

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 9th October, 2019

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairperson);
Aldermen Kingston and Spence; and
Councillors S. Baker, Beattie, Brooks, Ferguson,
Graham, Heading, Howard, T. Kelly, Lyons, Murphy,
O'Hara and Whyte.

In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mr. S. Dolan, Senior Development Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Flynn, Garrett, Hanvey, McAllister and McLaughlin.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9th September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Presentations

Update on Committee Workshop/Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 5th June, it had agreed a number of headline priorities for the 2019/20 programme of work, which would, amongst other things, assist in delivering the Belfast Agenda and key corporate priorities such as the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy the Belfast Region City Deal and the Inclusive Growth Framework. The Committee had agreed also that a workshop be held to allow for more detailed discussion to take place around the headline priorities.

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy reported that the workshop had taken place on 25th September and that discussions had focused primarily upon the following areas:

- maximising the Council's role as convenor and influencing strategic city issues and investments, such as housing, transport, regeneration, connectivity, and open and green shared spaces, to encourage the establish of sustainable city centre living;
- continuing to lobby for the transfer of regeneration powers to local councils;
- building upon strategic partnership working to promote the city's assets and to realise the opportunities presented by the Belfast Region City Deal;
- the Council's role as a responsible employer and leading by example;
- delivering a twin track approach to support people into employment and engaging with employers to support upskilling and progression opportunities;
- the need to build strategic relationships with key employers in order to understand how we can help them and they can help us address some of the key city challenges;
- providing tailored and targeted support to enable those who face multiple barriers to employment to benefit from a range of employability and skills support;
- the need to be ambitious in encouraging new businesses to start up and grow in Belfast and to think more radically about the types of support that might help them;
- the increasing importance of tourism to the city's development and the need to continue to invest, in order to ensure that the city feels the benefit of the tourism growth;
- the need for meaningful and ongoing community engagement for city developments and infrastructure; particularly in terms of established communities and neighbourhoods;
- the benefit of master planning to bring forward coherent urban design;
- the benefit of working with public and private sector partners to provide critical mass in terms of attracting and bringing forward development opportunities which can deliver mixed tenure residential, along with a viable mix of commercial, social enterprise and cultural opportunities;

- exploring the feasibility of alternative options to help address key issues, for example, co-development of housing, a business start-up offer for the Belfast economy, increasing vitality in the city centre and the future role of retail, generating a city centre environment to build communities in which people choose to live; and
- learning from the experience of the Bank Buildings Primark response to inform and manage our approach to intervene and support residents and businesses, for example, in the event of recent redundancies.

He pointed out that the workshop had proven to be beneficial in that it had enabled Members to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and challenges across the City and had allowed for more focused engagement around the proposed approaches for progressing programmes of work.

The Senior Development Officer then provided the Committee with an update on the progress of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, with reference being made to the eight core principles, the key projects/places to focus efforts, the special action areas, key achievements and current challenges.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the update on the strategic workshop and the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy; and
- ii. agreed that a workshop be held to discuss in greater detail the issue of residential provision, in the context of the City core and those areas surrounding it.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following two items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion of the items as, due to the nature of the item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Gasworks Northern Fringe Masterplan

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Masterplan for the Gasworks Northern Fringe.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the information contained within the report;
- ii. noted that an outline planning application for the Gasworks Northern Fringe lands for a comprehensive mixed-use development would be submitted in due course; and
- iii. noted that a report would on 25th October be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee seeking its endorsement of a recommendation that the development of the commercial use elements identified on Plots A and D of the Gasworks Northern Fringe be brought forward, aligned with the Council's emerging inclusive growth framework, as social enterprise, co-operative or community infrastructure schemes and within an agreed timeframe.

City Centre Public Realm Catalyst Projects

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 11th September, it had agreed emerging proposals to bring forward small scale, public realm catalyst projects for three cluster areas, namely Chichester Street/Callender Street, Greater Clarendon/Sailortown and Blackstaff Square and its environs, which could utilise pre-existing developer contributions which had already been received or been agreed through completed planning agreements.

The Senior Development Officer submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided additional information on the design principles upon which the public realm proposals would be based and the process for taking them forward, including engagement with Members and wider stakeholders. The report provided also details of the scope of the proposed project for Chichester Street/Callender Street and sought approval to proceed with the proposal.

The Committee:

- i. approved the scope of the Chichester Street/Callender Street public realm project and agreed to proceed with design development and delivery, in partnership with the Department for Communities, subject to the project costs being approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee;
- ii. noted the proposals for further engagement in respect of the development of public realm proposals at Blackstaff Square and Greater Clarendon/Sailortown;
- iii. approved the scope of the emerging Greater Clarendon/Sailortown project and noted that further details would be provided at a future meeting, following initial engineering assessments; and

- iv. approved the allocation from existing Departmental budgets of £100k towards the design and development of public realm and environmental improvement works.

Growing Businesses and the Economy

Update on Growing the Economy

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress against a series of commitments set out under the Growing the Economy pillar of the Belfast Agenda. The update is in line with the activity that was approved by the Committee on 6th March, 2019.

2.1 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is requested to note the Council’s performance and contribution to delivering against Belfast Agenda ambitions to grow the Belfast economy, focusing on the current support for Business Start-up, Growth and Investment.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 At its meeting on 6th March, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the delivery of the Growing the Economy work plan for the 2019/20 financial year. Since April 2019, officers have been working on a range of activities to address the challenges around low levels of start-up, innovation, business competitiveness and productivity and ensure that all of our residents are connected to economic opportunities.

3.2 This programme of work reflects the commitments of the Inclusive Growth Framework in relation to social enterprise and cooperative development, and in supporting the development of businesses in high growth sectors to create opportunities to connect our residents to the jobs of the future.

3.3 With the Enterprise Framework now in place, we have been working in partnership with stakeholders across the city to put in place an Action Plan to 2021. The framework sets a vision for the city as a great place to start and grow a business. It outlines recommended steps to be taken for Belfast to be ‘recognised for its diverse community of entrepreneurs, who benefit from a comprehensive, planned

and coherent system of enterprise support, which fulfils their needs at all stages of the business growth life-cycle'. Aligned to the thematic priorities of the framework, officers have been working to develop research and intelligence and deliver and further develop the range of support offered by the council. We have also been working to put in place the foundations required to support us to deliver the service more effectively through the development of a new customer relationship management system, and processes to ensure the support is flexible to meet the needs of the market.

3.4 Whilst work is ongoing to deliver the 2019/20 work plan, the key achievements to date are outlined below.

3.5 City for Enterprise

We deliver a range of initiatives which enable individuals including those from traditionally underrepresented groups to explore opportunities to start their own business or consider self-employment as a career path. To date 193 females have been engaged in activities with 72 accessing support through workshops, boot camps, peer support and pitching competitions. Our outreach and enterprise awareness support will culminate in a week-long series of events and workshops on Global Entrepreneurship Week in November. During that week, we plan to engage 400 individuals and support them to take positive steps towards starting a business. We are also exploring opportunities to engage with local community groups and individuals who are economically inactive to support them into self-employment as well as supporting access to St George's Market and other test trading opportunities for new businesses.

3.6 Following on from research undertaken as part of the Global Entrepreneurship Model (GEM) report for Belfast, the potential for additional economic impact to be generated from targeted graduate entrepreneurship activity was identified. The Council has been working with both universities and the FE college for some time to deliver targeted enterprise support for college and university students, alongside their studies. 37 students participated on this support last year with 11 reporting that they are actively trading to date. A further 6 of the students have gone on to access salary support through Invest NI, enabling them to build their business and undertake the necessary development work required in advance of them being able to draw down a full salary. This year's programme is launching

in September with the new academic year and will support 40 university and college students to start their own business.

3.7 City for Business Start-Ups

New businesses, social enterprises and cooperatives can access a range of advice and guidance to support them to go out on their own. Since April this year, 182 individuals have been engaged in the 'Go for It' programme which has supported the development of 112 new jobs to date. In June we launched a new initiative to extend the range of support available to new starts by providing additional mentoring and access to financial and other incentives. Since its launch, 37 new businesses have been supported and we have allocated £6,000 worth of incentives, helping towards business overheads.

3.8 One of the most significant challenges in Belfast is not only the number of business starts but also the lack of new businesses that have the potential for high growth. While there has been significant inwards into the development of more knowledge-based and high growth companies, our micro-business base is still predominantly locally-focused and the key individuals often require targeted support in terms of leadership skills to drive future growth.

3.9 In recognition of the need to provide a more focused support service to those businesses that have the potential to be high growth companies, the Council has put in place a support programme in collaboration with Invest NI and with support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). 33 businesses are currently accessing this support and, since April 2019, this has helped create 44 full time or equivalent jobs and helped the companies secure nearly £1m in export sales.

3.10 Members have confirmed their commitment to provide targeted support for the social enterprise and cooperative sectors and this is reflected in our new social enterprise programme which was launched in June 2019. This year to date our support for the Social Enterprise and Cooperative sector support has enabled us to work with 11 individuals or organisations. Later in the year, the Crowdfunder Belfast pilot project will go live. This will provide opportunities for 10 social enterprises or cooperatives to generate up to £10k of public pledges in order to grow their organisation. Subject to attracting funding from other sources, Belfast City Council will provide up to £5,000 of financial support towards each of these businesses.

