



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Forum for Alternative Belfast, 2012 Summer School</b>
<b>Date:</b>	8 June 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects, ext 3526
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	George Wright, Head of Facilities Management, ext 6232/5206

### Relevant Background Information

A request has been received from the Forum for Alternate Belfast to hold a Summer School in the City Hall from Monday 13 to Friday 17 August 2012.

Forum for Alternative Belfast is a not-for-profit organisation that campaigns for a better and more equitable built environment in Belfast. The forum was formally launched on the 4 June 2009 by a group of architects, planners and others who came together to explore the alternative ways that the city might be developed.

The Forum has held three successful summer schools in recent years. In August 2009 the outcome of the school was the 'Missing City' map starkly showing the empty land in the centre of Belfast. A number of 'what if' scenarios outlined how this space could be put to use.

The following year the week concentrated on the inner city centre with the outcome the 'Six Links' showing how north Belfast could be connected again to the city centre and highlighting the underlying dangers of the York Street Interchange for the city unless it designed it in the correct manner.

Last year the school concentrated on South Belfast and a long standing plan of the Road Service to build a road potentially severing South Belfast from the city centre. The result of the week was 'Streets not Roads' demonstrating how a tree lined pedestrian/cycle friendly street faced with buildings could provide a solution.

In the autumn of 2011 both the East and West Belfast Partnership Boards had discussions with the Forum about the 2012 summer school. It was agreed that the school would look at both East and West Belfast and their connections to the city centre. The study area reaches as far as Templemore Avenue in the east and Dunville Park in the west.

Because of the subject matter and Belfast City Council's relationship with the Partnership Boards the Forum wishes to have the summer school in the City Hall. Last year because of the subject matter the school was held in QUB.

**Key Issues**

The main discussions and workshops will take place between 9am and 5pm each day however to ensure local and community involvements feedback sessions will be arranged on the Tuesday and Wednesday evening. There will also be a public presentation after 4pm on the Friday to give the weeks findings.

Key to the summer schools success is the involvement of all the key government departments, Belfast City Council, other non government agencies and representatives from local neighbourhoods. Professionals and students from the fields of architecture, and planning will also be in attendance.

The organisers wish to use the Reception Hall for the main study sessions and the evening presentations. Some break out areas might be required for discussion groups. The organisers would also like to use part of the marble ground floor space as an exhibition area to give the summer school a public interface.

The anticipated numbers attending each day will be in the region of 30-40. In addition to the use of accommodation the organisers are also asking Belfast City Council to provide some light hospitality in the way of tea, coffee and biscuits each day.

Space is available in the City Hall during this time of the year which is relatively quiet for functions.

**Resource Implications**

The financial resource implications would largely be limited to the provision of light refreshments for this group. There are no asset-related implications.

**Decision (s) required**

It is recommended that the committee approve the requests from the Forum for Alternative Belfast to hold a summer school in the City Hall.

**Key to Abbreviations**

None.

**Documents Attached**

Appendix – map of proposed layout.