



Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	400 th Anniversary of the King James Bible
Date:	23 rd September 2011
Reporting Officer:	Hazel Francey, Good Relations Manager (Ext. 6020)

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>The Council, at its meeting on 1st September, considered the undernoted Notice of Motion which was proposed by Councillor Kingston:</p> <p><i>“The Council notes that this year marks the 400th anniversary of one of the English language’s most pre-eminent books – the King James Version of the Bible.</i></p> <p><i>The Council recognises that this publication combined an accuracy of translation with an authoritative and poetic use of language which has made it the most widely used version of the Bible, with over one billion sales. The Council recognises also the significance of the role which the King James Bible played in the development and the global spread of the English language, with a richness of expression which has enhanced our language and continues to do so to this day.</i></p> <p><i>The Council commends those churches and groups in Belfast and elsewhere which have organised events and activities in recognition of the 400th anniversary of this treasure in the Christian heritage of our country and requests the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to give consideration as to how the Council might also recognise this important and historic anniversary.”</i></p> <p>The Motion was referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration and report.</p>

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>In order to provide the Committee with proper information, some initial consultations were held between Councillor Kingston and Mr. John Doherty from the Bible Society Northern Ireland with a view to looking at how best to mark this anniversary should the Committee decide to adopt the Motion.</p>
2.2	<p>There are a number of events being planned by several churches and groups in Belfast to mark this anniversary. Therefore, to complement these events that are happening at a community level, the option of delivering a lunch-time event in the City Hall has emerged as a potentially appropriate way to mark this anniversary.</p>
2.3	<p>In consultation with the Bible Society Northern Ireland, this event could take the form of a</p>

2.4	<p>selection of the following activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions of Biblical phrases that still hold good in Belfast speech today • A shared reading of a passage of the Bible by senior church representatives in Belfast • A display of items associated with the King James Bible, such as different historical versions, ancient Greek and Hebrew texts, an audio display, along with other translations • Locating the King James version of the Bible within the historical chronology of Bible translations <p>The display could remain within City Hall for a short time after the event.</p>
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>Up to a maximum of £1,500 to organise and run the lunch-time event, to cover the costs of refreshments and the transport and positioning of artefacts. It might be possible to fund the event from the Good Relations budget, 75% of which can be recouped from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister through the District Councils Good Relations Programme. If this is not possible then the costs could be met from the Civic Hospitality budget.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Human Resources:</u></p> <p>Good Relations and other staff would be involved in the organisation of the event.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	<p>The event and display would be an exploration of the King James version of the bible within the context of the various translations of the bible over the years and therefore contribute to a shared historical perspective of the Bible.</p>

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>The Committee is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a lunch-time event in November, along the lines of the above mentioned content, in partnership with the Bible Society Northern Ireland • Facilitate an ongoing display of items for a short period following the event in order to enable those who cannot attend to view the artefacts

6	Decision Tracking
<p>Hazel Francey, Good Relations Manager</p> <p>November, 2011</p>	