



Subject:	Working and Learning and Growing the Economy: Programme of Work 2018/19
Date:	11 April 2018
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed programme of work to be delivered in the current financial year as part of the Committee's ambitions to support delivery of the targets under two of the pillars of the Belfast Agenda: Working and Learning and Growing the Economy. The work programme is in line with the direction of travel which was presented to and approved by this Committee on 7 March 2018, as well as input from Members into the Employability and Skills proposals as part of the Committee workshop on 21 February 2018. If all targets are met, this activity will support the creation of 1664 jobs.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the 2018/19 Work Plan to support the delivery of the Working and Learning and Growing the Economy strands of the Belfast Agenda, as set out in sections 3.4-3.10 and detailed in Appendix 1 - Approve applications to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for new programme activity including the Kick Start Programme, Digital Transformation Programme, Go Social Programme and Procurement Support Programme detailed in Appendix 1 - Agree to the development of partnership structures within the Working and Learning work streams for Employability & Skills to facilitate the delivery of priority actions where there is alignment of purpose and where there is an opportunity to share resources, therefore increasing ability to achieve outcomes more cost-efficiently.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Members will recall that, on 7 March 2018, a paper was presented to this Committee identifying the priority activities to be delivered in 2018/2019 as part of the Committee's ambitions to support the delivery of the targets under two of the pillars of the Belfast Agenda: Working and Learning and Growing the Economy. At that Committee, it was agreed that a follow-up paper would be presented to the April 2018 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee outlining specific details of activities. This report contains a series of more detailed propositions to secure Member approval for the work programme for the coming financial year. A summary of the key work streams, along with associated programmes, outcomes and assigned budgets for the 2018/19 financial year is attached as Appendix 1.</p>
3.2	<p>As detailed in the March 2018 Committee Report, our investments continue to be driven by the principle of Inclusive Growth and underpinned by a series of guiding principles. In terms of Inclusive Growth, in practice this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building linkages with employers that are committed to providing opportunities for long-term unemployed/economically inactive and supporting career progression - Providing up-skilling support for those already in work – especially those in entry-level roles - Ensuring that regeneration activity benefits local communities in terms of job creation,

improvement in public realm and training opportunities

- Addressing barriers to employment such as transport, access and childcare
- Supporting business development and growth for local companies – helping them grow and improve their productivity.

The guiding principles that direct how and where we focus our resources include:

3.3

- Employment/enterprise-led: focusing upon identified employment/ enterprise opportunities and gaps in provision;
- Needs-led: in order to deliver against the principles of Inclusive Growth, targeting interventions towards geographical areas and/or under-represented groups while being accessible and open to all;
- Ambitious: to increase visibility and awareness of Council's role within this environment and strategically build our position in this area;
- Intelligence-led and evidence-based: ensuring that our investment is based on a sound rationale;
- Adding value: ensuring we do not duplicate existing provision;
- Flexible: allowing for interventions to be developed around emerging market needs/opportunities; and
- Scalable: delivered seamlessly across the City, in line with need and opportunity – trying out new solutions on a pilot basis and increasing their coverage, if they have a positive impact.

Work Plan 2018/19: Working and Learning

3.4

The detailed work plan is included in Appendix 1 of this report. It includes information on the range of activities to be supported in the course of the year, in line with the paper presented to the Committee in March 2018. Against each activity, details of participant numbers, job outcomes and other relevant outcomes are set out. Financial information for the proposed expenditure in 2018/19 is also detailed. Please note that the figures in the appendix may vary from those set out below as the figures below are for the whole programme of activity, which may run more than one financial year, while the figures in Appendix 1 detail outcome and expenditure for the 2018/19 financial year only. Some of the highlights under the "Working and Learning" theme include:

- Employment Academies: These employer-led programmes focus on supporting those furthest from the labour market. The Academies work by adding value to existing training provision. In addition to the Hotel, Construction and Hospitality Employment Academies which were delivered in 2017/18, a series of new sectors

being explored and developed include Tourism, Transport, Public Sector, Retail, Childminding, Domiciliary Care, Advanced Manufacturing and Creative and Digital Industries. Work is under way at present to establish strategic partnerships with employers in these sectors to understand their recruitment requirements and put in place programmes to meet their needs. While the focus will continue to be on the economically inactive, the interventions may evolve to consider upskilling support – helping individuals to move into higher-level jobs. Critically, the higher level Academies will be informed by the intelligence gathered within our Graduate Research, which is due to complete in April 2018. This is likely to include bespoke Academies for both unemployed graduates as well as upskilling Academies for graduates who are under-employed to facilitate career progression. The Academies delivered by the Council in the coming year will support at least 350 new jobs

