



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Request for a Special Committee Meeting on the Economic Downturn.
Date:	9 th October, 2009
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive, Ext. 6002.
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Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that Belfast City Council in February 2009 agreed a number of actions in response to the global economic downturn. The actions were taken across the Council and the Development Committee subsequently agreed the setting up of a cross-party Economic Downturn Steering Group, which has been meeting monthly since May 2009.

As part of the actions it was agreed the Strategic Policy and Resources and Development Committees would hold a special meeting to review actions later in the year.

Key Issues

Belfast City Council has undertaken a range of actions in relation to the economic downturn and amassed information and analysis on issues relating to its impact on Belfast. While that impact has been significant it has not been as severe as might have been predicted, however, the challenges facing Belfast in creating a long-term sustainable and successful economy remain formidable.

In this context, further discussion on how Belfast can best face the future is now extremely important. In August 2007, the Council commissioned a report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.) to look at future prospects for the City. The report was completed in November 2008. In addition, recent research by Oxford Economics for Council has added to the information provided by O.E.C.D. Both of the reports draw major conclusions about Belfast and its possibilities and make relevant recommendations.

It is suggested the proposed special meeting would consider the impact of the economic downturn on the City in the context of the outcome of the above reports and then make recommendations about the way forward for the City.

Resource Implications

None.

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree to the holding of a special meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, to which the Members of the Development Committee would be invited, to consider the effect of the economic downturn on the City.

Documents Attached**Abbreviations**

O.E.C.D. – The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.