3.11 City for Business Growth

Members will be aware that, since 2015, the Council has had statutory responsibility for business start-up, social enterprise and targeted business support e.g. for female entrepreneurship. The Council also works with early stage and small businesses that are not yet Invest NI clients (in that they have not yet reached the export threshold or are not in key growth sectors). The support provided helps the companies address a specific growth challenge and covers issues such as marketing, cashflow management, digital skills and leadership development. Since April this year, we have supported 120 businesses by providing targeted 1-2-1 mentoring on their specific areas of challenge. We have also supported a further 16 companies to export to new markets. Collectively, these companies expect to generate very initial increases in sales of around £1.6million.

3.12 In August 2019, this Committee endorsed the ‘Way to Scale’ programme and this was subsequently launched – along with our partners from Catalyst Inc. and Invest NI – in early September. The programme aims to increase the number of businesses with the potential to scale and achieve turnover in excess of £1m in Belfast. 70 businesses have now registered to take part in the business bootcamp which will form part of the programme’s selection process. Following the bootcamp, 10 businesses will be selected to participate in a one week residential as part of Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Entrepreneurship Development Programme. They will also engage in 1-2-1 mentoring and peer workshops with other participating businesses and the programme will close with a one week Boston-based residential programme, which will focus on go-to-market strategies and tactics. We will work with our Boston-based contacts and networks to maximise the return for participating businesses.

3.13 In addition to our programme delivery, we continue to deliver services through the Innovation Factory including access to workspace, workshops and coaching for the growing entrepreneurial community. To date, the service has supported the creation of 125 jobs and houses 44 small businesses. The Innovation Factory is currently at 60% occupancy and the target for 31 Dec 2019 is 68%. The calibre of the businesses at the Innovation Factory is very impressive and they continue to create positive profile for themselves and for the centre. One example of this is a local start-up tenant, New Era Global Sports, which recently attracted a significant amount of positive publicity due to its

association with Rio Ferdinand. He recently visited the centre to launch the business.

3.14 City for Investment

In 2018, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee agreed to the establishment of a 'City Investment Service' on a pilot basis, for a period of 18 months. The aim of the service is to make the process of attracting and managing investment to the city as straightforward as possible. Since its launch, the team has worked with over 76 businesses. An evaluation into this service is currently underway, and this will be used to inform potential future options and approaches for delivery. Further details will be presented to the Committee at a future date.

3.15 Financial and Resource Implications

The activities outlined within this report will be resourced from the 2019/20 Economic Development budget agreed by this Committee on 6 March 2019.

3.16 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

Each of the proposed projects referenced in this report is informed by statistical research, stakeholder engagement and complementary policies and strategies. The unit is currently undertaking a process of equality screening on the overall work programme, this will ensure consideration is given to equality and good relation impacts throughout the delivery of each project.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation.

Update on Working and Learning

The Director of Economic Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the programme of work being delivered in the 2019/20 financial year under the Working and Learning pillar of the Belfast Agenda. The work programme supports the inclusive growth ambitions of the Council by addressing barriers to progression, focusing upon educational underachievement

and supporting residents to access employment and/or upskilling opportunities.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is requested to:

- i. note the content of the report and the progress achieved to date on the 2019/20 work plan to support the delivery of the Working and Learning strands of the Belfast Agenda; and**
- ii. note the ongoing work to inform the future strategic direction of the employability and skills work programme, supporting the ambitions of inclusive growth and Belfast Agenda commitments.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 The Committee will recall that, at the meeting on 6th March 2019, approval was granted for a series of activities that would support the commitments made under the Working and Learning pillar of the Belfast Agenda. Through this work programme, the Council is directly contributing towards the Belfast Agenda to better connect people to economic opportunities by:

- addressing educational inequalities and increasing skill levels;**
- connecting local residents to employment opportunities across a range of sectors;**
- addressing barriers to employment; and**
- supporting young people to progress through coherent pathways into employment, education and/or training.**

3.2 This work programme mirrors the commitments of the Council within the Inclusive Growth Framework in relation to employability and skills. It sets out how the Council is proactively working to address the barriers preventing city residents from accessing economic opportunity and to address the challenges of poverty and deprivation, focusing on the role of skills development and sustainable job creation as a way out of poverty.

- 3.3 However, Members should be aware that the extent to which Council alone is able to make an impact in this area is limited by its statutory powers and by available resources (both financial and staff resources). In order to achieve a step change, partnership working with government departments and employers is crucial. Strategic opportunities presented through the Belfast Region City Deal and Community Planning provide mechanisms through which the Council can better influence regional policies to ensure that provision is aligned to local needs. Moving forward, the Council's role in this area will require a combination of direct delivery interventions, where opportunities exist for investment, as well as a wider influencing role to champion the needs of the city within a regional context.
- 3.4 Recognising the importance of buy-in from other organisations, officers are working closely with partners to refresh the Employability and Skills Framework which was developed in 2015 and which served as a pre-cursor to the commitments within the Working and Learning theme of the Belfast Agenda. The refreshed framework will allow a greater degree of focus, ensuring that supply meets demand in terms of new employment opportunities. This will include exploring how the Council can work strategically with key employers to develop and deliver interventions that will create sustainable job opportunities for Belfast residents. A critical element of this work will include a commitment to supporting inclusive growth through our employment and skills interventions.
- 3.5 In parallel with these planned activities, there is a significant degree of work already under way on the delivery of the 2019/20 Working and Learning work plan. Progress to date (since April 2019) indicates that nearly 1750 Belfast residents have been supported, of which almost 650 have positively progressed into employment, education and/or training – 590 of these into employment alone. An update on the key elements of the Working and Learning work plan is outlined below:
- 3.6 **Supporting Access to Employment**
- The largest area of intervention through the employability and skills work programme is focused upon supporting Belfast residents into employment or into better employment. The spectrum of support provided through Council activities and/or funded projects provides a pathway of intervention geared towards supporting residents to positively progress, at their own pace, into a positive destination.

- 3.7 Tailored support for those furthest from the labour market is provided through five European Social Fund (ESF) projects, whose client groups include unemployed, economically inactive, young people (NEETs) and those with disabilities. Across these projects, over 1200 Belfast residents have accessed support to date, of which over 445 have entered employment, a further 35 participants have progressed into further education. The council is a match-funder of these projects: the majority of the funding is provided by Department for Communities (DfC) and ESF.
- 3.8 One of our key tailored interventions is the suite of Employment Academies that we operate. The structure of these varies from programme to programme but they are generally employer-led interventions designed to fill identified employment opportunities. Employers are involved in the design of the training and offer a guaranteed job interview or ring-fence employment opportunities for the specific target groups – principally the economically inactive.
- 3.9 This year we have extended delivery of Employment Academies across a number of sectors including construction, hospitality, transport, health and social care, childcare and leisure. Feedback from employers, including sectoral representative bodies, is very supportive of this model of delivery. Key employers engaged through academies include Translink, GLL, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, as well as a broader spectrum of small employers. Academies continue to be focused upon supporting residents into employment, however further work has been undertaken this year to increase the scale of our upskilling academies supporting residents to develop high level skills to move into better-paid employment. To date our academies have supported 244 Belfast residents, of whom 146 have progressed into employment or better employment (this is in addition to the figure in section 3.7). Average into-employment rates for academies is 65% which compares favourably to European Social Fund provision at 41% and regional employability programmes such as Steps to Success at 31%.

3.10 **Focus on Young People**

High levels of educational underachievement in Belfast coupled with high percentages of youth unemployment mean that there is a need for targeted interventions for affected young people. Over the last year, the Council has been increasing its level of investment and direct intervention

within this area. Key activities and achievements within the last six months include:

- procurement and launch of a citywide GCSE revision programme, aimed at supporting young people at risk of not achieving a C grade in English and/or Maths. This approach builds upon successful delivery models operating in parts of the city, ensuring provision is accessible across Belfast. In the 2019/20 academic year up to 365 young people will be supported;
- over 250 young people have been supported through our youth interventions, providing a range of support including career advice, work experience opportunities and intensive supports for young people at greatest risk of disengaging from the education and/or labour market. Intensive support is currently provided to 65 young people with complex needs and challenges and, to date, over 50% of the young people have positively progressed into employment, education and/or training; and
- work is about to get under way on a new Citywide Youth Support Programme. This programme focuses on providing a flexible programme of support tailored towards the needs of young people, helping them more towards training or employment outcomes. This initiative will operate alongside existing provision, recognising that a combination of interventions are often required to make an impact on a young person's life.

3.11 Strategic Engagement/Partnership Working

Officers are continuing to work in partnership with government departments and wider stakeholders to facilitate better alignment between regional employment and skills programmes and the needs of the Belfast labour market. Key areas of work underway includes:

- engagement on new employability programme – Employability NI: Officers are currently working with Department for Communities in their redesign of future into-work support. This provision will replace the current employability programmes such as Steps to Success. Whilst the proposed delivery model is still emerging, there is a clear focus for the department on local models of delivery with flexibility aligned to employer and participant need. The potential role of the Council in its future implementation is being explored and will be brought

back for members' consideration at a future meeting. To help inform this approach, a number of test and learn pilots are being undertaken. These include looking at how the business start-up support can be better aligned with employability support and exploring better approaches for employer engagement;

- **Belfast Region City Deal:** work is underway to refine the design of the employability and skills programme, aligned to employment opportunities arising from the 22 BRCD projects; and
- **Belfast Agenda Working and Learning Board:** Officers are working with community planning partners to develop collaborative interventions focused on a number of key issues including tackling educational inequality.

