



Subject:	City Region Growth Deal – update
Date:	20 th April 2018
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
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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"/>
Some time 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	To update Committee on the ongoing development of a Belfast City Region Deal Proposition including engagement with partners, emerging projects and next steps.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing work to develop the next proposition document for the Belfast City Region Deal• The initial emerging projects under the key themes• The next steps for engagement including a proposed joint members Forum in May 2018.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that a major programme to enable the development of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD), in accordance with the requirements of the Department for Communities and Local Government, is now in full operation.</p> <p>The programme is being developed to fulfil the agreed objective for the BRCD of “<i>more and better jobs; inclusive growth; improved skills and and growth of domestic business and FDI</i>”.</p> <p><u>Programme Update</u></p> <p>Innovation</p> <p>3.2 In line with the process adopted for other successful city deals the universities are working with the BCRD on the Innovation strand of the proposition. Queens University and Ulster University have developed outline innovation proposals for potential inclusion in the BRCD and examples of emerging projects include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Digital Innovation Centre • A Financial (and Legal) Technology Centre • Academic Medical Research Institute • Creative Industries Centre of Excellence • A Global Innovation Institute <p>3.3 Discussions with University partners, and the relevant NI departments has begun to further explore and develop these and other projects for inclusion in the next iteration of the proposition document.</p> <p>Employability and Skills</p> <p>3.4 The Chief Executive of Belfast Metropolitan College, on behalf of the Regional Colleges, is working with Council partners on the development of an initial proposition on Employability and Skills for discussion with government departments and agencies. A significant amount of engagement has taken place with the FE colleges in the region as well as council officers from all six councils in the development of a draft framework. The emerging framework has three principal strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting economic inactivity • Addressing skill supply issues • Meeting the skills needs of our growth sector

3.5	<p>Specific priority areas and programmes are being developed to support the key strands in areas such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers Enhancement, • Apprenticeship Hub, • Graduate Development, • Employability for All, • Economic Activation, • Business Productivity, • Digital skills.
3.6	<p>The skills proposition will underpin and support the other strands of the deal. It will seek to both support the skills needed to deliver growth in the high value added sectors such as digital and creative industries and also to enable and to facilitate inclusion through programmes to support the large number of people of working age who are currently economically inactive.</p>
3.7	<p>A key element of the employability and skills proposition will involve establishing a new integrated approach which is more responsive to the needs of business in the region and which reflects the changing requirements to remain competitive in a global economy.</p>
3.8	<p>A first draft of the proposition has been developed and a meeting is scheduled with NI departments in mid-April, after which there will be a need to be for direct engagement with business representatives across the region.</p>
3.9	<p>Digital</p> <p>Future City Catapult has been engaged on behalf of the Belfast Region City Deal Partners to develop a Digital Strategy to identify the digital infrastructure required across the region in order to advance economic growth and social inclusion. It will consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What digital infrastructure is required to support our key growth sectors • What future digital skills will be required to ensure digital infrastructure is used to achieve economic efficiencies • How digital infrastructure can progress social inclusion and inclusive economic growth
3.10	<p>A significant amount of work has been undertaken to date and FCC has conducted an extensive programme of engagement with Council partners and key stakeholders, including a session with local businesses facilitated by the CBI.</p>

3.11	<p>The emerging vision and proposition highlights a range of strategic objectives for the digital infrastructure strategy which include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take action to increase digital readiness of the regional economy 2. Accelerate the development of data and Internet of Things capabilities 3. A Pathway to a future-proof digital infrastructure 4. Embed digital into services prioritising those that will trigger economic growth
3.12	<p>Work is continuing to develop specific projects to support these objectives which will be included in the city deal proposition document at the end of April.</p>
3.13	<p>Infrastructure</p> <p>At the last meeting, committee was provided with an update on the emerging infrastructure projects in Belfast that were identified for initial consideration in the next city deal proposition. They were selected given their significance to the development of the city and wider economic region. These projects had already been priorities identified in a number of council strategies including the Belfast Agenda, the City Centre Regeneration Strategy and the Local Development Plan and include; The Belfast Story, Belfast Rapid Transit phase 2- Linking the north & south of the city, Lagan Bridges and Links, Transport Hub phase 2 (Weavers Cross), York Street Interchange. The Living with Water Project has also been identified as significant in terms of supporting the city's infrastructure and has been included for further consideration.</p>
3.14	<p>Members are reminded that in all of the work strands the initial list of projects are in early draft and it is important to recognise that the value of the projects being identified by Council partners has a value far in excess of even the level of financing that could be available through a £1billion BRCD. There are therefore a significant a number of steps, including discussions with DCLG and NI Government Departments on both financing and deliverability, still to be worked through in relation to all the projects that are being considered as part of the deal.</p>
3.15	<p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <p>Work has also begun on developing the tourism ask in the city deal. An early draft of this is due at the end of April and will help to inform this element of the proposition document. At the same time members will be aware that the Council continues to work on the development of a new potential city centre tourist attraction as well as developing a framework for neighbourhood tourism.</p>

<p>3.16</p> <p>3.17</p> <p>3.18</p> <p>3.19</p>	<p>Engagement</p> <p>Councils will continue to consult with the NI Executive Departments to test the emerging project list and updated proposition paper which will form the basis of discussion and negotiation with DCLG at the end of April / early May. It is anticipated that further prioritisation will form part of this process as well as the need for more information to take projects forward including detailed financial modelling with funding streams and development of individual business cases.</p> <p>As projects now begin to emerge, further detailed discussions will take place with all partners and the private sector to maximise the benefits of any deal, including identifying other funding opportunities. A further Joint Members Forum will also be held in May.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Finance for the development of the Belfast City Region Deal has been included in the revenue estimates.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>To be considered in preparation of Belfast City Region Deal.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None</p>