



Subject:	Destination Hub: Outline Business Case Update
Date:	13 th June 2018
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid - Strategic Director Place & Economy
Contact Officer:	James Collier - Development Manager

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	Members will be aware that feasibility work is ongoing on a major cultural and visitor destination in the city centre. Belfast City Council in partnership with Tourism NI have commissioned Deloitte together with CHL Consulting to take this work forward. The outputs will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Emerging Concept- Governance and Organisational Structure- Outline Business Case (OBC)
1.2	The report will be accompanied by a presentation by expert advisors from the project team, who will update Members on the work undertaken to date, their emerging thinking around the three areas of work above, and timetable for completion of the OBC for inclusion in the Belfast Region City Deal.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the work undertaken to date by the expert advisory team producing the Destination Hub Outline Business Case, including extensive engagement with key statutory and cultural stakeholders, and the intention to include this project within the Belfast Region City Deal. – Agree to receive a further report that sets out details of the outline business case, recommendations and a future work programme.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>In September 2015, Belfast City Council published the Belfast City Centre and Regeneration Strategy. This Strategy recommended that serious consideration should be given to developing an international visitor destination in the city centre to complement Titanic Belfast. Early feasibility work was conducted culminating in the completion of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) in June 2016 that endorsed this goal.</p>
3.2	<p>The SOC indicated that a visitor destination that can be an attractor of people and investment has the potential to make a real and lasting impact through increasing visitor trips/stays as well as increasing footfall in the city centre, thereby supporting retail as well as the wider daytime and evening economy.</p>
3.3	<p>This project aims to deliver an exciting, engaging and accessible set of world-class facilities that integrates with existing organisations and builds on the growing visitor economy. It should create opportunities for new jobs and skills development, as well as be aligned and add to the wider visitor and neighbourhood tourism offer across Belfast. It will provide both local and international visitors with an outstanding visitor experience and the opportunity to engage with our rich cultural heritage. This addition to the tourism offer will encourage people to stay longer, increase the dwell time and spend more in the local economy.</p>
3.4	<p>Belfast City Council, in partnership with Tourism NI, commissioned a team of experts to take forward the recommendations from the SOC of 2016 to progress and conclude a number of workstreams in order to take the delivery of a new city centre visitor destination to the next stage. These workstreams and associated outputs are set out below, and progress against these outputs will be provided as part of the presentation to Committee.</p>

3.5	<p>Output A: Outline Business Case</p> <p>The Outline Business Case will be compliant with the Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation, which is an essential element to securing future investment in any potential capital project of this nature.</p>
3.6	<p>Output B: Governance, structure and organisational design</p> <p>This will include assessment and identification of the optimal structures for the delivery of a new visitor destination to include governance during procurement, delivery and the ultimate ownership and operation of the facility.</p>
3.7	<p>Output C: Concept development</p> <p>This will include a review of previous feasibility work and further consideration of the key components of the visitor destination, including recommendations on how any investment could support the wider development of the creative and cultural sectors in Belfast. Therefore consideration is being given to the activity currently being delivered by various stakeholders and how a new visitor destination could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - help to foster city, regional and international collaborations; - provide a facility of the scale and quality to enable audience development; - help to address skills and employability gaps identified in these sectors - supplement and tie-in to the wider neighbourhood tourism offer in the city.
3.8	<p>A stakeholder group is in place to oversee the development of the work and this group includes representation from key statutory and cultural stakeholders. Further engagement has also taken place with the cultural and heritage sectors to help develop the emerging concept for the Destination Hub and its component parts. Further detail on the approach to date will be outlined by the consultant team in their presentation. If it is decided to take this project forward following the conclusion of the OBC then further engagement and communication activity would be undertaken across the city to help develop the concept and content of the Destination Hub. This will include delivering a programme of extensive civic engagement as well as detailed consultation with the wider cultural and tourism sectors.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Programme and next steps</u></p> <p>The expert team will be working on the above three workstreams over the coming months ahead of a further report to CGR and SP&R committees in August. A particular focus will be engagement with government economists over the detailed financial, economic and commercial elements of the OBC. This will enable the Destination Hub to be included as a project within the Belfast Region City Deal in September. Work is also ongoing to assess the relationship of the Destination Hub to tourism and cultural infrastructure across the city to ensure that any investment also supports and strengthens this existing offer,</p>

3.10	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> Costs associated with the outline business case are included in departmental budgets with partnership funding from Tourism NI.
3.11	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> There are no equality or Good Relations implications.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None