- In keeping with the Belfast Agenda commitment to ensure that “every young person leaving school has a destination that fulfils their potential”, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee last year approved the commissioning of research to look at the employability and skills requirements to enable the Council and its partners to meet this commitment – under the heading of the “City Youth Pledge”. The research will be complete in April 2018. The research has identified a number of challenges and gaps that are acting as barriers to ensuring that young people have access to the guidance and information to make informed choices regarding their education, training and employment options. These gaps include the lack of meaningful work experience, inconsistent quality of careers advice and guidance, disjoints between different statutory stakeholders, competition for young people amongst schools and further education providers etc. It is therefore expected that activities informed by this research will include improving access to work experience and intensive careers interventions in schools and alternative education providers. Activities going forward will also include the development of strategic relationships with statutory stakeholders to improve access to good quality and independent careers guidance on the full range of options available to young people (from school-based curriculum offer to vocational training and apprenticeship/higher level apprenticeships opportunities to employment options). It is likely that the research will also identify innovative early interventions for those young people who are at risk of dropping out of the education system as well as those who are not in education, training or employment. The development, implementation and delivery costs of this activity are expected to be £130,000 in 2018/19. It is estimated that 600 young people will be engaged and provided with opportunities to enhance their employability, skills levels and educational attainment

under the auspices of the City Youth Pledge

- Match funding support for five European Social Fund (ESF) projects (Springboard, Workforce Learning, USEL, Specialisterne and LEMIS + consortium), as agreed at the 7 March 2018 Council meeting. The Council's match funding is £240,000 each year for four years (subject to satisfactory performance) and Urban Villages (UV) have also provided £75,518 towards a number of those projects that are delivering activity in UV areas. In total, these projects will attract £5.4 million of funding over each year of operation. They will support 2,664 people who are unemployed or economically inactive by removing barriers to employment and enhance their employability and skills levels. Of these 2,664 participants each year, 616 people will find a job and a further 219 will progress to further education at Level 2 or above. Collectively, these participants will achieve 1,825 accreditations. In order to ensure that these projects are focused on areas of most need, Officers will gather participant and employment information at postcode level and will overlay that information with other information including deprivation levels, skills levels, poverty levels etc.
- Supporting and facilitating Jobs Fairs and career development events including Skills NI Careers Fair, aimed at young people aged 15-19, and The Belfast Jobs Fair in partnership with Department for Communities. The costs associated with these events will not exceed £20,000.
- Targeted support to ensure that under-represented groups including those in areas of highest deprivation and economically inactive are engaged and barriers to participation are removed (lone parents, those with disabilities and health conditions, economically inactive, ethnic minorities, older people etc.). The development, implementation and delivery costs of this activity are expected to be £45,000 within 2018/19. It is estimated that 300 people furthest from the labour market will be engaged and provided with opportunities to remove barriers to participation on Council's Employability & Skills activities, such as financial support for childcare/care to enable those with caring responsibilities to access Employment Academies and other employability interventions, interpretation services and support for ethnic minorities etc.
- Establishment of an Employability Forum: this will bring together the key statutory partners including Department for Communities (DfC), Department for the Economy (DfE), Department of Education/Education Authority and private sector employers. The purpose of the forum is to improve the integration of current interventions to improve skills levels and address economic inactivity challenges in Belfast. There

may also be an opportunity to pilot localised approaches to mainstream programme delivery. In the medium-term, there will be an opportunity to consider joint approaches to future delivery, potentially including co-commissioning of flagship Employability and Skills programmes such as Steps to Success, Apprenticeship NI etc.

