneration activity within the city.</p>
4.19	<p>Further detailed reports on the financial and budget implications will be brought back to Committee in-line with the budget estimates process and timetable.</p>
<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>	
4.20	<p>Development of new policies and/or service delivery models will be subject to equality screening and, where required, EQIA process.</p>
5.0	<p>Documents Attached Appendix 1 – Correspondence from Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey MLA</p>

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Appendix 1: Correspondence from Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey MLA



From: The Minister

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Council Chief Executives

Our ref: Sub/1548/2015

26 November 2015

Dear Chief Executives,

REGENERATION BILL

On 11 April 2013, the Executive agreed that the Reform of Local Government (RLG) should be implemented with effect from 1 April 2015, and that as part of that, certain Housing and Regeneration powers would transfer from my Department to councils on that date. I subsequently decided that the Housing functions would be removed from the transfer legislation, and the Executive agreed that the effective date for the conferral of the regeneration powers on councils would be 1 April 2016. I advised you of this last November, and my officials continued to work with you to prepare for implementation as the Regeneration Bill proceeded through its Assembly passage.

During the Committee Stage of this process, when the Regeneration Bill was scrutinised by the Social Development Committee, and both written and oral evidence was presented by interested parties, a number of fundamental policy issues were raised. I am of the view that it is important that the Bill has broad support, and I have been working towards that end. Unfortunately there remain unresolved issues, which have slowed down the legislative process making the timetable for putting this legislation into place extremely challenging. It is also important to consider the impact any further delay and uncertainty around the Bill would have on the detailed planning by my Department and the receiving councils for the transfer of staff, budgets and assets from April 2016. Contact from both council representatives and my officials have made it clear that there was a distinct cut-off date by which it must be certain that the legislation would be put into place, in order to ensure business continuity and that all parties were prepared from an operational perspective. We have now got to the stage where I need to be able to provide clarity to key interests on the way forward.

Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities



I am also conscious that plans for the restructuring of Departments are well underway and this will result in the creation of the new Department for Communities (DfC). This new Department will have responsibility for a much wider range of responsibilities including regeneration, social security, housing, employment services, culture, arts and leisure. In that context I have also been considering whether it would still be appropriate to be proposing, for example, to transfer work on physical regeneration projects to councils when similar type work is being transferred to DfC from other Departments.

Taking all these factors into account, I have concluded that now is not the right time to go ahead with the transfer of these key DSD functions to councils. In my view it would be a better option to proceed with the restructuring of Departments, and assimilate the various regeneration type functions in the Department for Communities and then we would be in a better position to determine if and when some of these responsibilities would be best delivered at a local level. This would be done in a future mandate, and would also offer an opportunity to take a fresh look at the underpinning policy. I have therefore decided not to proceed with the Regeneration Bill as currently drafted. This means that my Department will continue to have responsibility for the delivery of these key services to the community, retaining its statutory powers, control of the overall budget and ownership of the associated physical assets and it will continue to deliver the relevant programmes until such time as the Executive decides otherwise.

While I recognise that this may come as a disappointment to you, I assure you that I remain committed to the principles of local government reform and believe that local councils are best placed to deliver local solutions. I hope that the good work which has been done to date on this programme and the excellent arrangements and relationships that have been built up between the councils and the Department will continue as we work together on delivering these key services for the citizens of Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely



MERVYN STOREY MLA
Minister for Social Development

Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Subject:	Cultural Framework for Belfast – Draft Action Plan 2016-2020
Date:	9 December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Eimear Henry, Assistant Tourism, Culture and Arts Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Update Members on the development of a new Action Plan 2016-2020 to support the Cultural Framework for Belfast – Seek approval to proceed to public consultation on the draft Action Plan.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note and agree the contents of the Cultural Framework for Belfast – Draft Action Plan 2016-2020 as a basis for public consultation – Agree to consider the revised version of the Action Plan after the conclusion of the consultation exercise in April 2016.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware that, at a meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in August 2015, approval was given to commence the process of developing a new action plan for the period 2016-2020 to support the Cultural Framework for Belfast.
3.2	The Cultural Framework for Belfast was developed in 2012 and has a vision for 2020 that:

“Everyone in Belfast experiences and is inspired by our city’s diverse and distinctive culture and arts. Arts and heritage are valued for enriching quality of life and creating wealth, and the city’s culture and creativity is renowned throughout the world”.

3.3 This vision supports the Belfast Agenda in particular contributing to key actions to improve the city living experience and attract tourists to Belfast helping to achieve:

- Happy and healthy people and communities
- More jobs and a strong economy

3.4 The Cultural Framework is arranged under 4 key themes:

- *Distinctly Belfast*: It is widely recognised that a thriving and vibrant city is a diverse city that celebrates its uniqueness and takes pride in its difference. Under this theme, we support programmes that help connect people to the city, prioritising our local artists and our unique stories. This helps to build a positive image of Belfast by positioning the city internationally which in turn attracts tourists and boosts the economy.
- *Inspiring Communities*: Engaging communities across the city is an ongoing priority. It is vital that everyone in the city can have access to high-quality cultural services and can participate in arts and heritage activities. This improves quality of life and builds confidence at an individual, community and whole-city level.
- *Attracting Audiences*: One of the most critical challenges for the cultural sector continues to be the capacity to engage with, retain and develop audiences locally, nationally and internationally. There is a need to support collaborative marketing and communications that help build audiences to ensure the sustainability of the arts and heritage sectors in the city.
- *Strengthening the Sector*: In a time of economic constraint there is a need to support the development of the sector beyond direct funding. This theme therefore focuses on providing skills development and opportunities to diversify income streams. This includes connecting the arts and heritage sectors to tourism and the creative industries as well as introducing new business models and investment opportunities.

