



Subject:	Proposal for civic visit to Nashville
Date:	24 January 2020
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, EU & International Relations 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	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for the Deputy Lord Mayor to undertake a civic mission to Nashville from 13-17 March 2020, at the invitation of the Mayor of Nashville, Councillor John Cooper.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve participation of the Deputy Lord Mayor and the Director of Economic Development or nominee on a civic mission to Nashville from 13-17 March 2020.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In March 2019, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the International Relations Plan for the financial year 2019/2020. A key element of this activity involves the development of jointly-agreed work programmes for each of our Sister Cities (Boston, Nashville and Shenyang), focusing on areas of shared interest.

3.2	As part of our working relationship with Nashville, the Lord Mayor of Belfast has recently received an official invitation from the newly-appointed Mayor of Nashville, Councillor John Cooper, to travel to Nashville to attend the Music City Irish Festival which takes place from 15-17 March 2020. The Lord Mayor is unavailable to travel at this time and consequently the deputy Lord Mayor has agreed to travel on behalf of the city, pending Committee approval.
3.3	This year marks the 25 th anniversary of the signing of the Belfast-Nashville Sister Cities agreement. This is the inaugural year of a new event for Nashville – the Music City Irish Festival – and the city council was keen to ensure Belfast’s involvement in the event, given the long-running ties between the cities and the importance of music as a common area of interest.
3.4	In addition to musical performances on each of the three days (15-17 March), Belfast has been asked to consider providing promotional materials for display at the event. We are currently working with Visit Belfast to secure relevant materials. The event has a number of music-related sponsors and it is understood that Tourism Ireland are also considering involvement in the event.
3.5	While in Nashville, the Deputy Lord Mayor will undertake a programme of meetings with both universities, Vanderbilt and Belmont (linked to QUB and Ulster University), youth organisations linked to the council’s Youth Forum and business organisations including Invest NI, Nashville Chamber and the Nashville Healthcare Council. The conversations with the business organisations will focus on scoping out in further detail the plans for the proposed Belfast City Council/Invest NI business mission to Nashville in August 2020.
3.6	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> The cost of the proposed visit to Nashville will not exceed £6,000 and is contained within the agreed 2019 / 2020 International Relations budget.
3.7	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no equality or good relations implications/rural needs attached to this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None