3.12 In addition to the above, joint working is taking place with a range of stakeholders to pool resources for maximum impact. For example new areas of work include the delivery of a Northern Ireland Apprenticeship week, commencing 3rd February 2020. The Council, in partnership with the Department for the Economy, Belfast Metropolitan College and apprentice providers, will undertake a series of activities to promote apprenticeships to employers, young people and parents. This is particularly important given the low take-up of apprenticeships in Belfast and the need to address the skills gaps at levels 3 and 4 (A level and BTEC level), as identified in the Belfast skills barometer.

3.13 Supporting Inclusive Growth

The Inclusive Growth Framework presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 20th September outlines the Council's vision and commitments to supporting inclusive growth. The employability and skills work programme directly contributes towards inclusive growth by better connecting local residents to economic opportunity, removing barriers to participation, increasing skill levels and creating coherent pathways for progression. Whilst much of this activity is outward focused, officers have also been working internally to develop ways of maximising the social and economic impact of the Council's procurement and planning functions.

3.14 In partnership with Corporate Procurement Services, officers are considering the options for the implementation of a social value procurement framework. Approaches being

developed take into account best practice from elsewhere, central government ambition to evolve their existing 'Buy Social' approach and any potential cost implications of this approach.

- 3.15 Members will be aware of the draft Developer Contributions Framework which has been brought to the Planning Committee. This framework includes an option to seek contributions from developers to address employability and skills challenges in specific areas. Officers have commenced engagement with a number of key developments, including Waterside and Tribeca. Whilst developer contributions are commonly used across the UK, they have not really been used to date in the Northern Ireland market. To ensure that the Council's approach to developer contributions, in the context of employability and skills, is sufficiently ambitious whilst not discouraging development, officers have commissioned technical support to inform our approach, best upon best practice. The outcome of this work will be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

3.16 Intelligence and Research

As highlighted previously, one of the biggest challenges within the Belfast labour market is the persistently high levels of economic inactivity. Despite significant levels of investment in this area, the levels of economic inactivity have not dramatically changed in recent years. To better understand the challenges and barriers facing this cohort and inform future interventions, the Council and Urban Villages are undertaking research in this area. Delivered through primarily Urban Village areas in Belfast, the study will get a first-hand account from this client group as to the barriers they face. It will also ask questions about the awareness and experience of interventions and will explore what measures might encourage individuals to engage in support programmes. Research findings are expected later this year and will be reported to members in early 2020.

3.17 Finance and Resource Implications

The activities outlined within this report are resourced from the existing 2019/20 budget for the Employability and Skills section of the Place and Economy Department budget approved on 6th March by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

3.18 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessments

Equality screening data is gathered on a regular basis for all of the council's employability interventions. The most recent review has indicated a broad spectrum of participation across our employability programmes. However, officers constantly review participation and take action to encourage participation amongst specific client groups (e.g. additional outreach and engagement support for identified groups). It is important to note that participation on Council interventions is done on a voluntary basis."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Update on Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission

The Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To update the Committee on the terms of reference, programme of work and governance of the newly-established Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to;

- i. note the membership of Commission and how this will link with political decision-making and existing governance arrangements, the resource allocation including financial budgets and also the programme of work; and**
- ii. note the update on the work of the Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission. Regular updates will be provided to this Committee throughout the Commission's lifetime.**

This report was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on Friday 20th September.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 The Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission was set up to support the Council and city partners in the further development and implementation of the priorities as set out

in the Belfast Agenda. A particular focus has been given to the priorities of (1) growing the economy and (2) city development. The Commission will seek to deliver the core objective of inclusive growth.

- 3.2 The work of the Commission will take place in three distinct phases – analysis, visioning and participative to include a full economic review and baseline for the city and completion of a mini stern (by January 2020), scenario planning and ultimately the production of a full economic growth plan for the city by Autumn 2020.

Belfast City Council CEO will Chair the Commission and lead its work. She will be accountable for ensuring the Commission meets its goals and works within its terms of reference. The Commission will take evidence from all eight political parties represented on the council and will engage with the City Growth and Regeneration Committee throughout the process.

- 3.4 Accountability for day to day operation of the Commission (SRO) will rest with the Commissioner for Resilience, who will be tasked with advising and supporting the Commission, identifying resources (including from 100RC) and producing final outputs, as part of her requirement to produce a Resilience Strategy for the city. She will work alongside John Tully to ensure that the effective support is in place to support the Commission and its workstreams, provide research and ensure linkages with Community Planning and City Deal. Close working arrangements will also be put in place, the Director of Finance and Resources, the Director of Place and Economy and the City Deal lead and regular reports brought to CMT.

- 3.5 Core membership of the Commission is as follows:

- Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive, Belfast City Council
- Michael Lyons, Chair- English Cities Fund
- Matthew Taylor, RSA (previously led RSA Inclusive Growth Commission)
- Owen Reidy, or nominee, ICTU (tbc)
- Emma Cariaga, British Land
- Alice Charles, World Economic Forum
- Joe O'Neill, Belfast Harbour Commissioners
- Paddy Nixon, Vice Chancellor and President, Ulster University
- Ian Greer, Vice Chancellor and President, Queen's University Belfast
- Rotha Johnston

- Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive, Belfast City Council
- Anne McGregor, NI Chamber of Commerce
- Judith Totten, INI Non-Exec Board Member
- Ed Vernon
- Angela Magowan, Director, CBI Northern Ireland
- Neil Gibson, EY

However, the Commission will also take advice from a wide range of organisations, including the Nevin Institute and JRF etc.

3.6 Inclusive and Sustainable Growth

The Commission's membership has been broadened to include a wider range of economic expertise and viewpoints. ICTU has confirmed it will nominate a member and the Nevin Institute has also been contacted to provide advice and insight to the Commission. As the Commission's work proceeds, it will also seek advice from Trademark and other similar organisations to ensure that insights and practice on co-operative development inform the Commission's work. We are also seeking insight from social enterprise organisations to provide advice throughout. Inclusive growth has been re-emphasised in the Commission's terms of reference and its title brief, and Commission members were also briefed on the importance attached to inclusive growth at its first meeting. Specific reference has been made to cities that have developed economic strategies with inclusive growth or 'good growth' as core goals, and officers have been tasked with seeking input and insights from cities that can demonstrate success in this area. As the Commission develops it will align with ongoing work on climate change and sustainable development and seek advice from Leeds Climate Commission, Place based Climate Action Network (PCAN), Friends of the Earth etc

3.7 Governance and Member Engagement

The Commission is a collaboration between four city institutions, namely, Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour, Queen's University and Ulster University. Each organisation will take part in the Commission as per its own system of governance.

The following approach has been agreed for Belfast City Council:

1. that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee remains the primary Committee through which the Chief Executive will report on the Commission's work. That Committee will ultimately approve early and final drafts of outputs produced by the Commission, for formal ratification by Council. The City Growth and Regeneration Committee will also be consulted;
2. Three events, attended jointly by BCC members and Commission members, will be held throughout the Commission's work. The first will take place in the autumn to inform the Commission's early thinking; the second in early 2020 when some initial themes have begun to emerge and the third to inform draft conclusions;
3. Party briefings will take place in the normal way to ensure that Parties are informed continuously throughout; and
4. A summary note of each Commission meeting will be produced for the Strategic Policy and Resources and City Growth and Regeneration Committees.

3.8 Summary of the Commission's First Meeting

- The first meeting was a general introduction and context setting meeting- held on the evening of the 9th and all day on the 10th September;
- The meeting included presentations from local SME sector and large local and global businesses based in Belfast. It also included an overview of the UK Industrial Strategy – to ensure alignment with wider policy goals. Data was presented on Belfast's existing economic and 'good growth' performance and how it compares with other cities across Europe and globally, as well as presentations and discussion on cities as drivers of inclusive economic growth;

3.9 Some critical issues emerged in the discussion:

- 1. Belfast has an immense opportunity to align its economic ambitions with its social and environmental goals. For example, the transition to a low-carbon economy must be an equitable one, and this, therefore, presents an opportunity to significantly reduce and perhaps eradicate fuel poverty over time. Recent successes by industry (e.g. exceeding our targets on renewables) must be learned from and scaled up;**
- 2. The Commission's eventual conclusions/outputs must ensure that Belfast builds on its strengths- where it has already proven to succeed. However, its work will be impacted by national (UK) policy and we must be cognisant of that—an example is UK government policy on visa restrictions for international students;**
- 3. The Commission does not intend to work 'behind closed doors' for a year, and then produce a report. It wants to focus on practical solutions to drive city growth in the interests of communities, and will be looking for ways that the four anchor institutions (BCC, Belfast Harbour, QUB and UU) can work collaboratively to deliver 'good growth';**
- 4. Belfast has significant advantages given its proximity to Dublin and London. Both cities will continue to be successful in a post-Brexit environment, and therefore we must find ways to better leverage this connectivity and proximity, given the scale and nature of growth in both cities;**
- 5. The major issues remain those we've been debating for years- how to build skills among those furthest from the labour market and those economically inactive, so that they feel there are opportunities for them, as well as ensuring that we do not lose talent from the city. Skills already emerging as a major challenge;**
- 6. The city has many strengths but we are one of many cities that is promoting our distinctive 'offer'. Belfast has yet to really 'hone' what makes us unique. For example, the fact that the city is a leader in cyber security and food security is little known outside of these niche sectors. Generally speaking, there's a perceived lack of strategy on our economic future- other successful cities are clearer about their assets**

(economic, social and environmental) and focused on what they are going to do with them. A grand vision is needed- e.g. the Oxford/Cambridge corridor has a vision to be the R&D Centre for the UK;

7. A focus on inclusive growth and/or 'good growth' (term used by Edinburgh) is an example of how we can be competitive and distinctive... Glasgow has done this by stressing its quality of life and really pursuing a strong environmental agenda- which is increasingly being sought by people visiting the city and those investing in the city- both companies and workers; and
8. Several presenters/contributors emphasised the importance of focusing on the current drivers of growth – investing more in them rather than trying to do too many things.

