



<b>Subject:</b>	Request for International Events Support
<b>Date:</b>	09 March 2016
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Donal Durkan, Director of Development, ext 3470
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Laura Leonard, EU & International Relations Manager, ext 3577

<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to financially support the following events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- New York New Belfast Conference, 01 – 02 June 2016, New York</li><li>- Homecoming Conference, 12 – 14 October 2016, Belfast.</li></ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are requested to commit a maximum of £12,400 towards 2 international events, broken down as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- New York New Belfast: £5,000 sponsorship contribution plus travel and attendance at the conference to include the Chair of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee or nominee and one Officer (max. £2,400)</li><li>- Homecoming Conference: £5,000 sponsorship contribution.</li></ul>

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<p><b>New York New Belfast</b></p> <p>The seventh annual New York New Belfast conference will take place at Fordham University on 1 and 2 June 2016. Belfast City Council has been approached to request a sponsorship contribution of £5,000 towards the event. In return for this contribution, the Council will be invited to speak at the event and there will be opportunities to provide editorial and advertorial input into the Conference promotional materials.</p>
3.2	<p>The Conference aims to provide a platform for collaboration between the business community, public, cultural and education sectors in both cities and to develop mutual strategic alliances and business partnerships.</p>
3.3	<p>It provides an opportunity to promote Belfast as a place to do business and to highlight the new investment potential of key city centre developments. It will also allow the Council to present the new narratives developed through the City Positioning work and to present a coherent rationale for investment in Belfast.</p>
3.4	<p>The annual event has an impressive business focus, featuring speakers and meeting opportunities with key sponsors and participants such as KPMG, United Airlines, HBO, Whitehat Security and Shopkeep. Many of the business participants have a base in Belfast or are considering establishing here. The event therefore offers an opportunity to engage with these companies to explore opportunities for re-investment or to promote the range of incentives and attractions of Belfast as an investment location – including the reduction of the corporation tax rate from 2018.</p>
3.5	<p>The conference brings together artists with a connection to Belfast and also gives artists and cultural organisations from Belfast a chance to build international connections. Some of the city's flagship venues and events have taken part in previous years' conferences and have taken the opportunity to promote their work and to develop new opportunities for collaboration.</p>
3.6	<p>In the seven years since the inauguration of the event, there have been a number of key introductions and opportunities presented including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to engage further with New York businesses that have already invested in Belfast and potential for collaboration with Invest NI to promote the Belfast proposition to secure further investment</li> </ul>

- Visits by key business and political delegations to Belfast, including New York State legislators
- Supporting investment opportunities by New York State into local venture funds
- Presenting opportunities for local start-ups to pitch to New York Angel investors
- Facilitating cultural exchanges and showcasing opportunities such as Brendan Behan at the Chelsea in New York and The Flood from New York to Belfast.

**Homecoming Business and Investment Conference**

- 3.7 The third annual Belfast International Homecoming Business and Investment Conference will be held in Belfast from 12 – 14 October 2016. The conference aims to engage the Diaspora in Belfast’s growth and regeneration. The 2016 event will focus on attracting 25 Chief Executive-level business leaders to the city. This aligns well with the Council’s ambitions to attract additional investment to the city and to foster business growth in Belfast.
- 3.8 To date, a significant level of private sector partners have committed to the Homecoming. These include Ulster Bank, Deloitte, CPL Recruitment, Concentrix and Market Resource Partners as well as global partners such as Tyco, Bitnet Technologies, Google and Mïet Hennessey.
- 3.9 The Homecoming offers BCC an opportunity through the Lord Mayor to present the new Belfast propositions and elevate the city ‘Let’s Talk Belfast’ messaging to expats and Diaspora who wish to invest in the city.
- 3.10 Some of the outcomes of the previous two Homecoming events include:
- Early engagement around opportunities for collaboration in the field of sport, culminating in Friendship Four Tournament – the inaugural event of which took place in Belfast in November 2015.
  - Opportunity to attract UK Board of global brand Deloitte to Belfast to showcase investment opportunities and understand the potential presented by global connections.
  - Opportunity for high level legal symposium on international human rights law between local legal practitioners and their international counterparts, including an engagement with the Lord Chief Justice. This has presented additional opportunities for collaboration which are currently being pursued.

3.11	<p>Members are asked to agree a sponsorship of £5,000 towards the event. In return for this sponsorship contribution, the Council will receive speaking roles for the Lord Mayor and Chief Executive along with Conference passes for five delegates and prominent use of council branding on conference material.</p>
3.12	<p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>It is anticipated that the cost to the Council for financially supporting the above two events will not exceed £12,400. These costs can be met within the agreed International Relations budget for 2016-2017.</p>
3.13	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations implications attached to this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents attached</b>
	None