



Subject:	Update on Smart Belfast Programme
Date:	7 th November 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"/>
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 Smart Belfast programme encourages collaborative innovation between our local universities, digital SMEs and the public sector in order to tackle urban challenges, drive public service transformation, and support wider economic development in growth sectors of the city's digital economy.
1.2	Delivery of the programme is driven by an ongoing 'pipeline' of projects specifically chosen for their capacity to contribute to the Urban Innovation Framework agreed by Council in 2017. An update report was presented to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in September 2018. Given its interest in this area of work, this paper provides the City Growth & Regeneration Committee with an update on the current activities.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is requested to note the contents of the report.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Smart Belfast programme encourages collaborative innovation between our universities, digital SMEs and the public sector to tackle urban challenges, drive public service transformation, and support wider economic development in growth sectors of the city’s digital economy. It operate at three levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) City and regional: Working with partners to develop the digital innovation elements of the Belfast Region City Deal. And supporting partners to bring innovative solutions to challenges identified in the Belfast Agenda (while at the same time supporting our digital companies to innovate); (2) Organisational transformation: Contributing to the Council’s own service transformation by supporting the adoption of user-centric design; innovative procurement; and the application of data science and digital technologies. (3) Building the core foundations: Working with partners to build the strategic capabilities of our smart city (including supporting a city data platform, networks, skills sharing, joint delivery mechanisms, etc).
3.2	<p>The team currently consists of four officers temporarily re-assigned but is in the process of recruiting seven full time staff. Delivery of the programme continues to be driven by a ‘pipeline’ of projects specifically chosen for their capacity to contribute to the Urban Innovation framework agreed by Members in 2017. The latest information on the programme is available at http://smartbelfast.city</p>
3.3	<p>While the programme’s focus over recent months has been in the development of the digital and innovation pillar of the Belfast Region City Deal, the team has continued to deliver the smart city project.</p>
3.4	<p>An update was provided to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee in September 2018, and the Committee is asked to note a number of current and planned pipeline projects:</p>

Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) on Last Mile Freight delivery

3.5 The team has been working with Smart Dublin, the NI Department for Infrastructure, Belfast Business Improvement Districts, the NI Freight Transport Association, on a €240,000 SBRI competition to encourage SMEs to develop proofs of concepts to address the challenge of increasing numbers of van and lorry deliveries in both Dublin and Belfast city centres.

3.6 Here in Belfast, successful companies will explore the challenge from a number of perspectives including setting up ‘micro-consolidation’ centres to distribute goods to retail outlets using electric bikes and autonomous vehicles; creating ‘virtual’ loading bays that managed remotely via a mobile app; and working with freight companies to jointly schedule freight delivery slots into the city centre.

Amazing Places, Smart Places SBRI challenge

3.7 Working with the NI Department for Justice, the Community Safety Partnership and other agencies, the Council successfully applied to the Northern Ireland SBRI Change programme for £100,000 to work with digital SMEs to develop innovative ways to support the management of public space in the city (particularly in our parks).

3.8 The competition closes on 14 November and will provide opportunities for up to six companies to work with the city to explore how data science and digital technologies can support better understanding of issues associated with safe open space.

3.9 The competition has attracted substantial local and national interest. For example, the Smart Dublin team may be able to offer complementary funding to allow interested companies to also test their ideas in a number of parks in Dublin city centre.

Things Connected challenge competition

3.10 Working with Ulster University, the UK Digital Catapult, and other NI local authorities, the Smart Belfast team ran an open competition to encourage local companies to explore ways in which the region’s new ‘Internet of Things’ (IoT) radio network can be used to support city centre services and the citizen’s experience of the public realm. (The IoT network was established following a £100,000 joint bid to Digital Catapult by Smart Belfast and Ulster University and is free-to-use by local companies – more than 50 local companies have already registered to use the network.)

