



Subject:	Delivering a Smart Belfast
Date:	17 December 2019
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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 or Summary of main Issues
1.1	<p>The Smart Belfast programme aims to foster greater collaboration between our universities, industry and the public sector. In doing so it seeks to develop innovative solutions to complex urban challenges while at the same time supporting local businesses to develop their capabilities in cutting-edge digital technologies.</p> <p>Smart Belfast also seeks to influence initiatives of our partners to ensure that their investments (whether public or private) can maximise the opportunities of digital</p>

	technologies. The Smart Belfast approach has greatly informed the Digital Pillar of the Belfast Region City Deal and was an important element in securing this investment from Treasury.
1.2	Belfast City Council is now working directly with key partners to ensure that these digital investments will not only build the city's resilience to technological change, but also position us as a globally significant location for private sector innovation.
1.3	This report provides a short update on a number of current Smart Belfast projects and seeks Members' approval on a number of emerging opportunities.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To retrospectively approve the second-stage submission for the €7.5 million Hub-In Horizon 2020 project. 2. To retrospectively approve support to the scoping stage of the £6 million Active & Empowered Community Innovation project (Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund). 3. To note that the second stage of the £213,000 'Amazing Spaces, Smart Places' project is now under way. 4. To approve a one-third contribution to a budget of approximately £150,000 for the development of the BRCD Digital Outline Business Case(s). 5. To note the role a proposed Digital Commissioner for Belfast and, subject to an assessment, approve a potential one-quarter contribution of approximately of £50,000 per annum for an initial two years.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>The Smart Belfast programme encourages greater collaborative innovation between our universities, industry and the public sector. Delivery is through a project 'pipeline' which, during its first two years, has proven to be a powerful mechanism for attracting co-investment (eg) funding for the establishment of the Commissioner for Resilience, £100,000 for the city's first Internet of Thing network, and over £150,000 for the development of a Business Rates tool which has subsequently led to the creation of commercially successful products by a local technology company. Members will find more detail on these and other projects at the Smart Belfast website: http://smartbelfast.city</p> <p>Members are now asked to consider a number of current significant projects:</p>
3.2	Entrepreneurship For the Transformation of Historic Urban Areas (Hub-In)

	<p>Working with six other European cities and the Connected Places Catapult, Belfast City Council was successful in a first-stage application to a €7.5 million Horizon 2020 project that proposes to work with local communities to develop entrepreneurial skills in relation to opportunities arising from the transformation on historic urban areas.</p>
3.3	<p>Focusing on the regeneration of the city's maritime port and harbour areas, Belfast has bid for €700,000 to assist communities and local partners (including Titanic Foundation, Tourism NI and Ulster University's Future Screens NI) to work directly with citizens over a four year period to create entrepreneurial opportunities using innovative digital technologies.</p>
3.4	<p>The proposal is now going through its second (and final) stage of approval with a decision expected in February 2020. Members are asked to provide retrospective approval for this second stage submission (which due to time constraints could not be brought to committee previously). If successful, a report with proposals for next steps will be brought to Members in March 2020.</p>
3.5	<p>Active & Empowered Community Innovation project</p> <p>Following workshops facilitated by Smart Belfast, a local consortium representing Cisco, Ulster University's Connected Health Innovation Centre, Clarion Social Housing and others have bid to the £98 million UK Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund for a Health Ageing project in Belfast.</p>
3.6	<p>The first stage application (the closing date was 27 November) will establish a business case for a £6 million smart cities project that would allow planners and the city's health and social care partners to rethink how neighbourhoods are designed to help people remain active and productive in later life. The project would seek to utilise a wide range of emerging digital technologies, and fits well with the Council's aims to develop a Smart District and Testbed programme.</p>
3.7	<p>Members are asked to retrospectively approve Belfast City Council's support for the scoping stage of the project. A decision is expected in February and, if successful, a report will be presented to Members with further details of the next steps.</p>
3.8	<p>Amazing Spaces, Smart Places</p> <p>Members should note that Phase two of the 'Amazing Spaces, Smart Places' Small Business Research Initiative is now under way. The two-part project which was launched in October</p>