3.10 Future meetings/themes/areas of focus:

- Transition to a low-carbon/carbon neutral economy, and how we do this in an equitable way
- Learning from economic shocks and how the poorest and most economically vulnerable have been impacted- including across the generations
- Opportunities from energy transition- retro-fitting our existing stock and possible job opportunities for this/next generation

3.11 Financial and Resource Implications

Utilising existing budgets and resources, a maximum budget of £200k has been allocated to include commissioning three key phases of work and the five workstream research pieces (inc a mini stern).

3.12 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations set out within the report and agreed:

- i. that the data on Belfast's existing economic and 'good growth' performance and how it compared with other cities across Europe, which had been presented at the Commission's first meeting, be circulated to Members; and

- ii. to recommend that a representative of the sustainability sector be added to the membership of the Commission.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

Update on Car Parking Strategy

The Senior Development Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an update on the Belfast Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the update on the Belfast Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan, and progress with key recommendations; and

- ii. agree the proposed approach to engagement across the work strands of the Car Park Strategy.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 The Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) identified the need for a parking strategy and action plan to ensure appropriate provision and location of parking to support the vitality of the city centre. A Car Park Strategy (CPS) and Action Plan was published in May 2018. Public consultation took place between August and November 2016, including an event in the City Hall which was open to Members, key stakeholders and the general public.

- 3.2 The CPS included a comprehensive baseline review of parking, focused largely within the city centre and surrounding neighbourhoods, which identified parking issues, challenges and opportunities, and outlined a number of objectives and actions to support the Strategy's vision; *'Belfast is a city offering sufficient, high quality and appropriately located parking which supports economic development and regeneration within the city by balancing the requirements of residents, businesses, commuters and visitors'*.

- 3.3 The baseline review generally concluded that there is sufficient overall public parking supply within the city centre; a significant proportion of all day commuter parking takes place in the city centre; the quality of car parking facilities and payment technology varies greatly; and better management of parking demand and supply is needed to provide an integrated parking information system. The report also noted the impact of commuters who park in mainly residential areas, which prevents local residents from parking, adding to the cluttered feel of individual streets, decreasing perceived safety levels and reducing access for emergency service vehicles.
- 3.4 To address the issues identified, a number of objectives were agreed:
- ensure appropriate provision to support city centre and district centres;
 - encourage sustainable commuter travel;
 - minimise potential impacts on residential communities;
 - improve quality of parking information;
 - identify opportunities to provide secure bicycle and coach parking; and
 - ensure appropriate provision for taxis within the city centre.
- 3.5 In terms of delivery, a number of actions for the relevant statutory organisations were identified. A Belfast City Council officer led Car Park Working Group, overseen by the City Regeneration and Development section was established to oversee and report on implementation, with actions grouped within four work streams, and a lead department / organisation. A summary of the four work streams is outlined below.
- 3.6 Operational
- The Operational work stream is managed by the City and Neighbourhood Services Off-Street Parking Unit and includes issues such as Parking Orders, tariffs, ticketing and enforcement.
- 3.7 The Off-Street Parking Unit (OSPU) are progressing the development of the Belfast Off Street Parking Order, which

includes a review of tariffs, and blue badge parking policy. In August 2019, City Growth and Regeneration Committee agreed that a twelve-week period of consultation would commence on the Order. During this period, consultees will have the opportunity to put forward their views on other issues including on-street parking and residents parking schemes. The findings of the public consultation will be reported back to Members.

- 3.8 The CPS also suggested providing additional Belfast Bike docking stations within or adjacent to parking facilities. A Strategic Review of the Belfast Bikes Scheme is currently underway, which included engagement with members, and final recommendations will be presented to City Growth and Regeneration Committee at a future date.

3.9 Parking Forum

The Parking Forum work stream covers the actions relating to the wider car parking offer in the City, including off-street, on-street and private operators. The first meeting of the Parking Forum took place in September 2019 and will bring together statutory bodies and private car park operators. The Forum will facilitate sharing of information among stakeholders, with a view to finding solutions to common issues, such as the use of smart technologies to facilitate ease of parking and payment, improved information signage and direction to spaces and the potential introduction of quality standards across car parks.

3.10 Strategic Sites Assessment (SSA)

This work stream is overseen by the City Regeneration and Development Team, with actions including the monitoring of parking stock across the city centre and identifying opportunities to consolidate surface parking to provide a balanced parking offer while releasing development opportunities. The CPS identified a number of benefits from carefully planned rationalisation of surface car parking, including reduced traffic volumes from fewer circulating vehicles; reduced air pollution, improved road safety, and opportunities for regeneration.

- 3.11 An update on the emerging findings of the draft SSA was presented to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in June 2019, followed by engagement with Members, by way of a workshop in September 2019, to discuss the emerging proposals and next steps. The key findings proposed three priority clusters be taken forward for further consideration;

Inner North West, Clarendon and Ormeau Avenue. A further report detailing the outworking's of the member engagement and emerging next steps will be brought to Committee in the near future.

3.12 The SSA work stream will also continue to monitor car parking across the city centre, taking into account new multi-storey car parks, and other factors impacting supply, including future development proposals and transportation schemes. Further analysis is being undertaken and findings will be reported to a future meeting of Committee.

3.13 **(4) Transport**

The actions within this work stream are generally the responsibility of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), in consultation with Council Officers and other statutory partners. DfI provided an update on infrastructure issues including car parking at their Bi-annual Report to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in August 2019.

3.14 The CPS recommends a number of Transport related actions including:

- a review of on-street parking controls (tariffs, controlled zones, ticketing & payment);
- improved enforcement;
- review and implementation of Resident Parking Zones;
- new Park and Ride sites and review of parking costs at Park and Ride sites;
- improvements to cycling infrastructure; and
- minimising traffic in the BMTP core.

3.15 DfI is currently preparing the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Strategy (BMTS) which will inform a number of the actions of the Transport work stream. Council are represented on the Project Board of the BMTS and Members will continue to be consulted throughout the process.

3.16 The Local Development Plan will contain policies relating to transportation and parking, setting Council's position on issues including parking standards for development proposals and accommodation of sustainable modes of travel.

3.17 Engagement

Given the far reaching impacts of work being progressed, engagement and communication with city-wide stakeholders will be critical to successful delivery. In this context, it is important to note that the CPS is a 'City' strategy that will require cross-sector working and collaboration, in particular with Dfl, which remains responsible for on-street parking, transport and infrastructure.

3.18 As agreed by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 9th September (and as ratified by the Council), a twelve-week period of consultation is planned in relation to the Parking Order and members will be updated throughout the process.

3.19 It is proposed that specific engagement is undertaken on the emerging work-streams of the SSA work following agreement of the next steps, and agreement with other land-holders where appropriate.

3.20 It is proposed that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee provides official correspondence to the Dfl highlighting the issues caused by problem parking and to request their support in resolving. Dfl have completed one Residents Parking Zone in the Rugby Road area, which opened in April 2018. The Department will evaluate the impact of this initiative, and review the Residents' Parking Zone Policy. The Dfl is also currently implementing a new RPZ in the Iveagh area.

3.21 It is also proposed that the Council undertakes detailed engagement with communities where on-street parking issues are most prevalent in order to seek agreement on potential priority resident parking schemes in these areas. This engagement will seek to identify the potential requirements of the parking scheme appropriate for the particular area, and to gain majority support to enable the Dfl to action.

3.22 Financial and Resource Implications

In order to undertake the detailed engagement required to address problem parking issues in residential areas there will be a financial requirement of up to £15k which will be met from within existing budgets.

3.23 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

No specific equality or good relations implications at this time.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations, subject to the proposed engagement with the Department for Infrastructure on problem parking alluded to within paragraph 3.20 of the report being amended to provide that the Council would instead develop a comprehensive framework for submission to the Department and make reference to clean air zones, electric vehicle infrastructure and employer workplace levies.

Positioning Belfast to Compete

Cultural Strategy Implementation and Investment

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with further detail on the implementation of the new ten year cultural strategy for Belfast, *A City Imagining* including the financial and resource implications.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the contents of this report and agree to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee the growth proposal outlined therein, as part of the rate setting process; and**
- ii. note the requirement to recruit additional staff resources in order to ensure that the ambition set out in the strategy is achievable specifically to enable the council to secure new levels of partnership funding.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Background

Members will be aware that at the meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in August 2019, the new ten year cultural strategy for Belfast, *A City Imagining 2020-30*, was agreed. This strategy is the culmination of extensive public

engagement and consultation over a 2 year period and is a consolidation of the foundation, commitments and achievements of several preceding strategies and frameworks. A *City Imagining* sets out a long-term commitment to facilitating a new integrated phase of culture-led progress and development for Belfast. The strategy brings together the culture, events and tourism functions within Council as well as identifying areas of cross departmental working to support the Belfast Agenda. This requires a new cross-cutting approach within Council including the design and delivery of:

- a series of new programmes to support 16 priorities set out in the strategy;
- support for a number of flagship strategic projects including bidding for major events; and
- a new investment model including launch of cultural multi-annual grants.