- In collaboration with partners from the five neighbouring councils, support the development of the Employability & Skills strand of the Belfast Region City Deal. This activity has the potential to lever an additional £25million over the next 10 years. Work is under way to identify priority areas of activity and associated employment and skills development targets and potential outcomes.
- Working with the Council's Planning and Building Control Team to explore the potential for using Developer Contributions to lever resources and private sector buy-in to the Working and Learning activity.
- Undertake research, gather intelligence and scope innovative approaches to address gaps within Employability & Skills provision within the city with a view to piloting during 2018/19 such as:
 - o Apprentice+ which would enable those over 25 years old to access an apprenticeship programme
 - o Training for Success+ which would enable those over 18 years old who could not access Training for Success to avail of the supports available with this programme, for example those who were in prison at 16-18 years old and missed out on the supports provided
 - o A Shared Apprenticeships Scheme for Belfast which ensures that skilled trade apprentices are assured of continuous employment to enable the completion of their Apprenticeship NI training
 - o Paid Internships for economically inactive whom might consider to start their own business and become self-employed.

Work Plan 2018/19: Growing the Economy

Starting a Business

3.5

- Enterprise Awareness and exploring enterprise support: promoting entrepreneurship to individuals from under-represented groups to help them understand and overcome the barriers to starting a business or finding work as well as working with individuals who are unemployed who want to find out about self-employment, explore or

research a business idea. Activity will commence in May 2018, and will be aligned with the Employability and Skills work to support underrepresented groups and those experiencing specific barriers. Up to £101,000 will be allocated to this work this year;

- Graduate Enterprise Initiative: providing flexible support to student entrepreneurs in local academic institutions. Up to 80 students will have the opportunity to receive support through the programme. 10 graduates will receive financial support in the form of a salary grant to pursue and start their business. This initiative will commence in September 2018 with an annual cost of £200,000, £150,000 of which will be leveraged from Invest NI. Each participant will qualify for £15,000 to support them during the first 12 months of starting their business;
- Kick Start: aims to increase business survival rates by adding value to the Northern Ireland Business Start-up Programme (NIBSUP) through practical support and aftercare mentoring. A funding application to lever ERDF resources to support this programme will be submitted and if successful, the programme will commence in early 2019. The programme will be delivered over a four year period costing £60,000 per year (ERDF/Invest NI £48,000, Belfast City Council £12,000). A total of 300 businesses will be supported over 4 years through this programme with 240 jobs created;
- Go Social: programme to support the development of new social enterprises and co-operatives in the city to build upon the success of the current Go Social programme, which is due to complete in June 2019. This programme is currently undergoing the ERDF application process and is expected to commence in early 2019 to be delivered over four years at an annual cost of £90,000 (ERDF/Invest NI £72,000, Belfast City Council £18,000) – A total of 240 social enterprises/cooperatives will be supported over 4 years with 255 jobs created;
- The Northern Ireland Female Enterprise Challenge - A collaborative programme between the 11 Local Councils, Invest NI, and Women in Business NI (WIB) to promote and support female enterprise. This programme will be part-funded by Invest NI (£200,000), WIB (£200,000), and 11 Councils (£200,000) over a three-year period. This initiative aims to promote female enterprise, increase the numbers of women considering starting a business and encourage existing female entrepreneurs to grow their businesses. The cost to Belfast City Council for one year of delivery is £6,200. This will be supported via a funding agreement with the lead council.

Growing a Business

- Digital Transformation Programme: providing support to businesses to implement digital technology – aligned to the new investment in infrastructure as part of the Smart Belfast activity. This programme will commence in January 2019 and will lever ERDF and Invest NI funding. The total programme cost will be £80,900 per year (ERDF/INI £71,920, BCC £17,980). A total of 320 businesses will be supported over 4 years through this programme with 360 jobs created;
- Procurement Programme: support to enhance skills in tendering for SMEs, social enterprises and co-operatives. This intervention will enable participants to secure new business development opportunities through public procurement as well as wider supply chain development opportunities. An application for support to fund this programme through ERDF funds is currently being made. The programme is expected to commence in 2019 to be delivered over for years at an annual cost of £60,000 (ERDF/Invest NI £48,000, Belfast City Council £12,000). A total of 160 businesses over 4 years will be supported through this programme with approximately 134 jobs created;
- Cyber Security Programme – Delivered via a funding agreement with CSIT (Centre for Secure Information Technologies). This programme arises from the NI Cyber Security Strategy for NI, which the Council supported. Part of this programme will test the resilience of local businesses against cyber attacks and support them to improve areas of weakness. The budget for this programme is £21,000. There will also be a Cyber Challenge to maintain innovation in this sector which will support one or two businesses through open competition to develop their new Cyber Security Solution. The budget for this element of the programme is £24,000.
- Creative and Music Development Programme: Officers will be procuring for the delivery of support for the city’s creative and digital industries. This will include Output Music Development Programme and Conference for activity over 3 years at a cost of £50,000 (per year). Complementary to this will be a programme for creative convergence (music/digital/tech) as part of the city’s Smart City Framework, delivered in the Immersive Lab, estimated at £20,000 per year;
- In partnership with the Council’s Waste Team, Officers are currently working on developing a Circular Economy Challenge to encourage furniture design students to develop a more circular economy approach to furniture design. We are also working

