



Subject:	Request to Present: Ulster University Belfast Campus Update
Date:	10 August 2022
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Committee to receive a presentation from representatives of Ulster University on the opening of the Belfast Campus.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Members of the Committee are asked to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to receive a presentation from representatives of Ulster University on the opening of the Belfast Campus at the September meeting of City Growth & Regeneration Committee.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware that the relocation of the Ulster University campus to the city centre is of strategic importance not only to Belfast but the region as a whole. It is estimated the project will generate £1.4bn overall regeneration impact on the region's economy and supports Council priorities as set out within the Belfast Agenda and the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS).
3.2	By way of context and background Ulster University, in September 2021 began their phased handover and onboarding to the new Belfast campus, welcoming their first cohort of staff and students to the city centre. This phased process of completion, handover and onboarding, continued in controlled phases throughout the previous academic year. The University is now in the final phase of preparing to open the new campus, welcoming 15,000 students and staff this September.
3.3	Council officers have continued to work with the University along with various stakeholders to support the successful opening and opportunities to maximise the inclusive regeneration impacts of the campus, including through the Community Campus Regeneration Forum, which is chaired by Council and with representation from UU, CQ BID, DfI, DfC, Translink and local communities. It has been widely recognised that whilst the campus relocation will act as an energiser / catalyst to the wider city, the city centre in terms of its physical and social environment will need to adapt to seamlessly integrate the University and the volume of people it will draw in.
3.4	The influx of the staff and students to the city centre will have multiple positive impacts including increasing vibrancy and economic opportunities, and the University have been working with a number of stakeholders including Translink to promote and install a sustainable and active travel ethos from the start, as well as with Council in terms of other connectivity and active travel initiatives including the recent installation of the Active Travel Hub in Cathedral Gardens adjacent to the entrance of the Campus. The University have also been in ongoing engagement with local communities, and it is recognised that this must be maintained to ensure issues around parking or other social issues are mitigated and tackled and community / student relations are upheld.

3.5	<p>There is alignment here also with the principles of A Bolder Vision (ABV); promoting well being, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, creating lively, safe and green streets and removing barriers to movement between the city centre and surrounding communities and the proposed ABV catalyst projects notably Belfast Streets Ahead 3. The development of Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation within the area will increase the city centre population and provide enhanced vibrancy through increased footfall, along with further proposals that are currently being developed in terms of improving the adjoining public realm and development of open space (utilising developer contributions) which will also consider adjacent communities. Council’s future development plans for Cathedral Gardens will also play a key role as a strategic open space for the wider area and Ulster University. There is however further work to be carried out including the Fredrick Street Junction improvement works, and issues surrounding vulnerability, safety and cleansing that continue to be addressed through a number of forums. Further details on the governance approach to the city centre including vulnerability, safety and cleansing is covered on a separate agenda item within the City Centre All Party Working Group paper.</p>
3.6	<p>The University have requested to present to Committee, to brief Members on the positive impacts of the new campus, the migration plans to enable a controlled opening and the management of the sustainable transport approach, and the work ongoing to address the wider area issues including any community concerns and ongoing engagement.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Finance & Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents attached</p>
	<p>None</p>