3.2 Culture, arts and festivals make a city a great place to live in, invest in and visit. Culture is also vital to retaining young people. The most successful cities plan for the long term, have the most effective mix of local and international programmes and then in turn attract investment and sponsorship from the private sector. There is significant evidence of economic return from ambitious long term programmes that include international events and attractions. Many cities have also embedded their cultural strategies within their economic growth plans as they seek to ensure skills development, employability programmes and significant outreach work.

3.3 From the outset, it has been recognised that a transformation programme of this nature would require an increase in investment however this should be driven by the need to develop a new sustainable model that would also be supported by securing additional investment from public and private partners. In addition existing departmental budgets would be realigned to ensure maximum efficiency and meet the agreed priorities.

3.4 Implementation and Investment

Given that the strategy makes a long-term commitment over a ten year period, the approach to take it forward is based on a number of strategic implementation phases. Phase one is

for the period 2020-2023 and the draft implementation plans have been circulated.

3.5 The implementation plans address seven key areas of work in order to present a comprehensive programme over the initial 3-4 years delivery of the strategy. This includes:

- Actions required to deliver strategic priorities agreed in the strategy;
- Actions required to support a number of significant strategic projects such as:
 - New approach to Events and Festivals culminating in a year long, international programme of events in 2023; and
 - UNESCO City of Music designation in 2021.
- Priority areas and actions for tourism development (including neighbourhood tourism);
- Evaluation and research;
- Communications and marketing;
- Development of a new governance model; and
- The proposed investment model

3.6 A four year financial forecast has been completed to assess the level of investment required to deliver the high level commitments set out in the strategy that are subsequently detailed out in the implementation plans. This forecast includes:

- design and deliver of annual work programmes;
- bidding and securing major international and peripatetic events;
- establishing home-grown Belfast signature events;
- supporting greater sustainability for the cultural sector including new funding schemes; and
- delivery of key tourism priorities and targets

- 3.7 It should be noted that discussions have begun with Derry and Strabane District Council and with Tourism NI on developing a significant regional programme for 2023. Specific reports will be brought back to the Committee as this develops.
- 3.8 The approach to financial planning follows the overall principles of the strategy and the need to understand that a long view and commitment by Council is required for a number of reasons:
- To maximise the return on Council investment by ensuring a level of transformation and sustainable growth that is not achievable through shorter term approaches or interventions; and
 - to establish a new public-private investment model that leverages significant funding from other public and additional private sources similar to successful models adopted in other cities.
- 3.9 The extensive research undertaken in developing the strategy including in depth understanding of models of best practice in cultural policy and development supports the proposed approach. In addition the detailed and robust evaluation framework that will be established over the period ensures new levels of accountability and a strong evidence base for any future investment.

3.10 **Financial and Resource Implications**

Expenditure on delivering the Cultural Strategy for the period 2020-21 to 2023-24 will be both recurrent and non-recurrent in nature. Table 1 below shows the financial position in relation to the Cultural Strategy. From the table, it is clear that the existing budget is insufficient to cover planned recurrent expenditure. In 2020-21, the deficit is £126k and this rises to £525k by 2023-24. For non-recurrent expenditure, which primarily relates to the 2023 programme, this will be funded from specified reserves. At the start of the financial year 2020-21, there will be £1,948k in the specified reserve. As previously agreed by Members, this reserve has been built up over a number of years in line with good financial management practice. This has been the approach used in the past to fund major events such as Tall Ships in order to avoid a substantial increase in rates in a single year. However, from the table it can be seen that by 2021-22 there will be a shortfall in the reserve of £715k and this grows to £6,943k by 2023-24.

Table 1

Cultural Strategy Current Financial Position

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Recurrent Budget	6,227,282	6,227,282	6,227,282	6,227,282
Expenditure	6,353,864	6,434,764	6,590,319	6,752,868
Balance	- 126,582	- 207,482	- 363,037	- 525,586
Specified reserve	1,948,000	1,386,418	- 715,164	-3,963,746
Non recurrent spend	- 435,000	1,894,100	2,885,545	2,453,996
Deficit	- 126,582	- 207,482	- 363,037	- 525,586
Balance	1,386,418	- 715,164	- 3,963,746	-6,943,328

- 3.11 It is, therefore, clear that Members will need to enhance the rate support to the Cultural Strategy over the required period. It is recommended that an additional £394k through the district rate is added to the recurrent budget each year for the period 2020-21 to 2023-24. This equates to a 0.25% increase on the rate each year. The impact of this increase on the financial position of the Cultural Strategy is outlined in Table 2 below. The recurrent budget is now sufficient to cover recurrent expenditure and also make a contribution each year to non-recurrent expenditure. Whilst there is still a deficit in the specified reserve in the last two years of the programme, the financial plan would be to obtain other public funding from central government and sponsorship income from third parties. The budget includes provision for two additional posts which will be dedicated to securing this external funding.

Table 2

Revised Cultural Strategy Current Financial Position

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Recurrent Budget	6,621,773	7,016,264	7,410,755	7,805,246
Expenditure	6,353,864	6,434,764	6,590,319	6,752,868
Surplus	267,909	581,500	820,436	1,052,378

Specified reserve	1,948,000	1,780,909	468,309	- 1,596,800
Non-recurrent Spend	435,000	1,894,100	2,885,545	2,453,996
Surplus	267,909	581,500	820,436	1,052,378
Balance	1,780,909	468,309	-1,596,800	- 2,998,418

Members are also asked to note that funding the strategy, as proposed, will ensure that the Council will be in a position to provide sustainable financial support to the cultural development of the city for years to come. Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

The cultural strategy, *A City Imagining* has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Rural Needs Assessment (RNA). Any further investment or significant programmes will include equality screening as appropriate.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Update on Tourism and Events

The Director of Economic Development submitted for the Committee’s consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an overview of a number of emerging priority areas of work for the Council to support in relation to the development of tourism and events in Belfast.

1.2 Members will be aware that, at the City Growth and Regeneration Committee meeting in August, the ten year cultural strategy for Belfast was agreed. This strategy identified the potential for Belfast to position itself to visitors as an events destination as well as the need for ongoing wider tourism growth and the linking of current and future tourism attractions to relevant community tourism assets.

1.3 In order to prepare for the delivery of this strategy from April 2020 onwards, a number of priority areas for the remainder of 2019/20 have been identified and are set out in this report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the work ongoing to support tourism development in the City;

- ii. approve the commissioning of the visitor economy research, at a cost not exceeding £25,000;
- iii. approve the commissioning of the Visitor Experience Mapping and Development Plan, at a cost not exceeding £80,000;
- iv. approve the commissioning of a strategic development plan for a reimagined Maritime Festival, at a cost not exceeding £80,000, with £50,000 to come from the Council and £30,000 to come from other partners;
- v. note the priority areas of work from October 2019 till March 2020 and approve the allocation of budget from within existing Departmental resources;
- vi. grant approval for officers to enter into initial discussions with respective event organisers and other partners in relation to the hosting in the City of the All-Ireland Fleadh Ceoil and the Tall Ships Race;
- vii. note the details of emerging events that may be considered for future investment, as part of the Cultural Strategy's positioning of Belfast as an events destination' and grant approval for officers to take forward negotiations with relevant bodies;
- viii. agree to receive subsequent reports with full details of resource implications in advance of any formal bidding process;
- ix. agree to provide a financial allocation of up to £50,000 towards the hosting of the Irish Traditional Music Awards 'Gradam Ceoil', scheduled to take place in Belfast in February 2020; and
- x. grant approval to enter into a temporary sharing arrangement between the Council, Visit Belfast and the Grand Opera House to provide box office services during the renovation works in 2020.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Belfast has evolved into a successful and increasingly popular visitor destination over the last decade or more. This development hasn't gone unnoticed in the global tourism market. In 2018, the Lonely Planet identified Belfast

and Giant's Causeway as the top place to visit. A rich and authentic blend of natural assets coupled with a unique cultural heritage, a vibrant cultural scene and a long-renowned warmth of welcome means that visitors are increasingly being drawn to the city. The new cultural strategy, which has recently been endorsed by the Council, identifies the importance of events and festivals as part of the city's cultural offer. The new investment approach agreed as part of the strategy supports alignment between our investment in events and festivals and the key priorities of the new cultural strategy.

- 3.2 With recent investment in tourism infrastructure and improvements to connectivity, as well as the development of new areas of stand-out such as screen tourism and an award-winning hospitality offer, the key foundations stones are in place to support the development of the tourism sector in the city.
- 3.3 However, there is much more room for growth. Tourism NI has recently announced its ambition for tourism in the region to become a global export business worth £2 billion by 2030. Belfast already makes a significant contribution to the regional tourism industry. Recently-released figures from NISRA (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency) indicate that tourism expenditure was in the region is £395million last year accounting for 41% of the value of tourism expenditure across NI which was £968million.
- 3.4 This ambition is recognised and shared by the key partners from both the public and private sector. They believe that the growth will only be delivered if there is a focused approach to tourism development in the city that is built on maximising the return on the recognised standout by developing and connecting new and existing products and experiences for a growing number of visitors to share and enjoy.
- 3.5 The inclusion of tourism as a key growth sector in the recently-agreed City Deal validates and supports this view. It acknowledges the fact that the sector is already a significant economic generator but recognises the need for significant additional investment in order to move to the next level.
- 3.6 Our engagement with partners in developing the new Cultural Strategy identified the following four priorities for tourism development over the next four years:
 - enhancing and enriching the visitor experience;

- supporting the development of new tourism experiences and connecting existing/new tourism experiences to community tourism assets;
- focusing the tourism marketing and communications;
- Supporting skills development to enhance tourism growth and development.