3.5	<p>A number of cross-cutting actions were arranged under each of the four themes and agreed for the period 2012-15 to support the initial phase of the Cultural Framework. Following a significant programme of sector engagement, a new draft Action Plan for 2016-2020 has been developed.</p>
3.6	<p>Since August 2015 the following work has been undertaken to inform the draft Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A series of sector workshops focused on: Heritage, Inspiring Communities, Attracting Audiences, Developing People and International Connections; – Meetings with a number of key stakeholders including the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Tourism NI and Visit Belfast; – Commissioning reports to review and make key recommendations to support the Attracting Audiences and International Development strands of the Framework; – State of the sector survey carried out to establish the current position of the cultural sector in Belfast.
3.7	<p>This work has highlighted a number of challenges for the culture, arts and heritage sectors in the city. During the 2012 engagement process, a significant issue for the cultural sector was the level of public funding compared to other parts of the UK and Ireland. In recent years this has continued to decline and ongoing concerns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Public sector funding cuts including significant budget cuts to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland; – The Council’s funding for arts and heritage organisations has remained standstill since 2013 and projected budgets for the core funding programme are set to not increase between 2016 and 2020; – The need to protect the existing cultural infrastructure that has been developed in recent years; – The need to develop new programmes and work that resonates locally and internationally positioning Belfast as a contemporary, modern, vibrant and creative city; – Lack of capacity to secure external investment to realise business development opportunities; – Lack of capacity among some groups to deliver quality cultural programmes; – Lack of capacity among some groups to effectively market and communicate activity.
3.8	<p>The pressures on arts organisations due to the major cuts to arts funding is likely to</p>

	<p>increase the requests made to Council for support however there is no additional budget available for grant funding. In response to this situation Council officers will continue to provide support and deliver development programmes to help organisations diversify their income streams and secure funding from other sources. This is outlined in the Strengthening the Sector theme of the Action Plan.</p>
3.9	<p>The draft Action Plan has responded to these challenges and sets out a number of commitments. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Carrying out a cultural mapping of the city to establish current activity and gaps in provision; – Developing a series of new heritage initiatives including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encouraging conservation of the city’s built heritage through establishing character and style guidelines; ○ Delivering a citywide programme Bringing Belfast’s Heritage to Life; – Reviewing the current small grants programme to ensure effectiveness of funding in supporting the priorities of the Framework including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access to culture, arts and heritage for priority groups, in particular, children, young people, older people and hard-to-reach communities, including minority ethnic communities and disabled people; ○ Support for innovation and new work; – Scoping potential for development funding for organisations transitioning from project to core funding; – Delivering a programme to build capacity across Belfast for community-led quality arts activities and festivals; – Developing a strategic approach to marketing culture, arts and heritage in the city; – Investing in people through new tailored skills development programmes including apprenticeships, mid-career progression and leadership opportunities.
3.10	<p>The full draft Action Plan is included at Appendix 1. It is proposed that this plan proceeds to a 12 week public consultation period to commence in January 2016. This consultation will be proactively managed by officers to provide opportunities for individuals and groups across the city to feedback. A revised plan will be presented to Committee in April 2016 for consideration.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The implementation of this Action Plan is included in the draft budget estimates for</p>

3.12	<p>2016/17.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>A full Equality Impact Assessment on the Cultural Framework was carried out in 2012. This updated Action Plan supports the existing Framework.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1 - Cultural Framework for Belfast – Draft Action Plan 2016-2020

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Cultural Framework for Belfast

Action Plan 2016-2020



Draft November 2015



Belfast
City Council

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Copies of the full Cultural Framework for Belfast published in 2012 are available on request or from our webpage:
www.belfastcity.gov.uk/culture

We're committed to making sure that our services and information are available to all parts of the community. If you require this publication in another format or language please contact us.

INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Framework was launched in October 2012. This Framework was created in consultation with the culture, arts and heritage sectors across Belfast. The significant volume of achievements over these past three years is evidence of that ongoing partnership approach. As the Framework moves to a second phase, this new action plan sets out our priorities for the next four years.

Culture and arts make a vital contribution to this city helping to improve quality of life, drive the economy and make Belfast a shared, welcoming and proud city.

In 2013, Belfast City Council significantly increased its direct funding for culture however for many organisations this amounts to only a small contribution towards their annual turnover. In recent years further cuts to public funding of arts and heritage has resulted in increased pressure on organisations to sustain the programmes of activities, festivals and events that are such a vital part of the life of the city.

It is also changing times in local government with the recent transfer of a number of powers and areas of work to local councils in April 2015 with further changes planned. Culture and arts continue to be a valued and important part of the future of the city.

In 2012 we agreed a vision for 2020 that:

“Everyone in Belfast experiences and is inspired by our city’s diverse and distinctive culture and arts. Arts and heritage are valued for enriching quality of life and creating wealth, and the city’s culture and creativity is renowned throughout the world.”