with 10 hospitality businesses to develop Circular Economy practices. The total cost of these interventions is £20,000;

- We are working with the advanced engineering sector to deliver a support programme to support 12 businesses at a cost of £30,000;
- Innovation Factory (IF) currently supports 33 tenant businesses and engages 120 businesses per annum on their tailored support programmes. The centre currently supports 138 jobs. A separate report relating to IF performance is tabled to Committee for information.

Investing in Belfast

3.7

- As detailed in the International Relations Paper tabled to City Growth and Regeneration last month Members will recall the recommendation of a lead development agency for the finance and professional services sector to position Belfast in London and Dublin as an integrated solution for business relocation set up at a cost of £40,000 per year contracted for 2+1 years (subject to satisfactory performance). This will also provide support for indigenous businesses in this sector to develop their UK and ROI partnerships to expand the business as well as profiling Belfast as a dynamic investment location for this sector.

3.8

City Centre Development

- Festive Lighting – Officers are developing a design-led approach to festive lighting to consider improvements to city centre lighting as a longer-term project. The cost for this work to shape future direction is approximately £30,000. Additional funding for the delivery of the overall scheme will be levered from the private sector, DfC and the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs).

3.9

Marketing and Promotional Support

In order to promote the Council programmes and activities and maximise take-up it is proposed that a budget of £80,000 is set aside to promote the range of activities identified above. Working in conjunction with the Corporate Communications Team and the Departmental Communications Support, this is likely to involve a range of print media, PR and social media. While there is an extensive range of programme support available to individuals seeking employment or waiting to start or grow a business, the marketing message will be simplified and, once the individual or company makes contact with the Council, we will direct them towards the support that meets their needs.

3.10	<p>The Belfast Agenda emphasises the importance of partnership working and collaboration towards common goals and outcomes. There are opportunities for targeted support in the Council's economic development and employability and skills activity by engaging with key events and conferences. It is proposed that a budget of up to £70,000 is set aside for this activity in the coming financial year. The over-riding principle of this support is that the Council will financially support events, conferences, fairs and programmes delivered by our third-party stakeholders working with our target clients where our support and input can create a referral onto the Council's programmes and where the Council's ambitions and interventions can be profiled to key target audiences.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Performance Measurement and Evaluation</u></p> <p>To independently measure and evaluate Development Department's performance across the Growing the Economy and Working & Learning work streams detailed in this report Officers wish to adopt an independent evaluation approach to verify outcomes on an annual basis. Evaluation and reporting will be undertaken over a four-year period aligned to the Belfast Agenda stretch goals. The approach will include participant and customer surveys, focus groups and telephone surveys. It is anticipated that there will be an annual performance review report with key recommendations and findings. This will be supplemented by a six monthly progress status report which will be tabled to Committee for information. The business programmes and initiatives delivered by Innovation Factory will also be evaluated through this commission. This evaluation will provide a full measure of the economic performance of the service areas and value for money assessments. The cost of this service will be a maximum of £30,000 per year over a 4 year evaluation period.</p>
3.12	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The activities outlined in this report and work-plan attached as Annex 1 will be resourced from the set 18/19 financial budget for the Economic Development and Employability & Skills sections of Development Department budget.</p>
3.13	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>Each of the proposed projects referenced in this report is informed by statistical research, stakeholder engagement and complementary policies and strategies. New projects or service areas are equality screened and considerations given to equality and good relation impacts at the initial stages of project development. Officers will work closely with the Equality and Good Relations Team on this activity.</p>

4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Working and Learning and Growing the Economy delivery actions, outcomes and expenditure – 2018/19