	<p>2019, is receiving £215,000 funding from NI Government Departments. The aim is to work with innovative businesses to adopt technologies that can better inform how the Council manages its parks and open spaces.</p>
3.9	<p>Working with the Department of Justice, Department for the Economy and Strategic Investment Board, and City and Neighbourhoods Services, the Council has now appointed two SMEs to collaborate with Parks and Community Safety staff on innovative technology and data-driven solutions that can help us manage safe, accessible and enjoyable parks and open spaces in Belfast. Phase two will continue until March 2021.</p>
3.10	<p>Digital Pillar of the Belfast Region City Deal</p> <p>The Smart Belfast approach has been influential in shaping the design and content of the Digital Pillar of the Belfast Region City Deal. The aim of this £150 million investment is to ensure that our city region is well-positioned to address the disruption that new technologies are likely to have on our economy and the way we design and deliver public services.</p>
3.11	<p>The Digital pillar is also being shaped to ensure that it will support businesses to build their innovation capabilities and therefore be better placed to exploit the opportunities that emerging technologies represent. It is also seeking to leverage co-investment from private sector partners on joint projects. Members will be aware this work is already underway with the renowned Fraunhofer Institute (via BABLE) to provide specialist advice and to facilitate this engagement with industry.</p>
3.12	<p>In addition to this programme development, the City Deal process also requires that each project requires HM Treasury Green Book compliant Outline Business Cases (OBCs). While the work that BABLE is undertaking will go some way to informing the content of the OBCs, further work is required to determine the financial and commercial elements of the projects and to produce the actual documents which will be submitted to UK Government and the Northern Ireland Civil Service.</p>
3.13	<p>It is therefore recommended that a tender is published to procure these services, which is estimated to be in the region of £150,000. Members should note that the cost of this will be split between the BRCD partners based on the EPP, with Belfast City Council paying approximately one third of the total cost.</p>

<p>3.14</p> <p>3.15</p> <p>3.16</p> <p>3.17</p> <p>3.18</p>	<p>Belfast Digital Commissioner</p> <p>Building on the Smart Belfast approach and the development of the City Deal Digital Pillar, work is now under way with the Vice-Chancellors of both local universities, Belfast Harbour and Catalyst Inc to develop a small number of transformative investments in the city – which collectively have the potential to secure Belfast’s position as a globally significant location for innovation-led investments.</p> <p>Members will be aware of Belfast Harbour’s commitment to invest £254 million over the next five years to contribute to its aims to be the smartest regional port in the world. Partners are now considering opportunities to complement this investment with plans for an FDI- focused innovation district; and a Belfast City Council-led ‘Smart District’ (for which over £40 million has been identified in the City Deal Digital pillar).</p> <p>The value of the Smart Cities market is estimated to be worth over £2 trillion within the next five years. Partners have agreed that there is significant potential for Belfast to be part of this market if the city builds on a shared proposition around these three significant investments.</p> <p>In support of this aim, the Council is working with the universities and Harbour on proposals for a Digital Commissioner who would work with industry to grow the city’s strengths and reputation as a place to invest in technological innovation. This type of position has been a critical factor in other smart cities (including Eindhoven, London, Helsinki and Amsterdam). Initial work is under way with the Strategic Investment Board to identify the specific roles that a Commissioner could play in Belfast, and to consider the most appropriate mechanisms through which this person could deliver the most benefit for the city.</p> <p>Members are asked to the note the important of a Digital Commissioner role for Belfast and, subject to a further assessment, approve a potential one-quarter contribution of approximately of £50,000 per annum for two years to the establishment of the post.</p>
	<p>Financial & Resource Implications</p>
<p>3.19</p> <p>3.20</p>	<p>At this development stage the Hub-In and Active & Empowered Community Innovation Testbed projects require an in-kind contribution of officer time only.</p> <p>The £150,000 for the Digital BRCD Outline Business Cases will be split across the six partner councils. The council’s contribution will be met from the City Deal Budget.</p>

3.21	When confirmed by partners, the budget for the Digital Commissioner will be split across four organisations with Belfast City Council making a one-quarter contribution to the total cost for two years (approximately £50,000 per annum). This is included within the City Deal budget.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.22	None.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None.