This vision is supported by four key themes: Distinctly Belfast; Inspiring Communities; Attracting Audiences; and Strengthening the Sector.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

There have been a number of key achievements in the period since the Cultural Framework was launched in 2012. These were supported by substantial direct investment to arts and heritage organisations. Our new funding schemes totalled an annual investment of £1.8m in the sector amounting to an increase of 25 per cent on the previous year's budget. This investment helped organisations reach audiences of just under 4 million, engage with approximately 170,000 participants, and provide around 8,000 employment opportunities for artists each year.

Belfast gets a fantastic return on Belfast City Council's funding of arts and heritage, approximately £8 for the city for every £1 of our investment. But arts and heritage is more than a sum of these parts helping to make Belfast a better city to live in, work in and visit.

INVESTMENT

£4.1m in 52 arts and heritage organisations through core multi annual funding;

£176,000 through PEACE III in 11 community arts Creative Legacies projects;

£180,000 invested in 12 large festivals through the PEACE III City of Festivals Programme;

Nearly half a million pounds invested to support over 100 arts and heritage projects

Supporting nearly 100 community festivals in partnership with Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, with funding of over £400,000

Investing £900,000 in 7 flagship projects through a new fund, Creative and Cultural Belfast, in partnership with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Where do culture, arts and heritage fit in to our overall vision for the city?

Since 2012 there have been a number of significant developments and we believe that it truly is a time for transformation for the city. Belfast is the economic driver of the region, the capital city and the cultural and creative hub of Northern Ireland. The city has changed dramatically in the past ten years with physical changes, population growth, and community development.

Over this past year a number of key strategies have been launched that will help give shape to our plans for the city. These have included a City Centre Regeneration and Investment Plan which recognises that the city centre is the driver of the regional economy. A healthy and prosperous city centre therefore isn't just important for the local area, it benefits all of Belfast and Northern Ireland. This plan looks at the physical space and considers market and economic analysis of the city centre's office and retail offer, as well as priorities for tourism development and job creation. It is recognised that there

may be an opportunity to provide a physical presence for a cultural and creative hub within the City Centre. The Integrated Tourism Strategy for Belfast 2015-2020 has the ambitious aim of doubling the value of tourism for the city over the next 5 years and the contribution that culture, arts and heritage makes to the international positioning of Belfast is considerable.

Alongside these ambitions are challenges that the city must continue to address. As part of local government reform, council took on responsibility for community planning in April 2015. This involves public services working together with communities to deliver real improvements for local people. Working with a wide range of partners, including representatives from the statutory, business, higher education, community and voluntary sectors, we will develop a long-term plan to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the city.

The cultural sector has an important role to play in all of these developments to support talent and connect locally and globally to tell the Belfast story.

Theme ONE

Distinctly Belfast

Walled by hills, nestled around the banks of a river flowing to the lough, Belfast's heritage, archaeology, architecture and townscape tell the city's physical and social stories. Our art is unusually rich in the quality and variety of our artists and arts organisations, and we are home to the finest practitioners who are receiving international awards and acclaim. We have a unique history and a future full of promise. This is what makes Belfast distinct.

The challenge, in a rapidly globalising world, is to connect Belfast to its arts and heritage, developing cultural programmes that reflect and engage with our people and communities, their issues and interests. But Belfast is more than its physical space or administrative boundaries. It is a confident and contemporary European city. Culture and arts can showcase Belfast as a distinctive, dynamic and world-class place to live in, work in, and visit.

A strong and lively sector is also a sustainable sector, and it will attract and retain artistic talent. Distinctly Belfast is about high quality work that resonates with the people of Belfast and broadcasts our unique qualities to the wider world, enabling the city and its culture to be recognised and valued at home and abroad.

On one side of the coin, meaningful, engaging culture and arts will connect all our residents to our city, creating a more confident and cohesive society. On the other side, a city that truly celebrates its artists and promotes its culture, arts and heritage will connect internationally, drawing in tourists, attracting investors and boosting the economy, making our city truly competitive on the world stage.



Aims	Commitment	Actions/ Targets	What success will look like
Connecting people to the city, its stories, places, arts and heritage.	Support high quality cultural programmes that resonate with the people of Belfast. Attract, nurture and retain artistic and creative talent.	Support 8,000 artists' contracts per year. Set up Heritage Forum by 2016. Deliver a City as a Gallery/ Art in the Public Realm Initiative to be supported through external funding by 2018.	Belfast will be internationally recognised for its cultural excellence.
Promoting the value and authenticity of the city's heritage.	Promote the use of culture, arts and heritage to animate the city and create vibrant, welcoming places.	Conduct a feasibility study into a permanent Belfast Story exhibition to be completed by 2020.	The people of Belfast will value the contribution culture, arts and heritage makes to the city.
Promoting Belfast as a contemporary and creative city.	Promote and enhance access to Belfast's heritage. Develop opportunities to showcase the quality of Belfast's distinctive culture, arts and heritage locally, nationally and internationally.	Deliver a Bringing Belfast's Heritage to Life exhibition by 2018. Publish a Public Art Policy by 2018. Support 50 international partnerships by 2020.	
Placing culture, arts and heritage at the heart of Belfast's ongoing narrative.	Support artists to develop relationships and participate in global networks. Support outward and inward programmes and increase investment opportunities in Belfast's culture, arts and heritage. Support the development of new products and initiatives.	Develop a new support programme by 2017 to showcase Belfast's arts & heritage through local, national and international opportunities. Support the development of new work that presents Belfast as a contemporary cultural city through revised funding programmes by 2017. Scope the potential for character and style guidelines to be included in the planning processes by 2020. Explore the option to develop an inventory of buildings of cultural significance by 2018 and how this could be utilised by stakeholders to promote the conservation of Belfast's built heritage.	

