



Subject:	City Growth and Innovation Commission
Date:	22 March 2019
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Grainia Long, Commissioner for Resilience John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input checked="" 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	This paper proposes the establishment of an action-oriented Commission- established for one year- to create a step change in driving innovation and growth. The purpose of the Commission is to support the Council in the further development and implementation of its priorities as set out in the Belfast Agenda. A particular focus will be given to the priorities of (1) growing the economy and (2) city development. The Commission will seek to deliver the core objective of inclusive growth.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	That a City Growth and Innovation Commission be established to integrate and join up major strategic projects facing the city of Belfast for the next 10-20 years.

2.2	<p>The establishment of a Commission will inform the development of the ‘next phase’ of growth required to meet the city’s ambitions in Belfast Agenda- i.e. 2021 and beyond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that major programmes are integrated and joined up, i.e. economic growth must also be sustainable - that resilience is built-in; so we are better able to withstand shocks and stresses, and by reducing risk make Belfast increasingly attractive to investment - that economic growth is inclusive- the benefits are spread, facilitated through specific interventions - that opportunities to fund and accelerate this growth are identified and realised - that NI Civil Service / NI government / Invest NI are aligned to the plans developed - that the Commission operates in parallel to the development of a Resilience Strategy for Belfast. That way, resources and opportunities arising from our membership of 100 Resilient Cities are targeted towards delivery of resilient inclusive growth.
3.0	<p>Main report</p>
3.1	<p>Several ‘once in a generation’ opportunities have recently emerged which if realised could deliver transformational impacts for the city of Belfast and realisation of our Belfast Agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Belfast Region City Deal could yield £1bn in investment – and the city itself is poised to invest millions in digital capacity, infrastructure and innovation, and tourism product, expanding the city’s growth potential over the long-term. - The potential to develop an innovation district at scale - The development potential of the City Centre and Waterfront District is a key focus of growth, alongside major infrastructure projects planned for the next decade, and several strategic sites coming forward. Strategic partnerships between the City Council, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, the universities and other public and private stakeholders could unlock significant investment potential and deliver development at scale to transform the city. - The emergence of an Economic Corridor between Belfast and Dublin could be a game-changer for the economic prospects of both cities. It would open up access to talent and encourage innovation and competition at an important time in the city’s development. - Emerging sectors such as Fintech, cyber security, health analytics and sciences and food security have proved that Belfast is a world-leading city in which to invest. Over the next decade, our priority is to find, nurture and develop the next generation of industries to compete globally. - The development of our Economic Growth Framework

- Our membership of the **100 Resilient Cities** programme gives us access to cities who are working globally to solve strategic risks and create the conditions for successful cities. This knowledge and still gives us advantage, and **de-risks the city** at a time when access to private finance is critical to our ambitions. As one of the **youngest** cities in Europe, our people are a major asset to the city. Having a young population means that interventions and actions will have long-term positive consequences. It will boost our competitiveness as a city, provided we can retain and attract back this talent and make the most of every young person's capacity.

3.2 However, as we embark on a decade-long growth programme, strategic challenges exist which could blow us off course:

- The decision of the **UK to leave the EU** represents a significant change as we re-negotiate our relationship with Europe and accustom ourselves to trade with the EU as a third country. Our global trading relationships are also impacted by a challenging geopolitical landscape.
- **Environmental change** poses many risks for cities. We must build resilience into our growth strategy if we are to succeed in adapting to changed climate conditions. Other cities are exploring the opportunities to be gained through the development of new technologies to help mitigate and adapt to climate change- e.g. a Green New Deal to drive economic transformation.
- **Long term financial sustainability** and stability for the city is a major challenge. Extracting value from public assets and attracting private finance to the city will require a new range of funding structures to meet our priorities. We also need to be poised for accessing funds from the Westminster Government such as shared prosperity and UKRI.

3.3 These represent significant and long term projects, which require detailed planning, over the long term. A resilient Belfast will require us to join up these long-term projects so that we are successful in delivering Belfast Agenda.

3.4 The proposal bears some similarities to the approach taken by other cities to drive long term delivery of major strategic programmes- for example, Cardiff's Growth and Competitiveness Commission and Greater Manchester's Independent Prosperity Review.

It will seek to maximise the resource opportunities for Belfast arising from our membership of 100 Resilient Cities, which allows us to commission key pieces of research.

3.5

The establishment of a Commission will inform the development of the 'next phase' of growth required to meet members ambitions in Belfast Agenda- i.e. 2021 and beyond

- that major programmes are integrated and joined up, i.e. economic growth must also be sustainable
- that resilience is built-in; so we are better able to withstand shocks and stresses, and by reducing risk make Belfast increasingly attractive to investment
- that economic growth is inclusive- the benefits are felt by all
- that opportunities to fund and accelerate this growth are identified and realised
- that NI Civil Service / NI government / Invest NI are aligned to the plans developed

3.6

Key outcomes from the Commission's work:

The Commission will be an advisory body to members, to help delivery of the following:

1. Bring clarity on the delivery priorities in the Innovation and Digital Investment Pillar of the City Deal. Projects should be investment ready.
2. Investors identified and in place for the additional £500m for the City Deal
3. A Resilience Strategy to develop the city's adaptability to future challenges.
4. A joined up land use plan to accelerate growth
5. An energy transition plan for Belfast – produced in partnership with external institutions – supported by Smart Cities team and BCC energy team and sustainable development team
6. Propositions for an Urban Resilient Fund (bring challenge to the process)- again, in partnership with others e.g. Belfast Harbour, DFI
7. Investment prospectus for an Economic Corridor
8. Options paper for new forms of finance for the city- long term
9. Drive 'green infrastructure' network across the city- securing finance, community engagement/management/ownership etc.
10. Clarity on our long term infrastructure needs and financial models

3.7

Belfast City Council Chief Executive will chair the Commission and lead its work. The Chief Executive will be accountable to both the Strategic Policy and Resources and City Growth and Regeneration committees for ensuring the Commission meets its goals and works

	<p>within its terms of reference. The Commission will engage regularly with this committee and provide substantive progress reports.</p>
3.8	<p>Accountability for day-to-day operation of the Commission (SRO) will rest with the Commissioner for Resilience, who will be tasked with advising and supporting the commission, identifying resources (including from 100RC) and producing final outputs, as part of her requirement to produce a Resilience Strategy for the city.</p>
3.9	<p>The Commissioner for Resilience will work alongside the Director of City and Organisational Strategy to ensure that the effective support is in place to support the Commission and its workstreams, provide research and ensure linkages with Community Planning and the City Deal.</p>
3.10	<p>If this proposal for a City Growth and Innovation Commission is approved, a further detailed paper will be brought to SP&R outlining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Membership and Terms of Reference for the Commission - Fully Costed indicative Programme of Work - Timelines and Milestones
3.11	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>No there are no current financial implications however a further detailed paper will be brought to SP&R outlining a fully costed indicative Programme of Work</p>
3.12	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None.