



Subject:	BCCM future resource request
Date:	9 December 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development,
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development

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
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Introduce the presentation to this committee by Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM), setting out their proposed priority actions for the financial year 2016/2017– Outline the associated financial contribution requested from the Council towards the operational costs, in line with Council priorities for city centre regeneration.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Note the proposed future role for BCCM, as set out in a recent independent review– Agree the priority actions for the organisation for the coming year, in line with Council priorities for city centre regeneration, and agree that Council officers should work with BCCM staff to agree specific activities to deliver on these priorities– Agree the financial contribution of £190,000 for core funding for the financial year 2016/2017, subject to approval of the requisite budget in the estimates in January

	<p>2016, and subject to agreed actions being undertaken and targets met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agree a contribution of £30,000 towards the employment of a BIDS Development Officer from Economic Development Unit estimates, subject to BCCM finding the match funding from other sources.
3.0	Key issues
3.1	<p>Members will be aware that the Council has supported BCCM since its establishment. The organisation performs a range of operational functions that contribute towards City Centre vibrancy, safety and security and public space management.</p>
3.2	<p>BCCM is funded from a range of sources, but its key funding partners are Belfast City Council, Department for Social Development and the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce.</p>
3.3	<p>BCCM provides services within a defined boundary in the City Centre area, stretching from Shaftesbury Square to the end of Royal Avenue/York Street. A section of that area is now part of the boundary for the Belfast One Business Improvement District (BID), which will be operational from April 2016. The BID focuses on providing additional services to businesses located within the agreed boundary. Work is currently underway to define the services the BID will support. However, it is important to note the BID services must be <u>additional</u> to those already provided by statutory partners, as established by defining a baseline of current service delivery. BID partners are of the view that Council support for BCCM – although a discretionary activity – would constitute existing baseline services and therefore, there is an expectation the Council would continue to resource a similar level of service provision in the City Centre. The BID will then plan its activities to operate in addition to these core services. This approach is consistent with how BIDs are developed in other areas.</p>
3.4	<p>At present, BCCM's work is focused round three key themes, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Economic Performance: addressing issues such as reducing vacancies, supporting additional city animation and liaison with traders on key city events – Safer City: this work includes the City Centre Beat initiative and the retail crime scheme – Public Space Management: involves activities to maintain high quality public realm such as liaison with Belfast City Council's Cleansing Services on City Centre street

cleansing regime and services, representing business interests on transport issues and working to address access barriers into the City Centre.

3.5 In recognition of the need to look at their future operating strategy with the introduction of the BID, BCCM recently commissioned an independent review of the organisation. The report looked at how similar City Centre management services operated in those cities that also had Business Improvement Districts. It suggested that BCCM should focus on the following priority areas:

1. Lead on the strategic development of the City Centre, liaising with partners such as Belfast City Council, DSD and private sector partners
2. Promote and assist with BIDs in the City Centre
3. Provide ongoing operational support to established BIDs on a contractual and non-contractual basis, acting as a co-ordinating forum as well as providing an evaluation framework
4. Provide support and services for other non-BID and partnership organisations such as the Chamber
5. Identify areas of the City Centre outwith the defined BID area and develop proposals for the continuation of services in these areas such as business liaison, festive lighting and promotional banners.

3.6 The BCCM Board has recently endorsed this approach and on this basis, the organisation is currently working on its business plan for the coming financial year. It is in the process of working with partners to secure the resources to deliver key services in line with the priority areas identified above.

3.7 Given the success of the Belfast One BID, BCCM considers there are opportunities to develop additional BIDs. In particular, it considers that a BID would support the development of the main office area to the rear of City Hall – the Linen Quarter. This is in line with Council plans to support additional investment in that area through the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (CCRIS). BCCM is, therefore, asking that the Council provides support towards a dedicated member of staff for the coming year to undertake this activity. It is recommended that the Council provides up to £30,000 towards the costs in the coming financial year, subject to BCCM finding the match funding from other resources.

In recognition of the ongoing operational support role for BCCM in the delivery of City

3.8	<p>Centre support services, and taking account of the BID requirement to focus on additional activity, it is also proposed that the core funding for BCCM should remain at £190,000 for the coming financial year, subject to approval of the requisite budget in the estimates in January 2016 and subject to agreement with BCCM on activities to be undertaken that will help deliver on council priorities for city centre regeneration.</p>
3.9	<p>Members have already been advised that the BID intends to focus over half of its efforts and resources on city marketing. While this is not an area in which BCCM is operational, it may align with some of the activity currently undertaken by Visit Belfast. In this context, it will be important to consider how these activities can be complementary, in order to avoid duplication and maximise the impact of the investment. These discussions will be undertaken with both the BID and Visit Belfast in the coming months.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Resource Implications</u> It is proposed that core funding of £190,000 is provided to BCCM for the coming financial year, along with £30,000 one-off support towards BID development activity in other areas of the city. This funding has been set aside by the Council within its Economic Development Unit budget estimates for the coming financial year.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u> No specific equality or good relations implications. BCCM's work will include activities to support access to the city centre for all</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	There are no appendices.