Theme TWO

Inspiring Communities

Belfast City Council recognises that our people and our communities are the lifeblood of the city. Engaged and active communities are not the by-product of a successful city - they are a prerequisite for its success. During the development of the Framework and throughout the delivery of the 2012-15 Action Plan, our partners have been emphasising that engaging communities across the city must be a priority.

Community arts, outreach and audience development all create opportunity and encourage people to learn new skills. Festivals in particular can offer new experiences and open up communities to new people and other cultures.

This improves social cohesion and quality of life, building confidence at an individual, community and whole-city level.

This is a significant achievement in its own right, but these activities also help to grow audiences for the whole cultural scene, increasing the demand for arts and heritage and, in turn, shaping the future of our cultural city.



Aims	Commitment	Actions /Targets	What success will look like
<p>Removing barriers to participation to ensure all sections of the community can engage with high quality culture, arts and heritage.</p> <p>Enabling people to value and understand their place.</p> <p>Developing shared cultural space, celebrating and promoting local cultures and communities.</p> <p>Targeting areas and communities with low levels of engagement in culture, arts and heritage.</p>	<p>Build upon existing infrastructure to sustain partnerships between the community and cultural sectors.</p> <p>Encourage and support new partnerships between the community and cultural sectors.</p> <p>Improve communication with hard to reach communities.</p> <p>Ensure support for diverse range of programmes with targeted initiatives for priority groups.</p> <p>Establish baselines in order to improve community and cultural engagement initiatives*</p> <p>Nurture culturally curious communities and support people to live creative lives.</p> <p>Promote the value of cultural engagement across Council programmes and strategies.</p>	<p>800,000 people will have participated in culture, arts and heritage activities by 2020.</p> <p>Support a minimum of 5 artist-in-residence programmes across Belfast by 2018.</p> <p>Deliver community festivals training programme by 2016.</p> <p>Deliver capacity building programme to increase quality of community led arts programmes by 2017.</p> <p>Complete cultural mapping of Belfast by 2016 and update annually*</p> <p>Deliver access to artefacts programme for Belfast in partnership with other agencies by 2020.</p> <p>Deliver a heritage skills development programme by 2018.</p> <p>£1.2m invested in engagement programme in culture, arts and heritage from non-Council sources.</p> <p>Support participation in voluntary and amateur arts activities through key partnerships.</p> <p>Support shared cultural spaces across the city.</p>	<p>Belfast will be a more active, engaged and inclusive city.</p>

* Further commitments and targets will be developed following establishment of baselines and completion of cultural mapping.

Theme THREE

Attracting Audiences

This theme is about engaging, retaining and developing audiences - one of the most critical challenges facing the cultural sector today. Culture and arts is part of the experience economy. Audiences value the feeling of being engaged. Surrounding restaurants, hotels and businesses also benefit from increased footfall, supporting the wider service economy.

Heritage is our most accessible cultural asset - it is the backdrop to our daily lives and a magnet for tourists. Visitors to the city in particular bring additional spending power and attract yet more visitors by broadcasting the Belfast story around the world. Increased income can help organisations grow, but engaged audiences also sustain the cultural scene as a whole, increasing the demand for high-quality, culturally relevant programming.

Ultimately, our audiences are advocates for our future cultural provision. Growing audiences is important. In recent years, we have invested in the cultural

infrastructure, and now we must ensure that there is the demand to sustain the supply. However, sustaining existing audiences is also vital. Audience NI's audit of Belfast audiences has indicated that 1 in 5 households attend ticketed events each year and this figure has not increased in the period 2012-15. Attracting audiences is especially difficult in the current economic climate. Few organisations have dedicated marketing staff, while the decline of culture and arts coverage in the media has led to less exposure and profile. And there is no dedicated, coherent marketing resource for culture and arts.

Increasingly, the only platform to market activity is social media. Much more can be done to improve access to culture and arts across Belfast, including working closely with stakeholders, agencies and media to encourage enjoyment of what the city has to offer. Consideration must also be given to establishing a dedicated marketing resource to promote Belfast's culture and arts.

