



Subject:	Request to present to Committee – Visit Belfast
Date:	10 February 2015
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Brian Johnston, Tourism, Culture, Arts & Heritage 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
1.1	The purpose of the report is to seek Members' approval for a presentation to the March meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee by Visit Belfast in order to outline their draft Business Plan for the 2016/17 financial year and associated funding request.
1.2	The draft Business Plan has been developed in collaboration with Council officers and officials from Tourism Northern Ireland, as the other key public sector funder in Visit Belfast.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">agree to receive a presentation from Visit Belfast at the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in March 2016.
3.0	Main report
3.1	In June 2015 Members approved the 'Integrated Tourism Strategy for Belfast' for the period 2015-2020. The strategy identified Visit Belfast as a key delivery organisation for tourism in Belfast.

3.2	<p>Visit Belfast's role as outlined in the strategy included tourism marketing of the City, visitor servicing, close working with the private sector and increasingly developing a destination management role particularly around events and conferences hosted in the City.</p>
3.3	<p>There are four Council Members on the Board of Visit Belfast, namely; Councillor McDonagh-Brown, Councillor Hargey, Councillor O'Donnghaile and the Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Spence.</p>
3.4	<p>Early engagement with Visit Belfast in developing this business plan has focussed on looking at how the organisation can support the Waterfront Hall in achieving its ambitious business tourism targets as well as contributing to the tourism strategy target of doubling the value of tourism by 2020 by focussing on overnight stays. However, it is also important to acknowledge that the leisure tourism market remains important in Belfast. In this context, Visit Belfast is considering how they can work closely with the Belfast One BID, in promoting the City as an important retail and leisure destination. This collaboration will be important in order to avoid duplication of activity and to maximise the impact of the investment.</p>
3.5	<p>Visit Belfast lead on the tourism marketing of the City. The specific messaging will be informed by the recent City positioning work that Belfast City Council is leading on. This work and will also influence the messaging of strategic partners such as Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland promoting Belfast as a tourism destination both domestically and Internationally.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that previous funding agreements with Visit Belfast have been in the region of £1.8m per annum. It is anticipated that a similar request will be made for 2016/17 for which provision has been made in the estimates.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality and good relations implications.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None