



Subject:	Proposed workshop to consider city centre retail
Date:	9 th May 2018
Reporting Officer:	Nuala Gallagher – Director of City Centre Development
Contact Officer:	James Collier – Development Manager (ext. 2381)

Is this report restricted? Yes No

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"/>

Is the decision eligible for Call-in? Yes No

1.0	Purpose of Update or Summary of main Issues
1.1	<p>The purpose of the update is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update members on the recent commissioning of retail analysis, in conjunction with the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (BCTC), to consider the retail sector in Belfast; and to• Seek approval to undertake a workshop for all members with the appointed retail consultants and BCTC at the end of June 2018 to present the interim findings of the recent analysis, prior to the final report and recommended next steps coming back to committee in August.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• note the commissioning of further retail analysis and agree to a workshop for all members at the end of June with the consultants.

3.0	Main update
3.1	<p data-bbox="258 264 421 293"><u>Background</u></p> <p data-bbox="258 315 1433 595">The Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) emphasised the importance of having a strong retail offer in the city and provided a vision for retail in Belfast city centre as “<i>providing a regionally competitive retail offer and a shopping experience that is unmatched anywhere else in Northern Ireland</i>”. This approach is also advocated in the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) and in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS).</p>
3.2	<p data-bbox="258 667 1433 853">Alongside the work undertaken previously, a need has now been identified for a retail analysis to assess a variety of short and long-term challenges to the retail and leisure sector in the city, thereby helping the council and its partners across the city to respond to this fast-changing environment.</p>
3.3	<p data-bbox="258 920 1433 999">In conjunction with the BCTC, the Council commissioned FSP Retail and Business experts (FSP) to undertake retail analysis including:</p> <ul data-bbox="309 1070 1433 1464" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="309 1070 1433 1149">• analysis of the existing leisure and retail offer, and identification of gaps in provision and opportunities for development of the independent retail sector; <li data-bbox="309 1171 1433 1249">• consideration of retail and leisure in Belfast in the context of the Northern Ireland, UK and the Republic of Ireland markets; <li data-bbox="309 1272 1433 1305">• review of current and emerging consumer trends in retail and leisure; <li data-bbox="309 1328 1433 1464">• identification where possible of <i>practical</i> steps that can be taken by the city council, other public bodies, the Chamber of Trade and Commerce and retailers themselves to strengthen Belfast’s retail position.
3.4	<p data-bbox="258 1525 1433 1615">The experts will work collaboratively with council officers across the relevant departments, and will also engage with key local stakeholders including the BIDs and developers.</p>
3.5	<p data-bbox="258 1682 1433 1760">Members are asked to approve a members’ workshop in late June with the retail experts FSP and BCTC. It is proposed the workshop will:</p> <ul data-bbox="309 1783 1433 1973" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="309 1783 1433 1861">• include a presentation from FSP on their initial findings from their retail analysis of Belfast and to identify core issues for inclusion into the final report; and <li data-bbox="309 1883 1433 1973">• allow a fuller exploration and discussion of the report to enable the experts to secure member feedback prior to proposing potential actions and next steps.
	<p data-bbox="258 2033 1433 2069">The final report, including recommended actions, next steps and any associated costings</p>

3.6	<p>will come to committee in August.</p> <p>Subject to approval, all members will be notified of the date of the workshop in the coming days.</p> <p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.7	
3.8	<p>Resources for the commission are met within the existing City Centre Development Team budget.</p> <p><u>Equality implications</u></p>
3.9	<p>There are no equality implications associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices
4.1	None