Aims	Commitment	Actions /Targets	What success will look like
Increase the numbers of residents taking part in culture, arts and heritage.	<p>Identify and carry out appropriate benchmarking.</p> <p>Gather, share and apply learnings from relevant data.</p>	<p>Audit of existing research carried out by 2016; commission relevant research and publish insights.</p> <p>Establish Strategic Attracting Audiences steering group for the city by 2016 including arts, heritage and tourism bodies.</p>	Everyone will be aware of Belfast's diverse culture, arts and heritage offer.
Increasing the number of visitors taking part in culture, arts and heritage.	<p>Focus on innovative and consistent use of digital platforms for marketing and visitor information.</p> <p>Develop and enhance the audience experience of culture, arts and heritage in the city.</p>	<p>Establish research working group by 2016.</p> <p>Establish baseline for number of residents and visitors attending cultural activity by 2016 and grow by 5% by 2020.</p>	
Promoting Belfast as a diverse and dynamic cultural city to existing and potential out-of-state audiences.	<p>Position Belfast as an international creative and cultural city.</p> <p>Strategic nurturing of media relations Develop a strategic partnership approach to marketing planning and activity.</p> <p>Promote the value of marketing and PR through Council-led up-skilling via learning, development and knowledge sharing platforms.</p>	<p>By 2020 increase the number of residents attending ticketed events from 1 in every 5 to 1 in every 4.</p> <p>Establish communications working group by 2016.</p> <p>Invest in media monitor for Belfast's culture, arts and heritage; establish 2 year baseline and 2 year growth by 2020.</p> <p>Deliver tailored training/ upskilling programmes including but not limited to audience engagement and digital innovation by 2018.</p> <p>Establish framework for measuring non-ticketed activities by 2018 and establish baseline by 2020.</p> <p>Invest in an appropriate communications platform for culture in Belfast by 2017.</p> <p>Invest in tailored audience development programmes and projects throughout period 2016-2020.</p> <p>Improve visitor/audience servicing in the city including signage and signposting by 2017.</p>	

Theme FOUR

Strengthening the sector

Belfast's culture and arts scene is vibrant and varied, and it contributes significantly to the life of the city. But it is reliant on public subsidy in a time of economic constraint, which is a risk to its sustainability. We recognise that the market alone will never wholly support our cultural organisations - indeed, this is one of the reasons why we fund them. However, culture and arts can help lead us out of recession, providing creative solutions in challenging times.

And as a building block for prosperity, they provide a platform for other industries, creating jobs and driving indirect income in to the city, for example, in the tourism and creative industries sectors. To enable organisations to unlock their economic potential, we will facilitate skills training and help them seek out and avail of new income streams. This will include opening doors to tourism and creative industries, growing closer relationships with other sectors and with European partners and providing business

development support to help them become more successful.



A Cultural Framework for Belfast cannot be achieved in isolation, and we will work in partnership with other key agencies, including through a proposed memorandum of understanding with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Internally, we will work across all business areas within Council - from City Events and Venues to Parks and Good Relations - to ensure our cultural organisations are used and supported in the continued development of the city.

Aims	Commitment	Actions /Targets	What success will look like
Providing opportunities for organisations to develop and diversify their income streams.	Maintain financial investment in culture, arts and heritage.	For every £1 we invest, a further £8 will be generated.	We will have a strong, skilled and multifaceted arts and heritage infrastructure across the city.
Increasing investment in culture, arts and heritage organisations.	Facilitate collaborations and partnerships.	£2m of external funding by 2020.	
Developing better infrastructure for skills development in Belfast.	Support organisations to identify and increase assets.	Support 300 full time jobs a year.	Our culture and arts offer will be more competitive than other UK and ROI cities.
Promoting partnership working and collaboration.	Identify and attract external funding, as appropriate, including EU.	Establish MoUs with key strategic partners.	
	Increase access to creative/make space.	Carry out audit of current support for career development and identify gaps by 2017.	
	Promote entrepreneurial skills development.	Carry out review of small grants programmes by 2016 and launch new programme by April 2017.	
	Ensure there is an effective strategy for ongoing support of existing cultural infrastructure.	Establish creative/ cultural ambassadors scheme.	
	Ensure cultural sector's contribution to the city is recognised in the Belfast Agenda.	Deliver tailored skills and career development programmes by 2018.	
	Develop and support research priorities for the arts and heritage sectors.	Deliver support programme for creative start up/ new business models by 2018.	
	Ensure cultural sector's contribution to the city is recognised in the Belfast Agenda.	Invest in research and development through appropriate small grants by 2017.	
	Develop and support research priorities for the arts and heritage sectors.	Provide development grants for organisations not currently in receipt of core funding by 2018.	
	Develop and support research priorities for the arts and heritage sectors.	Benchmark Belfast against comparator cities and carry out annual research by 2017.	
	Develop and support research priorities for the arts and heritage sectors.	Support peer to peer cultural partnerships between Belfast based organisations/ artists and national/ international partners by 2018.	
	Develop and support research priorities for the arts and heritage sectors.	Review supply of work spaces, studios and creative spaces and develop plans to address unmet demand including use of Council owned buildings by 2019.	
	Develop and support research priorities for the arts and heritage sectors.	Ongoing support for Forums including Culture, Festivals and Visual Arts.	



Subject:	Bid for 24 Hour World Endurance Championship 2017 (Athletics)
Date:	9 December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	Over the last year Council Officers have been working with the local organising committee, who operate under the auspice of Athletics Northern Ireland, in their bid to secure the 2017 Twenty-Four Hour World Endurance Championship. This paper contains a request for approval of an underwriting letter of support in order that the organisers' bid can be endorsed by United Kingdom Athletics (UKA), which in turn will allow the submission to be presented to the International Association of Ultrarunners (IUA). in order to secure the event for Belfast
1.2	For Councillors' information, the IUA operates under the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Committee is asked to consider whether <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a letter of support, underwriting up to a value of £50,000, the bid for the World 24 Hour World Championship in 2017, should be issued by Council to United Kingdom Athletics. This will enable the bid to go in-front of the International Association of Ultrarunners in order to secure the event for Belfast.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> This event would be staged from the 30 June to the 2 July 2017, and would attract approximately four hundred participants, accompanied by four hundred coaches and support staff. It is also estimated that the event would attract around 1,000 spectators

