



Subject:	St George's Market and George Best Belfast City Airport Partnership
Date:	9 November 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Clodagh Cassin, Markets Development 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	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Advise Members of a proposal to develop a partnership between St George's Market and the George Best Belfast City airport, focusing on branding the catering facilities within the airport using imagery from St George's Market.– Seek Members' approval to move forward with the proposal, subject to a legal agreement setting out the parameters of the partnership.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Note the early engagement between the catering franchise partner at the George Best Belfast City airport and the Council with regard to using the St George's Market brand within the revamped catering facilities in the Departures Lounge at the airport– Agree that Officers should proceed with the development work, subject to the ability to sign off on the design concepts and subject to a form of legal agreement, to be drawn up in conjunction with the Council's Legal Services Team.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>The George Best Belfast City airport is a key transport facility for the City and the wider region. The airport services a number of UK and European destinations and there are ambitious plans to add further routes.</p>
3.2	<p>The airport is of critical importance to the development of the Belfast Waterfront as a</p>

	<p>conference and exhibition centre. One of the key selling points of the Waterfront venue is the proximity of the airport to the City Centre and the Waterfront. Passenger numbers at the airport are in excess of 2 million every year. This includes a mix of both leisure and business tourists.</p>
3.3	<p>The airport's franchise catering partners, HMS Host, are currently working on a significant refurbishment plan for the café area in the Departures Lounge. As part of this development work, they are keen to give the facilities a local feel and have engaged with the Council to explore the opportunities for reflecting the very successful St George's Market in the design work.</p>
3.4	<p>The principle behind the proposal is that a version of the St George's brand would be incorporated into the branding of the wider catering provision. While the engagement to date has been around the principle rather than any detailed design work, there have been some concept designs developed. These include options for including panels to tell some of the history of St George's. The St George's name would also be incorporated into the design work – possibly referencing the “Market restaurant”, or “Mini Market” with imagery reflecting St George's Market.</p>
3.5	<p>The association with the airport offers significant opportunities to promote St George's Market to leisure tourists who have been to the City and would be keen to come back as well as business tourists who might be keen to return to the City on a weekend break. The airport reports that the majority of their business customers fly out of Belfast on a Thursday. They are actively looking at how they can encourage those visitors to return to Belfast and Northern Ireland for weekend visits and they consider that the local messaging around key attractions, such as St George's will support that ambition.</p>
3.6	<p>Members will be aware that St George's Market currently attracts around one million visitors a year. The growing success of events, such as the Twilight Market, demonstrates that the market is a unique attraction in the City and is critical to our ambitions of doubling the value of tourism in Belfast.</p>
3.7	<p>The benefits of a partnership arrangement with the airport and St George's Market include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opportunity to profile St George's Market to more than 2 million people annually; – Potential to reduce advertising costs at the airport; – Opportunity to introduce more local produce into the catering facilities at the Airport; – Opportunity to improve the commerciality of the Market.
3.8	<p>While it is planned that there will be an association with St George's Market, the produce on sale does not necessarily have to come from the Market. There has, however, been engagement with the catering franchise to look at opportunities for introducing products from traders at St George's where this is possible and they are keen to explore this further.</p>
3.9	<p>In addition to the presence within the catering facilities, there is an opportunity to work with the airport to look at how the Market is profiled across all of the public areas within the airport in order to maximise the exposure in both the Departures and Arrivals area.</p>

3.10	<p>Following engagement with the Council’s Legal Services team, officers have been advised that there are no reasons why this partnership should not proceed in principle. It will be important, however, to ensure there is a legal agreement between Belfast City Council and the airport’s catering partner outlining the parameters for use of the brand.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.11	<p>No specific financial contribution required from Belfast City Council – the design and branding work will be carried out by HMS Host, following Council approval.</p> <p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.12	<p>No specific equality or good relations implications.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None