3.7 A number of actions will be taken forward this year in support of the long-term tourism growth and development that will lay strong foundations for the success of the new Cultural Strategy, in turn supporting the delivery of the Belfast Agenda. Recommended priority actions to be completed over the next six months are outlined below.

3.8 Visitor Economy Research

Despite significant growth in the visitor economy, Belfast still has considerable progress to make in order for the contribution of tourism to the economy to be on a par with comparator UK and ROI cities. A more intelligence-led approach is required to establish the potential size of Belfast's growth market and to understand the threats and opportunities associated with delivering against the regional targets and those set out in the Belfast Agenda. The first step in this process is to undertake an audit of existing research and commission up to date research that will:

- create an evidence base which quantifies Belfast's ongoing position as the regional driver for tourism with detail of the level of growth required within the city region to deliver on established city and regional targets;
- provide insights into the market viability and contribution of further capital or product developments proposed in Belfast between 2020 – 2025 including the Destination Hub/Belfast Story project, as part of the Belfast Region City Deal;
- forecast the number of visitors to Belfast annually until 2025 using existing data sources and trends within a range of agreed scenarios. Using this forecast, establish within those scenarios the expected GVA change for each scenario; and
- assess the potential threats and opportunities to delivering on these targets.

3.9 Visitor Experience Mapping and Development Plan to include an integrated approach to Local Tourism and the Belfast Region City Deal

A number of case studies of successful cities have identified the importance of developing a clear tourism narrative that is then supported by a visitor experience plan. The purpose of a more integrated visitor experience approach is to ensure that there is more effective investment in and positioning of the tourism offer including the need to ensure that the economic benefits of tourism can be accessed across the city. This approach to tourism development will support all four of the priorities set out at 3.6.

3.10 Furthermore, given the development of the Belfast Brand, the emerging Tourism NI experience brand due in market from late 2019 and the Belfast tourism narrative and themes included in the ten-year cultural strategy, it is recommended that Belfast now develops a detailed visitor experience plan that will:

- Increase understanding, coherence and visibility of the authentic Belfast visitor experience;
- Increase understanding of the market fit in relation to product development and positioning;
- Build on and increase sustainability of investments to date;
- Increase understanding of the visitor journey and identify opportunities for increasing dwell time and spend across the city; and
- Add value by creating and co-ordinating a more integrated approach to the Belfast offer.

3.11 The plan will include the following elements:

- mapping of existing tourism assets including an assessment of quality, market fit, sustainability and brand fit;
- completing a gap analysis of experience-based products including consideration for how planned new developments will support additionality rather than displacement or duplication;

- developing and creating thematic and geographic clusters of tourism product across the city;
- producing an investment framework in tourism that will support Council to leverage funding into long-term sustainable tourism development from other public and private sources; and
- clearly and strongly positioning Belfast as the driver for tourism growth in the region and supporting the development of its positioning on the island of Ireland.

3.12 Developing Belfast as an Events Destination

Market research indicates that the key market segment for visitors to Belfast and Northern Ireland is the ‘culturally curious’ visitor. These visitors are interested in the cultural heritage of the place and enjoy the authentic experiences that Belfast has to offer. One of the most popular forms of cultural expression is delivered through the programme of events that take place in the city.

3.13 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its special meeting on 28th August, agreed the new Cultural Strategy for the city ‘A City Imagining’. This includes a new approach to Council support for festivals and events. It proposes a more strategic process of investment, focusing on those events that align most closely with the city narrative and that will deliver on the cultural and economic ambitions, as set out in the Cultural Strategy and Belfast Agenda.

3.14 As part of this work, a new multi-annual grant for Festivals and Events is due to open for applications in October 2019 providing up to four year funding for events from April 2020 onwards. This will help to provide the levels of investment to support signature Belfast events of the desired scale and ambition.

3.15 In addition to this investment, the Council continues to be responsible for the direct delivery of a number of key events. These events also have the potential to grow to become signature city events. However in order to do so an increasingly strategic and partnership-based delivery model must be adopted.

3.16 Members will be aware that the Maritime Festival is one of the most significant events in the annual events calendar. The maritime theme has emerged strongly in the new tourism narrative and our research indicates an opportunity and willingness among partners to re-scope this event.

While there is still some work to do, the proposal is that the event will become biennial (taking place in the year that the Foyle maritime festival does not happen) and that consideration is given to how the unique Belfast angles could be developed further, including the link to Titanic. The ambition is to grow this event to a turnover in excess of £1million working alongside existing and new partners. It is recommended that this is the first of Council's events to be fully reviewed and relaunched with the remaining programme to be refreshed from 2020 onwards.

- 3.17 To support the development of the Maritime Festival, it is proposed that the following work is commissioned:

Review

- review of current festival offer and impact to include a competitor analysis of international maritime festivals and other signature city events of comparable scale;
- market analysis including opportunities for Belfast to take forward a signature event that supports visitor economy and responds to market trends; and
- consideration of benefits of establishing a biennial model.

- 3.18 **5 year Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025**

- Develop a creative vision including a strong strategic and creative narrative for the festival;
- Short, medium and long-term goals for:
 - Audience development – local, national and international;
 - Brand positioning;
 - Marketing and communications; and
 - Capacity building including partnership working and skills development.
- Governance and delivery model including wider stakeholder engagement plan;
- Financing approach including business modelling that considers public, private and earned income;

- Programming approach including but not limited to responding to and developing the cultural, heritage and physical assets of the city; and
- Evaluation including proposed Key Performance Indicators and data collection over a five year period.

3.19 Programme Development

- Outline programme – to include identification of development opportunities and key projects for 2021, 2023 and 2025 including artists, cultural organisations and commissions;
- Role and development of local cultural sector in long-term programming approach;
- Development of a community engagement programme;
- Potential programming enhancements including opportunities to bid for, secure or developing international linkages; and
- Detail of how the event might support wider cultural and economic ambitions of the city through complementary programming and activities.

3.20 Major Events

The cultural strategy commits to a more strategic and sustainable approach to bidding for major events for the city, building on a number of successes in recent years. At the core of this process should be effective partnership working with other statutory agencies and ensuring that major events have a long-term legacy that contributes to local capacity building and transformation.

- 3.21 Over the last decade, the Council has delivered a series of high profile national and international events. Members are reminded that the city has played host to The Tall Ships Race in 2009 and 2015, 2011 MTV's European Music Awards, the 2014 Giro D'Italia along with a series of events across 2017 (International Ice Hockey World Championships; World Endurance 24 Hour Race; UEFA Under 19 Women's Euro Championships and the 2017 Women's Rugby World Cup) and in 2018 Belfast was the host location for a series of BBC lead projects inclusive of the Radio 2 Folk Awards, the BBC Biggest Weekend and the BBC Proms in the Park.

- 3.22** It is important to note that the process for securing events of this scale and impact is often subject to significant lead-in times; partnership buy-in; sizeable multi-partner budgetary resources; diary scheduling; highly competitive bidding processes; venue capacities; etc. It is, therefore, recommended that officers scope opportunities for the period 2020-2025 in line with the cultural and tourism priorities that have been agreed. Details on any potential bids would be presented to the Committee approval in advance of any formal bids.
- 3.23** Two initial opportunities have been identified that strongly align to the new Cultural Strategy. These are:
- All Ireland Fleadh Cheoil
- The potential to bid for Fleadh Cheoil strongly contributes to the overall priorities set out in the cultural strategy due to the level of economic return; contribution to long-term capacity building and alignment to the city's aspirations to become a designated UNESCO City of Music. As part of UK City of Culture in 2013, it is estimated that Fleadh Cheoil delivered 430,000 attendees and £40 million return for a £1.5 million investment; and
- Tall Ships
- An opportunity has emerged to bid for Tall Ships Race in 2023. This would support the growth of the Maritime Festival and provide a major flagship as part of the planned 2023 programme. Belfast hosted the 2015 Tall ships attracting 520,000 visitors with a direct economic impact of £17 million and a total social media reach of 72 million.
- 3.24** The request at this stage is approval for officers to pursue discussions with the respective event organisers and other partners. Updates will be provided to Committee at key points before progressing to any formal bidding stage.
- 3.25** From our previous engagement with the event organisers, we understand that one of the key decision-making factors in the process for identifying the location for the Fleadh Cheoil is the commitment of that town or city to invest in musical development and culture. Like most of the major events, this will require significant collaboration with local partners that have a direct delivery role in this field. The organisers will take a view of the vibrancy and commitment of partners in the local scene as well as key investments to support music

and cultural development. Members will be aware that, for the last two years, the council has supported the ‘Gradam Ceoil’ music event – widely regarded as the Oscars for Irish traditional music. The event has taken place at the Belfast Waterfront and has had a full house on both occasions, bringing more than 1500 audience members and musicians to the venue. The event is broadcast live on TG4 and online and generated viewing audiences of close to half a million people. The television coverage included extensive footage of the city of Belfast, including profiling some of the key landmarks and telling the story of the musical heritage of the city. The live event has also involved some iconic performances from local musicians including Field Marshall Montgomery Pipe Band as well as input from local actors including Ian McElhinney and Stephen Rea. The inaugural Belfast event was attended by President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins. In addition to the main event, a number of fringe events took place in locations across the city including St George’s Market, Duncairn Centre and Linenhall Library.