	and create approximately 5,000 bed-spaces, which in turn would generate £364,000 additional economic activity for Belfast.
3.2	The main race elements of the event would take place in the Council owned Victoria Park, with the opening and medal ceremonies being staged at Belfast City Hall. Both these elements are subject to Council approval. Three hundred of the proposed competitors would come from out-of-state and the event would be in keeping with the Belfast Agenda, in that the Championship would not only help the local economy through tourism bed-nights, but would portray the city as an active and vibrant place to visit.
3.3	To date Council Officers have issued general letters of support to assist the local organisers, who operate under the auspice of Athletics Northern Ireland. However, United Kingdom Athletics have now indicated that they will not support the bid unless an underwriting commitment is made by a commercial sponsor or public body. The total cost of staging the event is £78,761 and the organisers have secured £28,761 from commercial sponsors and other sources, including personal loans. However, the local bid group has been unable to gain an underwriting commitment for the outstanding £50,000, thus Belfast City Council is being to act as guarantor for the bid up to the amount stated £50,000.
3.4	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> The organisers have given assurances that they will address the cash shortfall prior to the event. Any underwriting arrangement agreed by the Council would be subject to a final business case and legal contract. They have also stressed that the likelihood of Belfast City Council being asked to pay the full £50,000 is low, with the Council's commitment likely to be £10,000, which would be sought via Belfast City Council's annual Support for Sport Events grants scheme.
3.5	To date Belfast city Council has made no resource commitment to this event or its bid. However, if Council agrees to underwrite the proposal, and the bid is successful, it would mean that BCC would be exposed to a possible £50,000 shortfall in 2017. Therefore, Members are asked to note that Officers would attempt to address the financial implications as part of the Development Department's budgets for the 2017/18 period.
3.6	<u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u> Belfast City Council Officers will work with the local organisers to ensure that all sections of society in Belfast can become involved in the event.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached

4.1	None
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Subject:	Request for Council Support for Chinese New Year 2016
Date:	9 th December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, European & International Relations Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to advise Members of a request for financial support for the annual Chinese New Year celebrations for 2016 and to recommend approval of the request.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider and agree Council support for the Chinese New Year 2016 celebrations, up to a value of £4,000. <p>This budget is available from within the Council's International Relations budget.</p>
3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware that the Council's International Relations Framework promotes civic and business linkages in key global markets, including China. One of the main partners on the China work is the Confucius Institute at Ulster University. The Institute is funded to support cultural development outside of China.

3.2	On 18 February 2016, the Confucius Institute, in partnership with the Culture Office of the Chinese Embassy in London, plans to hold a celebration event to mark the Chinese New Year. The Institute is inviting the famous Chongqing Sichuan Opera House to perform the Sichuan opera for a Belfast audience.
3.3	This event will bring senior officials from the Chinese Embassy in London to officially recognise Chinese New Year and, in particular, the opening of the Chinese Consulate General in Belfast. An audience of 3,000 people is expected to attend the event.
3.4	Invited guests to the event will include all Council Members with a speaking role for the Lord Mayor alongside the Chinese Ambassador and Consul General. Schools participating in the Confucius programme will also be invited to attend.
3.5	The overall budget for hosting the event is around £24,000. The Institute has requested a sum of £4,000 from Belfast City Council towards the costs of hosting the event. This budget is available from within the council's International Relations budget.
3.6	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The Confucius Institute has requested £4,000 from Belfast City Council towards an overall project cost of £24,000. This would be used to assist with the costs of promotion as well as hospitality and venue costs.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>No specific equality or good relations implications.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None



Subject:	Nashville Visit and Action Plan
Date:	9 th December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, European & International Relations Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of the report is to seek approval for an outward Nashville visit in March 2016 (11-16 March 2015).
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agrees to the Nashville visit, with participation of the Lord Mayor and Chair of the Nashville Steering Group or their nominees, and the development of a 2015/16 action plan through the Nashville Steering Group. <p>A budget of £5,000 from the International Relations budget has been set aside for work on Nashville, including this visit.</p>

3.0	Main report
3.1	Members may be aware that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the Mayor of Nashville and the Lord Mayor of Belfast in 1994 to promote cultural, tourism and business development opportunities between the two cities.
3.2	<p>There was limited activity in the early days due to limited resources locally and changes in the political environment in Nashville, but around 2010 there was renewed interest in expanding the link from local partners who had made some progress in developing their own bilateral links with partners in Nashville. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff exchanges, joint research and host visits between Queen’s University and Vanderbilt University – Establishing and building on the Belfast – Nashville Songwriters Festival – Participation in the annual Music Cities Irish Festival – Development of links between Ulster University and Google Fibre to facilitate exchange programmes – Development of links with Ulster and Belmond Universities – Exploration of healthcare links and conventions between the NI based EU Connected Health Alliance and the US Commercial Service – Exploration of partnerships between Visit Belfast and the Nashville Visitor and Convention Bureau.
3.3	The council convened a steering group of interested stakeholders including Ulster and Queen’s Universities, Invest NI, Visit Belfast, Tourism Ireland, Tourism NI, Generator NI, BBC and Belfast Nashville Songwriters. They agreed to a collective programme of activities covering a wide range of issues including education, economic development, genealogy and cultural tourism.
3.4	Individual partners have been working on their respective areas of collaboration such as QUB’s links with Vanderbilt University and the successful Belfast-Nashville Festival. The challenge has been to consider whether and how the Council can add value to those links and, as such, whether there needs to be a focus on exploring opportunities for additional links with Nashville and what the Council’s role should be in that regard.

