



Subject:	Update on International Relations – Nashville
Date:	7th November, 2018
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development, ext 3470
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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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with additional information on the invitation received to attend the Nashville Health: Further Conference held in August, 2018 and to set out the rationale behind the decision not to attend the event.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p data-bbox="272 226 432 255"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="272 275 1471 510">At the October meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, Members noted the update on International Relations activity for the period April-September 2018. As part of that report, they noted that a planned visit to Nashville at the end of August 2018 had not taken place and asked that officers provide a report to the November meeting of the Committee to review why it did not proceed.</p>
3.2	<p data-bbox="272 580 1471 808">Members will be aware that, in May 2018, Belfast City Council hosted a cross sectoral delegation from both US-based Sister Cities, Boston and Nashville. As part of the mission, one of the Nashville delegates, Marcus Whitney, visited Belfast for the first time to explore the strengths of the life and health sciences sector and opportunities for future venture capital investment in the city.</p>
3.3	<p data-bbox="272 887 1471 1211">Marcus met with a number of relevant stakeholders across business, education and government as part of his visit programme. He was impressed by the quality of the research expertise and business innovation in the sector locally and considered that there were opportunities for collaboration with Nashville-based businesses as well as investment opportunities. On return to Nashville, Marcus engaged with the Invest NI office in Chicago and issued an invitation to NI-based partners to attend a health conference and business event which was taking place in Nashville at the end of August, 2018.</p>
3.4	<p data-bbox="272 1290 1471 1413">The rationale behind this invitation was to encourage relevant Belfast companies and economic development players to attend and meet counterparts in Nashville in order to explore potential business and investment opportunities.</p>
3.5	<p data-bbox="272 1491 1471 1615">Members will recall their agreement for the Chair of City Growth and Regeneration Committee and the Director of Economic Development or their nominees to attend the conference, subject to confirmation of stakeholder commitment and programme value.</p>
3.6	<p data-bbox="272 1693 1471 1921">During June and July, Council officials met with Invest NI, Catalyst Inc. and potential company delegates to discuss this opportunity and explore the potential to attend the event. Unfortunately there was not sufficient interest expressed by the individual business or the business support organisations to attend the event and, as a result, the Council delegation did not travel to the event. This was in line with the Committee approval.</p>

3.7	<p>Since this time, officers have continued to engage with Marcus Whitney, Nashville’s economic development team and the Chicago-based Invest NI team to look at future opportunities within the Nashville life and health sciences sector for Belfast companies. The partners consider that there is an opportunity to undertake additional research and scoping work in order to understand the scale and nature of the opportunity. This will ensure that the future opportunities identified are informed by research in order to maximise the opportunities for success and to increase the potential for interest from local businesses. This may include a future business mission to Nashville. Invest NI’s trade development teams and their Chicago office will be critical in scoping and supporting any future business engagement activity, as will other enterprise partners including Catalyst Inc.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.8	<p>Any costs associated with future business-related activity will be presented to Committee at a later date and will be considered as part of the estimates process.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.9	<p>The International Relations Framework was equality screened.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None