3.11	<p>'IoT' is expected to be a significant technology for businesses over the next decade, and the competition provides local companies with unique opportunities to build their skills while at the same time working with councils on real-world applications.</p>
3.12	<p>Two SMEs have been chosen to go forward for the Belfast challenge. They will be supported by Ulster University to develop their ideas during an initial proof-of-concept phase in autumn 2018</p>
3.13	<p>Alongside the competition, the Council also arranged free training for over 60 SMEs in managing cloud-based Internet of Things applications.</p>
<p>Maritime Mile demonstrator project</p>	
3.14	<p>The Smart Belfast team has also been exploring how IoT technologies could support the development of the city's 'maritime mile' (ie, from the Big Fish to the Pump House) – with a particular focus on how pedestrians and visitors plan their journeys and interact with the public realm.</p>
3.15	<p>Smart Belfast is working with the Titanic Foundation and Tourism NI (who have offered match-funding) and IoT company, 'Hello Lamp Post', to co-invest in a small-scale demonstrator project that will use mobile phone technology to encourage pedestrians to interact with 'Artificial Intelligence chat-bots' along the maritime mile. The learning and data from this demonstrator will then be used to inform the future use of smart technologies in public space and in a future smart district.</p>
3.16	<p>Hello Lamp Post are also planning to bid to a €3 million 'SynchroniCity' IoT fund to develop this work further in Belfast and in Eindhoven.</p>
<p>UK Space Agency Call For Ideas</p>	
3.17	<p>Urban air quality and its links to health outcomes is a growing issue at the national and international level. Smart Belfast is currently involved in a UK Space Agency funded project with a consortium of SMEs, the Belfast Health Trust and Department for Health. This Urban Healthy Living project seeks to model Belfast's traffic data and air quality to provide information on air pollution in a near real-time for city planners and citizens.</p>
3.18	<p>Building on this work, the SME consortium is now bidding to the Space Agency for an even more ambitious air quality project.</p>

Business Rates Maximisation

3.19 Following a £140,000 SBRI competition in 2017 that sought to use big data to identify additional business rates incomes and improve the accuracy of the city's Rates Register (the competition identified over £300,000 of additional Rates income), the Council is now moving to procure a Business Rates data tool.

3.20 Two companies that successfully delivered the SBRI have used the experience to develop market-ready products that are being sought by a number of other UK cities. The project also featured in the UK Government's Industrial Growth strategy.

Smart Tourism

3.21 Smart Belfast is facilitating a 'collaborative growth' network of twelve SMEs that has come together to develop joint innovations that generate and/or utilize that have come together to develop joint innovations to generate and/or utilize tourism data.

3.22 Invest NI is providing £25,000 to each network and if they develop sufficiently robust business cases they will be able to access a further £175,000 each.

Data Analytics for Economic Activity

3.23 The team has worked with local SME 'Expand Access' to successfully bid to a €1 million EIT Digital Call. This project, which includes partners from Helsinki and University of Madrid and Future Cities Catapult, seeks to bring together a wide range of economic, skills, employment and business data to develop comprehensive analyses to inform decisions by both by individual businesses and public policy makers.

Health analytics

3.24 Smart Belfast is facilitating a 'collaborative growth network of local SMEs that has come together to develop joint innovations that generate and/or utilize health data to incentivize local people to take part in healthy activities.

3.25 Invest NI is providing £25,000 to the network and if it develops a sufficiently robust business case the SMEs will be able to access a further £175,000.

Belfast Bikes R&D project

3.26 Over the past twelve months the team has been working with local SME, See,Sense, BT, the Department for Infrastructure, NSL, PSNI and QUB on a joint R&D project that deployed 75 sensors on the Belfast Bikes. The data from this project is being used to better understand usage of the scheme and wider cycling behaviour across the city.

3.27	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The 2018/2019 programme budget for Smart Belfast was agreed by the SP&R Committee in November, 2017.</p>
3.28	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Equality and good relations implications will be taken into consideration and it is proposed that we will take this through equality screening; however, it is anticipated that any collaborative efforts should have a positive effect on Section 75 groups.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None