3.5	<p>In September 2015, Nashville elected a new Mayor – Megan Barry. The Mayor’s Office has indicated an interest in exploring opportunities for further mutual linkages between Nashville and its partners, including Belfast. The Sister Cities lead in Nashville has been in regular contact and has confirmed that a delegation from Nashville will travel to Belfast before the Sister Cities Summit in Dublin (April 2016).</p>
3.6	<p>In order to establish relationships with the new Mayor and to help test out the new city positioning narrative to international markets, it is proposed that the Lord Mayor (or nominee) visits Nashville in early March 2016. Invitations may also be issued to partners (subject to them covering their own costs) to visit the city at the same time and maximise the impact of the Belfast presence in Nashville. The objectives of the Belfast City Council visit would be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ascertain the political support for additional links between the cities – including exploring the potential resource commitment on the Nashville side to undertake trade missions and develop joint projects around tourism, healthcare and music – On the basis of this engagement, explore potential areas for collaboration for the coming year and beyond – Explore opportunities to profile Belfast as a cultural tourism destination in the Southern States and increase tourism revenue from this market – Promote Belfast’s investment message, as articulated through the place positioning work – Profile Belfast as a creative business location by engaging with the Belfast- Nashville Songwriters’ Showcase which will be broadcast to over 60 million homes in USA – Plan ahead for the visit to Belfast by Nashville partners in April 2016, as part of the Sister Cities network conference in Dublin.
3.7	<p>There are opportunities for engagement in and profiling at a number of significant events including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Music City’s Irish Festival on 12 March hosted with the Sister Cities and Mayor’s Office, profiling the creativity and vibrancy of Belfast. The Lord Mayor has been invited to attend a reception of delegates and music businesses and to work on incorporating a Belfast branded stage with Belfast musicians in future years. A Queen’s and Vanderbilt float for the festival is also being developed – Tourism Ireland’s tourism showcase event on the same day, profiling Belfast as a

	<p>business and leisure tourism destination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Activities as part of the Belfast-Nashville Songwriters’ Showcase, including events to be broadcast across USA. The Lord Mayor has been invited to be filmed at this with the Mayor of Nashville to introduce Belfast artists at the event. This programme will be broadcast to over 60million homes in the USA.
3.8	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>A budget of £5,000 from the International Relations budget has been set aside for the work on Nashville, including this visit. This will cover travel and accommodation costs for the Lord Mayor, Chair of the Nashville Steering Group, (or nominees) and one officer.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>No specific equality or good relations implications.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None



Subject:	Go Ultra Low City Scheme - £10m ecarni bid
Date:	December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Clare McKeown, Sustainable Development Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
	To update Members on the £10 million submission to the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) competition for NI to become a regional exemplar for the uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs). The bid, which is 100% funded, is led by the Department of Regional Development Ecarni team, and Department of Environment in conjunction with local Councils. Belfast City Council is the lead Council.
2.0	Recommendations
	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the measures outlined in the NI ecarni bid Agree that Council will sign the NI Ultra Low Emission 'charter' as part of the bid process
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u>
	The UK Climate Change Act introduced in 2008 sets a target of 80% reduction in green house gas emissions by 2050. As the transport sector is responsible for around 20% of the UK's emissions particular focus is being placed on the transition to alternatively fuelled vehicles in order to meet this target.

In early 2015 £35 million was allocated to a 'Go Ultra Low City Scheme' to encourage city regions to take a lead role in the transition to electric and other ultra low emission vehicles. This is an opportunity for a city/region to build an international reputation for the uptake of ultra low emission vehicles – a major growth market and technology over the next fifteen years.

In April 2015 the DoE/DRD E-car team proposed leading a regional bid to the scheme in partnership with Belfast City Council. Following an initial application the Northern Ireland bid (**ecarni**) was shortlisted with ten other UK cities; four of which will be allocated up to £10 million.

The NI bid is designed to contribute to the wider sustainable transport vision for the region. It will use targeted policy and financial incentives, alongside strong marketing and innovative ICT to inform and monitor measures, to promote and build momentum for a major change in the uptake of ULEVs across the region. Since April the DRD e-car team have been working with the public and private sector to draft the bid, which includes the following measures:

- i. **Put in place a Diesel to Electric vehicle scrappage scheme** to encourage the switch to EV's to owners of pre-2006 diesel vehicles which emit very high levels of pollution.
- ii. **Provide incentives for an EV motability scheme** to encourage greater uptake of EV as the car of choice for eligible customers.
- iii. **Create an EV salary sacrifice scheme** for NICS with further implementation to the wider public and private sector
- iv. **Create a strong marketing and communications campaign** which will increase the awareness of ULEVs , promote the individual measures and develop an online digital platform which will act as a 'one stop shop' for EV drivers.
- v. **Develop a Northern Ireland Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Strategy** and international policy guidance which focuses on the development of short , medium and long term policies and measures to encourage the uptake of ULEVs including where appropriate amendments to local legislation and policy in the transport , planning and environmental sectors.
- vi. **Advance the legislative process** to permit all approved electric vehicles in motorway bus lanes for a dedicated period of time.
- vii. **Work with local Councils**, private sector and procurement partners to establish a series of highly visible dedicated rapid charging areas and parking zones in strategic

locations throughout Northern Ireland.

