



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Renewing the Routes Update and Variation
Date:	13 May 2009
Reporting Officer:	Marie-Thérèse McGivern Director of Development ext. 3470
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Relevant Background Information

This report provides an outline on the ongoing activity in respect of the Falls Road Renewing the Routes Action Plan as an update on progress and to provide the context for the proposed variation in the previously agreed budget allocation.

The variation in the budget involves a suggested reallocation, within the “cleaner, greener, safer” theme, towards the development of an alternative project that would contribute to the same overall objectives.

Key Issues

Update on Activity

A significant element of the work within the Falls Road part of the IDF Programme is focussed on improvements to commercial properties.

The “Commercial Improvement Programme” on Falls is well underway with 67 properties completed as part of Lower Falls and Lower Springfield Road phases. Works are currently underway at 34 properties between Broadway to La Salle Gardens. Consultation has commenced for the 51 properties targeted as the first part, of what will be two phases, of commercial improvements in the Andersonstown area.

Completed projects also include the restoration of the decorative category B1 listed railings at St Comgall's and Tourism Signs (installed at 7 key locations on the Falls Road, in conjunction with the Tourism Unit, including Carnegie Library, Dunville Park, St Mary's University College, Royal Victoria Hospital, City Cemetery, Falls Park,

Milltown Cemetery and Bog Meadows). Environmental and landscaping works to West Circular Roundabout have also been completed in time for most of the planting to be in bloom.

The Broadway “Soffits and Sills Project” Environmental Project was completed at the end of last year and saw the enhancement of the structural detailing on residential properties contributing to the revitalisation of this busy route.

The feature lighting scheme has been completed on two of the Falls Road’s historic buildings of architectural merit: Falls Road Carnegie Library and St Mary’s University College. This programme is nearing completion as the project commissioned for the International Wall reaches the final stages with the official switch-on planned for May 2009.

As part of the “cleaner, greener, safer” theme consultants have designed a two part project for the B listed Milltown Cemetery railings and entrance. This project will secure the restoration and reinstatement of the entrance gate and two pedestrian gates combined with refurbishment and repainting the decorative railings.

Proposed Variation in Budget Allocation.

The agreed Falls IDF Action Plan included a proposal to develop a project for Dunville Park. The potential for environmental improvements to the Park boundary was identified as part of the environmental and open space improvements within the Plan. The proposed works sought to improve the entrance and railings as part of a medium term environmental improvement for Falls and Grosvenor Roads.

The context for the proposed works has changed since the adaption of the IDF Action Plan and ongoing scoping work for the project has identified issues that make it unfeasible to pursue the proposed works within the programme timescales. The Department for Social Development in conjunction with the Council are currently progressing work towards an economic appraisal for the Dunville Park. This work is developed in consultation with the Greater Falls Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership and several designs have been produced through a series of consultations with community groups whilst agreement has been reached on the broad scope of the project. The timeframes involved in developing the economic appraisal and detailed works make it impractical to proceed with the envisaged works.

In order to ensure the Council is in a position to develop a viable scheme for the expenditure of the approved resources it is suggested that Committee considers the reallocation of resources to alternative environmental improvement works on the Falls Road to the St Peter’s Cathedral area. There are no additional financial implications arising from the reallocation and the proposed works would provide similar benefits to the agreed scheme.

Resource Implications

There are no additional financial implications arising from the reallocation.

Recommendations

Members are requested to approve the reallocation of £30,000 from the “cleaner, greener, safer” theme to support the development of an environmental improvement project in the St Peter’s Cathedral area of Falls Road.

Decision Tracking

Following ratification detailed designs will be produced for installation.

Time Frame: Match 2010. Reporting officer: Shirley McCay

Key to Abbreviations

IDF: Integrated Development Fund

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