

<b>Airwaves STEM Review</b>	<b>13 September 2016</b>
<b>To: The Leisure and Development Committee For Information</b>	

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b>	
<b>Strategic Theme</b>	Accelerating Our Economy & Contributing To Prosperity
<b>Outcome</b>	Improving knowledge and awareness of STEM subjects; adding value to the Airshow offer; future engagement with local employers
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Paul Beattie – event led/managed by Joanne McLaughlin
<b>Cost: (If applicable)</b>	Approx. £5,500 for marquee hire, publicity, and marketing materials

**The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information relating to the STEM event at Airwaves which was new for 2016.**

### Background



#### STEM Marquee

The STEM Marquee at Airwaves was established for the first time this year.

The theme of the marquee was to engage and stimulate interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths subjects and potential careers.



#### Exhibitors

- Exhibitors included:
- Northern Regional College
- University of Ulster – Biomedical Sciences, Life & Health Sciences, Stratified Medicine, Northern Ireland Centre for Food and Health.
- Moyola Engineering.
- W5.
- Royal Air Force, Royal Navy Reserve, Army.

In addition to the Marquee, the area also included the Education Authority's STEM Module, and the RAF's Skytech Asset – an augmented reality event space, which gives the virtual feel of being an RAF technician.



## Feedback

197 unsolicited feedback sheets were returned. Visitors were asked to rate their visit to the Marquee on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), and add any additional comments which they thought might improve their visit. The breakdown was as follows:

Rating	Number of responses
1 (poor)	3
2	6
3 (good)	15
4	37
5 (excellent)	136

Comments included:

*“Wonderful addition to the Airshow – thanks”*

*“Brilliant information area; all stands very helpful; hope to see it again”*

*“It was really fun – we enjoyed building the tower and the science”*

*“Great to see – we need more of this and more women in STEM”*

*“Amazing - as an OAP I found it so interesting”*

Exhibitors have all requested to return next year; some have requested extra space, and in the case of the University of Ulster, they feel that there are other faculties that they could include. This would also be an opportunity to ensure that the North Western Regional College and Queens University are also involved.

## Visitor Numbers

No full count of the entrance numbers was kept. However, approximate snapshot counts on Sunday of visitors in the marquee were as follows:

Time	Number of visitors
At 12pm	83
At 2pm	65
At 4pm	67
At 5pm	49



Throughout of visitors throughout the day varied from steady to exceptionally busy. All stands had interactive material and resources, as well as experienced staff on hand to answer queries. While all the stands were busy, there is no doubt that the college and university were fielding many “future career” queries.

### **Moving forward**

Full feedback from the exhibitors will be sought shortly. However, based on the feedback from both exhibitors and from those visiting, it will be recommended that this element of the weekend’s activities be continued and built upon. Interaction on social media showed some interest from other employers, and next year’s marquee could be designed to reflect this, for those companies struggling to find employees.