- viii. **Create a highly branded EV car pool** with associated infrastructure for staff use across all government departments, public and private sectors Advance the legislative process to ensure that only these highly branded EVs can access city centre bus lanes on arterial routes.
- ix. **Through the use of data analytics and behavioural monitoring mechanisms,** work with Invest NI, Queen's University, Ulster University and University of Hertfordshire to identify and monitor the outcome of, measures to be implemented by the bid.

One of the key criteria of the bid is evidence of support from key regional organisations. The bid team has asked all partners involved in the bid to demonstrate their support for the bid in principle by signing up to an Ultra Low Emission 'charter' (see **Appendix 1**). All partners are asked to sign up to general promotion and marketing activities as outlined (some of which the Council is already involved with) and some more specific activities:

- I. Introduce a **ULEV policy** throughout the Council by June 2016, which will demonstrate our commitment towards sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.
- II. Investigate the establishment of an **EV Car Pool for Council staff** by September 2016, in conjunction with the overall 'highly branded' and visible EV Car Pool being implemented by the ecarNI team.
- III. Assist in the identification of land within Belfast City Council area which could be utilised for '**EV Rapid Charging and Parking Zones**' in the Council area, in particular, land in or adjacent to Air Quality Management Areas.
- IV. Encourage the formation of an **ecarni members club** in the Council area for existing and future EV drivers, who will meet frequently to exchange new information and share EV driving experiences.
- V. Deliver a programme of **marketing activities** in partnership with the ecarNI team, to help promote ULEVs in the council area.
- VI. **Engage with the local business and wider community** to promote and develop the ecar brand to facilitate a change the region's travelling practices

It is acknowledged that some of the specific measures will require more investigation and, if the bid is successful, further agreement with DRD on the appropriate level of funding required.

	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None at present</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>Equality and good relations implications, in relation to this policy, are still under consideration. Further updates will be sent to the Equality and Diversity Officer in due course.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix One: Ultra Low Emission ‘charter’



Northern Ireland's
Go Ultra Low Proposal

Go Ultra Low Bid - Charter

I/We on behalf of [Belfast City Council](#) commit to making Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) a central focus within our organisation and embedding a sustainable transport approach in our decision-making and the ways we work. This means we will:

- Share examples of how we are considering / using ultra low emission vehicles across our organisation;
- Show how we are promoting the use of ultra low emission vehicles together with alternative more sustainable travel options for our staff and employees;
- Demonstrate our thinking and vision for the future, and the role our organisation plays;
- Report our progress against sustainable transport indicators;
- Provide examples of the work that we have done to promote sustainable transport within Northern Ireland.

We agree to provide the following commitments to the Go Ultra Low Bid:

General Marketing

- Be an active loyal ambassador or advocate for ultra low emission vehicles in Northern Ireland;
- Show clear leadership for the uptake of ultra low emission vehicles, within the Northern Ireland car retail sector;
- Provide leading information and support to all our staff, so that they can promote the benefits of ultra low emission vehicles and provide the best available information about them to customers;
- Engage fully with the ecarni team, to help them promote the benefits of ultra low emission vehicles and significantly increase their uptake across Northern Ireland;
- Fully utilize the Ecarni Ambassador (stakeholder) toolkit, as soon as it becomes available;
- Contribute and manage relevant content on the ecarni digital platform (one-stop-shop);
- Ensure that at least one member of staff will attend all the ecarni stakeholder group meetings, to ensure that the voices of Belfast City Council are being heard.
- Contribute financial support towards the package of ecarni marketing activities, including a high profile, multi-media advertising campaign, high profile events, an authoritative and fully interactive digital platform (one-stop-shop) for ULEVs in

Northern Ireland; a suite of promotional materials and ambassador toolkits and so on. The level of funding per year, over the 5 year period, would be discussed and agreed with all 11 councils in Northern Ireland if the ecarNI bid has been successful.

Specific Measures to Increase the Uptake of ULEVs, some of which will have financial support from the ecarNI funding award (if successful)

- Introduce a ULEV policy throughout the Council by June 2016, which will demonstrate our commitment towards sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.
- Investigate the establishment of an EV Car Pool for Council staff by September 2016, in conjunction with the overall 'highly branded' and visible EV Car Pool being implemented by the ecarNI team.
- Assist in the identification of land within Belfast City Council area which can be utilised for 'EV Rapid Charging and Parking Zones' in the Council area, in particular, land in or adjacent to Air Quality Management Areas.
- Encourage the formation of an ecarNI members club in the Council area for existing and future EV drivers, who will meet frequently to exchange new information and share EV driving experiences.
- Deliver a programme of marketing activities in partnership with the ecarNI team, to help promote ULEVs in the council area.
- Engage with the local business and wider community to promote and develop the ecar brand to facilitate a change the region's travelling practices.

Other Specific Commitments:

- *Other commitments can be listed below*

Name / position _____

Signed on behalf of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX