



Subject:	CIVITAS Study Visit and CIVINET Conference in Belfast
Date:	22 nd April 2015
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Keith Sutherland, Urban Development Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide information to elected members on the CIVINET / CIVITAS programmes and seek approval for the attendance of Members on the proposed Study visit to Ljubljana, Slovenia as part of the CIVITAS Activity Fund.</p> <p>CIVITAS is a European programme launched in 2002 aimed at creating cleaner and better transport in cities. Since then it has provided funding of over €200 million for innovative transport projects in 60 European cities. CIVINET is funded by CIVITAS as a UK & Ireland network that brings together local authorities to achieve “more sustainable, clean and energy efficient urban transport systems” and the Council became a member in 2011.</p> <p>Through CIVINET the Council can access resources on good practice in sustainable transport policies / initiatives and access future CIVITAS funding programmes. A small grant from the CIVITAS Activity Fund has been secured for a study visit to Ljubljana/Slovenia to meet local authority representatives and exchange knowledge.</p>
2.0	Recommendations
	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• approve and nominate two members to participate in the study visit to Ljubljana in May 2015; and• nominate up to six members to attend the 30th April Belfast CIVINET Conference.

3.0	Main report
	<p>Study Visit to Ljubljana</p> <p>The Council secured a small grant through the CIVITAS Activity Fund which provides resources for local authorities to exchange knowledge from CIVITAS demonstration cities. The selected demonstration city is Ljubljana, which has implemented a number of sustainable transport measures that increased the quality of life for the inhabitants such as a public bike share scheme, new pedestrian areas, linked green spaces and squares closed for motorised traffic. The changed approach to sustainability has been developed over a relatively short period with Ljubljana awarded the title of European Green Capital for 2016.</p> <p>The Council is launching its public bike share scheme on the 27th April 2015 as a high profile active travel project for Belfast. There are some challenges in that Belfast does not yet have the same levels of established cycling culture, therefore it is important to learn from comparative cities how to change attitudes and ensure longer term success.</p> <p>The Activity Fund will provide a grant of £2,500 to the Council for a study visit to the city to meet local authority representatives and exchange knowledge. It is proposed that a group of four delegates (2 officers and 2 elected members) take part in the three day study visit to Ljubljana. The study visit will focus on the development of the Ljubljana public bike share scheme, the process for citizen engagement and the role of elected members in the process. A proposed draft programme is attached in appendix 1. Following the study visit the Council will have to produce a final activity report on the outcomes of the visit for further dissemination in the CIVITAS community.</p> <p>Belfast CIVINET Conference</p> <p>On the 30th April 2015, the Council has agreed to host a CIVINET Conference in City Hall called 'On the Move' with a focus on cycling and connectivity. The programme is attached in Appendix 2 and members will be able to attend free of charge.</p> <p>Financial & Resource Implications</p> <p>The projected cost of travel and accommodation for the study tour to Ljubljana is covered by the CIVITAS Activity Fund. CIVINET have offered a number of free places to elected members and officers who wish to attend the CIVINET Conference on the 30th April.</p>

4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Draft Programme- Ljubljana study tour Appendix 2 - Belfast CIVINET Conference Programme