3.26 The organisers are currently finalising the application process for the 2020 Awards which are planned to take place in Belfast in February 2020. In order to support the UNESCO designation process as well as the engagement process around the potential future hosting of the Fleadh Cheoil in Belfast, it is proposed that the Council provides financial support to the event organisers. Funding will also be provided by NI Screen and the Department for Foreign Affairs in Dublin. The financial ask from Belfast City Council is £50,000. This is in line with the funding allocated for previous events.

3.27 Visit Belfast and Grand Opera House Engagement

Members will be aware that representatives from the Grand Opera House (GOH) recently attended the Committee to advise of their planned renovation scheme which will mean the temporary closure of the venue from January 2020 for a period of almost a year. In order to maintain their box office service for events from 2021, the GOH management have asked Visit Belfast if they could rent a space within Visit Belfast for a temporary period of around 12 months from January 2020.

3.28 The Visit Belfast team has advised that it is able to provide a desk space in the middle section of the Visit Belfast Welcome Centre. The counter space has good synergy with the other box office and ticketing services provided by Visit Belfast, and will help enhance the offering to visitors and drive further footfall to the centre. Visit Belfast has been

working with the council's Estates Management Team regarding this proposed arrangement and they have sought and received landlord approval for the proposal. If approved, this agreement will generate an additional income for Visit Belfast. GOH will be responsible for all works to accommodate the move. It is proposed that the Committee provides approval to enter into a temporary sharing arrangement between the council (as the tenant), Visit Belfast and GOH.

3.29 Update on UEFA Super Cup

Members may be aware that, at the end of September, UEFA announced that the 2021 Super Cup final would take place in Windsor Park. The Super Cup involves the winners of the Champions League and the Europa League in the preceding season. A further report on the event will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee, outlining more detailed plans and any associated funding requests from the council.

3.30 Financial and Resource Implications

The cost of a comprehensive visitor experience plan for the city is estimated at up to £80,000.

3.31 A 5-year plan and programme for the Maritime Festival requires an investment of £50,000 from Council at this stage with a further £30,000 leveraged from city partners. Both of these costs are to be met from existing departmental budgets.

3.32 At this point, there is no financial ask for any of the major events identified in this report. The only financial ask is for £50,000 towards the hosting of Gradam Ceoil in February 2020. This as above, is to be met from existing departmental budgets. Future reports will be brought back to this Committee with recommendations for investment in any of the major events identified. Costs associated with hosting events of this scale have been considered as part of the overall growth plan for the new cultural strategy.

3.33 There are no financial implications for the Council of the arrangement between Visit Belfast and the Grand Opera House.

3.34 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

These actions are directly aligned to the priorities set out in the cultural strategy. This strategy has been subject to an

Equality Impact Assessment and a Rural Needs Assessment. Further investment will include equality screening as appropriate.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed also:

- i. to commend those officers who had worked to secure the hosting in the City in 2021 of the UEFA Super Cup event;
- ii. that a letter be forwarded to Mr. Paul Donnelly, local tour guide, congratulating him on winning the Top UK Guide Award in the Wanderlust World Guide Awards 2019; and
- iii. that an update be provided at the forthcoming employability and skills workshop on the implications for Grand Opera House staff of the planned refurbishment works.

Belfast at MIPIM

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 This report updates the Committee on the benefits of attending MIPIM as requested at the meeting in April, 2019. It also updates on preparations for MIPIM 2020.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note:

- i. the benefits of attending MIPIM; and**
- ii. the ongoing preparations for MIPIM 2020.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 The Council has been working with private and public-sector organisations to bring a delegation to MIPIM for the last four years. In April 2019, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee agreed that planning for MIPIM 2020 needed to commence immediately and, accordingly, approved attendance at the event of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson (or their nominees), along with senior officers, as appropriate, including travel and accommodation. The Committee also approved funding of £80,000 in line with the amount approved for MIPIM 2019, as part of the overall public private sector sponsorship fund, and the appointment of external consultancy support for

programming, event management, communications and design for MIPIM 2020, with the cost to be met from the overall private public sector sponsorship fund. Committee also agreed that a report be submitted outlining the benefits for the City resulting from the Council's participation in MIPIM. In August 2019, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee subsequently agreed the contract on behalf of the partnership for the build, hire and fit out of a stand/pavilion at MIPIM 2020. At the meeting, it also asked for a report on the benefits derived from attending MIPIM and for details of the contractual arrangements in place for MIPIM 2020. This report outlines the benefits of attending MIPIM and contractual arrangements in place for MIPIM 2020.

- 3.2 MIPIM (in French - Le marché international des professionnels de l'immobilier, in English - The International Market for Real Estate Professionals) is arguably the most important real estate event in the world, gathering influential investors from across the international property industry. It facilitates showcasing of cities, networking, introductory meetings, learning and transaction through events, seminars and dedicated exhibition zones for each city over four days in Cannes, France each year. In 2019, 26,800 participants from over 100 countries attended MIPIM, of which approximately 6,000 were from the UK and 14,500 from Europe. The delegation included 6,380 investors, 2,743 developers and 1,610 local and public authorities' representatives.
- 3.3 The purpose of attending MIPIM is to showcase the investment opportunities in Belfast to attract long term institutional investment, developers of scale with a social conscience and corporate occupiers into the city.
- 3.4 In 2019, 43 private and public-sector organisations including Belfast Region City Deal partner Councils, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Queens University Belfast, Tourism NI, Translink, Visit Belfast, Ulster University together with a number of developers, professional and financial consultancy organisations attended MIPIM as 'Team Belfast' to help showcase the city offer and seek funding for their regeneration and development projects when they are at the right stage. The delegation and preparation for MIPIM is led by Taskforce comprising of representatives from public and private sector sponsors. The 2020 Taskforce is chaired by Joe O'Neill, Chief Executive, Belfast Harbour Commissioners. Members include representatives from Titanic Quarter, Invest NI, KPMG, a developer, and Belfast City Council.

- 3.5** The Belfast Agenda sets bold ambitions and economic development priorities for the city. Delivering inclusive growth and ensuring that no one is left behind is central to this vision. It aims to develop a competitive city region economy by supporting 46,000 additional jobs and 66,000 new residents. Short term targets include attracting £1 billion in private sector investment and securing a Belfast Region City Deal.
- 3.6** Achieving these ambitious targets requires significant private and public sector investment. To give members a sense of investment required, the Belfast Agenda indicates a stretch target of £5 billion in investment over ten years from the inception of the plan and a total in the region of £7.5 billion by 2035. This includes the requirement to deliver 31,600 new homes for and develop 550,000 sq m of employment floor space to support the additional jobs. In addition, major infrastructure works for the Belfast Dublin economic corridor programme would require a further estimated £10 billion of investment. The Belfast Region City Deal funding commitments also requires an additional £150 million of private sector investment.
- 3.7** Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) recognises that the city's large scale development projects are catalysts for wider city regeneration, however many of these projects require inward investment to come to fruition. Significant projects being brought forward include Tribeca, a £500 million regeneration scheme; Belfast Waterside, a £465 million multi-phase development; and The Sixth, a £80 million development project. Translink are currently seeking a private sector development partner to deliver Weavers Cross, a 125,000sqm million regeneration project centred around the £250 million Transport Hub.
- 3.8** It is evident that, in order to deliver our aspirations for the city, Belfast must proactively promote itself to the international investment and real estate community. Council must work in partnership with public and private sector partners to build awareness of the Belfast investment proposition and facilitate investor engagement to support delivery of catalyst regeneration projects.
- 3.9** Members will be aware that Council is also involved in a range of work streams to promote the city internationally. These include:

- International Relations framework which focuses principally on Sister City Agreements with Shenyang, Boston and Nashville, the Memorandum of Understanding with Dublin, and developing relationships with the City of London;
- Integrated Tourism Strategy 2015 – 2020 which aims to double the value of tourism through enhanced marketing, better events, and product development;
- Working in partnership with Invest NI to attract foreign direct investment;
- Work in partnership with Department for International Trade (DIT) to promote investment opportunities through the Northern Ireland Investment Portfolio; and
- Supporting local companies to export and develop an international presence through Invest NI and Catalyst Inc.

3.10 The key objectives for MIPIM were presented to Members in December 2018 as:

- attracting the interest of real estate investors, developers, occupiers and funders in the context of development and investment that provides for sustainable inclusive growth in the city;
- Positively influence perceptions of the city showing its investment potential;
- Sharing learning from other UK and European Cities; and
- Delivering an initiative which reflects the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda;

3.11 Attracting the interest of real estate investors, developers, occupiers and funders in the context of development and investment that provides for sustainable inclusive growth in the city

Belfast at MIPIM includes a concentrated programme of on and off stand events, meetings and investor presentations to showcase Belfast as a credible investment location. Belfast is seen by other cities to 'punch well above its weight'.

- 3.12 In 2019, Council officers and the Chairperson of City Growth and Regeneration Committee held over 60 one-on-one meetings over three days with developers and investors interested in Belfast. It would be very challenging to organise this number of meetings in Belfast, or any UK or Irish location. There was a significant increase in footfall on the Belfast Stand in 2019 and requests for impromptu meetings from investors which highlights the growing interest in Belfast within the investment community.
- 3.13 We can demonstrate that relationships established and investment propositions presented at MIPIM have translated into inward visits to the city by institutional investors, funds, developers and occupiers looking at opportunities across the city.
- 3.14 While it is difficult to precisely quantify the total level of inward investment resulting from MIPIM, in 2016, when Belfast first attended the event, the city set a target to attract £1bn of investment. Since then, development completed or in progress is valued at approximately £2bn.
- 3.15 Since 2016, Brookfield, a global institutional investment fund with whom we had a series of meetings with at MIPIM, has invested over £100m in purpose built student accommodation, a new asset class in Belfast. 2018 saw a significant increase in interest in residential development with proposals coming forward on a number of build to rent schemes and follow up visits from funds and companies who are working through planning etc to bring forward a number of schemes. Officers have also held follow up meetings in Belfast with institutional investors, including Legal and General and Aviva, and facilitated connections to project sponsors. Visits have also taken place from interested development companies such as Bruntwood and Generate who have carried out significant mixed use developments and innovation districts in the North of England.
- 3.16 A number of major regeneration projects which would not otherwise come forward without long term investment are currently in discussions with institutional investors and first met via MIPIM. While these types of processes can take a number of years to complete, they are likely to result in over £1 billion investment when fully delivered. Invest NI are also following up with a number of corporate occupiers who expressed interest in Belfast at MIPIM. Thus, the collaborative approach between Council and city partners has assisted in attracting investment to deliver projects in the city.

3.17 In addition, private sector partners have secured business and investment as a result of relationships brokered at MIPIM. Commercial sensitivities preclude us from providing some of the specific examples which are currently under negotiation, however it is evident from the growing number of sponsors, and level of repeat sponsors, that city partners see value in attending MIPIM at part of the Belfast delegation.

3.18 Positively influence perceptions of the city showing its investment potential

Attending MIPIM has necessitated the Belfast delegation to develop a shared investment narrative for the city and communicate this message globally, causing a step change in market awareness of Belfast as a destination for investment. All messaging has been developed in line with the Belfast brand and is incorporated into other marketing activities undertaken by Council to promote investment. In addition, through proactive PR, Belfast has received high quality media coverage in international, national and regional publications.

3.19 Create and continue to foster a strong public-private sector collaborative effort and strengthening relationships with international and city partners

Belfast at MIPIM is delivered as a public private partnership. The Belfast delegation includes project sponsors for key city regeneration and development projects, and BRCD partners. This collaborative approach across public and private sector leaders provides potential investors with a comprehensive overview of the opportunities and benefits of investing in Belfast, and provides confidence of stability through a strong civic leadership presence.

3.20 Delivering Belfast's international ambitions relies on strong collaboration with Department for International Trade (DIT), the City of London, Northern Ireland Office and Invest NI. Invest NI co-fund Belfast at MIPIM. DIT have a significant presence at MIPIM and invite Belfast to participate on panel discussions with other UK regions and promote the Northern Ireland Investment Portfolio. Through relationships fostered at MIPIM, the Chief Executive was invited to join the DIT Capital Investment Advisory Board in May 2018.

3.21 Shared learning from other UK and European Cities

Representatives from national, regional and city governments attend MIPIM, including London, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Newcastle, Scotland Development International, Sheffield City Region, Midlands UK and Dublin City Council all participate at MIPIM.

3.22 Through MIPIM officers have built relationships with city leaders from other UK and European cities. This has facilitated shared learning and better working relationships across officers and elected Members. Examples include:

- Invite from Liverpool City Council to join the European Waterfront Cities Network resulting in best practice exchanges on Waterfront development;
- Engagement with Homes England to share how they are accelerating house building in England;
- Input from Edinburgh City Council to inform the City Centre Connectivity Study; and
- Engagement with Dublin City Council to support the Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor.

3.23 In addition, guest speakers are invited to participate in events to inform industry best practice. In 2019, City of Edinburgh Council and Cardiff Capital Region shared learnings from their respective City Deals; award winning regeneration company Urban Splash participated on a city living panel and Bruntwood, a key development partner for the Manchester Innovation District, joined an innovation district panel discussion.

3.24 Deliver an initiative which reflects the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda;

While progress has been made over the past number of years, Belfast faces a number of challenges to growing the city, including unlocking inclusive city centre living to increase the city centre residential population and addressing aging infrastructure. It is essential that the city continues to promote Belfast as an attractive location for investment and development to enable the shared and inclusive growth of the Belfast Agenda.

- 3.25** Belfast has won a series of awards and accolades which help position us as a business friendly city and raise profile within the investment and real estate community. The annual FDI awards organised by the FDI Magazine are held during MIPIM. In 2019, Belfast received 8 awards including being ranked number one for business friendliness and second globally to Hong Kong for FDI Strategy. Other awards include being ranked within the overall top 10 for mid and small sized cities, economic potential, human capital and lifestyle, cost effectiveness, connectivity and within the top 25 emerging and developing global markets.
- 3.26** **MIPIM 2020**
- In April 2019, the Committee agreed the need for immediate planning for MIPIM 2020 and authorised officers to commence preparations, including budget spend.
- 3.27** Plans are well underway for MIPIM 2020. The official launch was held on 6th September and 19 sponsors are so far confirmed. Invites have been issued to institutional investors for a pre-MIPIM Investor Event in London in November. It would be at significant financial cost to Belfast City Council and reputational risk to the city to not attend MIPIM 2020.
- 3.28** The City Solicitor has reviewed the vendor contractual commitments for MIPIM 2020. The value of these are £189,506 in respect of stand hire and build, event management, marketing, communication and logistics.
- 3.29** It should be noted that as, per Committee agreement in April 2019, accommodation and delegation passes have been booked.
- 3.30** Work is ongoing to secure sponsorship. Belfast at MIPIM 2020 was successfully launched on the 6 September at Belfast Harbour Studios with over 100 people representing private, public and third sectors were in attendance. At the time of writing, £249,000 of private sector sponsorship has been raised from 19 sponsoring organisations including Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Invest NI, Queens University Belfast and Translink.
- 3.31** Plans are underway to develop the 2020 programme. A number of national and international speakers have been approached to participate on panel discussions. HBO and Sky have been approached to provide a high profile Belfast prop to drive stand footfall.

3.32 Pinsent Masons and CBRE are hosting a pre-MIPIM Investor Event in London on 19th November, with invites issued to over 50 institutional investors.

3.33 Finance and Resource Implications

Belfast at MIPIM is delivered as a public private sector sponsorship fund. The total sponsorship target for MIPIM 2020 is £430,000 with £350,000 from private and public sector partners which equates to approximately 80% of total income, and £80,000 from Council. Council funding was previously agreed by the Committee and is contained within existing departmental budget.

3.34 Income by way of sponsorship matches expenditure each year. Therefore the more sponsorship that is raised, the more value can be added to the programme. Members are asked to note that at time of writing £249,000 sponsorship income has been secured from public and private partners. As in previous years this is expected to increase significantly.

3.35 A report outlining options on the Council's role and contribution to MIPIM 2021 onwards will be brought to a future meeting enabling members to consider how they may wish to take advantage of the opportunities presented by MIPIM in the future.

3.36 Equality, Good Relations and Rural Needs Implications

None associated with this report."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting in relation to the Council's participation in MIPIM beyond 2020.

Re-alignment of IABA Funding

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th September, 2018, it had agreed to support the staging in the 2019/20 financial year of the All-Ireland Elite Boxing Championships and had granted approval for Council officers to assist the Irish Athletic Boxing Association in its preparations for the event.

The Director of Development reported that it had since been established that the event could not proceed within the proposed timeframe, as it would coincide with the dates set aside by the Amateur International Boxing Association and the International Olympic Committee for qualification for the 2020 Summer Olympic Games. As a consequence, the Irish Athletic Boxing Association had requested the Council to support instead the staging of the 2020 European Schoolboys and Schoolgirls Championships and to reallocate to that event approximately £70,000 which had been earmarked for the Elite Boxing Championships.

He explained that the European Schoolboys and Schoolgirls Championships, which would take place in either the first two weeks in July or the last two weeks in August, would attract competitors from thirty countries, as well as coaches, support staff and officials. It was estimated that the event would attract a daily audience of 2,000 spectators and would generate in total around £1.7 million of visitor spend. Importantly, it would elevate Belfast's status in terms of bidding for future European and World boxing competitions and would meet the objectives set out within the Council's Boxing Strategy. He pointed out that the Championship would cost between £200,000 and £250,000 to deliver and that, whilst additional funding had yet to be secured, an approach had been made to Sport NI, Tourism NI and the Belfast Boxing Strategy Steering Group.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee:

- i. agree to support the staging in 2020 of the European Boxing Confederation Schoolboys and Schoolgirls Championships;
- ii. agree to re-allocate approximately £70,000, which had been set aside in 2019/20 for the Elite All-Ireland Boxing Championships, to that event;
- iii. note that this support would be subject to the Irish Athletic Boxing Association securing additional financial support from Sport NI and Tourism NI and through the Belfast Boxing Strategy; and
- iv. note that an update report would be submitted to a future meeting.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Chairperson