



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Renewing the Routes Request for Specified Reserve
Date:	20 August 2010
Reporting Officer:	J McGrillen / R Cregan
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Relevant Background Information

The Development Committee as part of the estimates and budget setting process agreed the provision of core budget funding for the delivery of Renewing the Routes local regeneration activity for this financial year (£300,000).

The June Development Committee received a detailed report that outline the proposed approach to the longer term delivery of local regeneration activity under the Renewing the Routes initiative and suggested approaches to the short term delivery of implementation works during the current financial year (**Appendix 1**).

The timescale for the completion of the survey and prioritisation process will, however, leave insufficient opportunity for the development and implementation of physical projects, in new areas of the city, within the remaining period to March 2011.

The Development Committee resolved to seek a deferral of the implementation activity and carry forward the agreed resource allocation into the next financial year as a specified reserve. The deferment would enable the resources to be fully targeted on the new priority areas in combination with any future additional resource allocations.

Section 56 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 only permits the Council to maintain a Capital Fund and a Renewal and Repairs Fund in addition to the District Fund. However, the Council can identify parts of the District Fund reserve for specific purposes. This would remain legally part of the District Fund and would not be shown separately from the District Fund Reserve on the Council's Balance Sheet.

The issue of a specified reserve has been discussed and agreed previously with the Local Government Auditor and was used for the Brighter Belfast Programme in similar circumstances. This approach would, however, require the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Key Issues

This suggested deferral of activity was endorsed by the Development Committee to provide the opportunity for the establishment of an updated prioritisation framework to ensure the effective targeting of local regeneration resources.

In order to secure the capacity for the Council to commit future resources to the proposed activity, as outlined above, would require the establishment of a specified reserve. The remit for medium term financial planning lies with the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The suggested deferment has been brought before the Committee at the earliest opportunity to facilitate the effective financial planning of Council resources and it is recommended that Members support the proposal for the establishment of a £300,000 Renewing the Routes Request specified reserve.

Resource Implications**Recommendations**

It is recommended that Committee support the proposal to defer the implementation Renewing the Routes local regeneration activity and accede to the request for the establishment of a specified reserve, for the £300,000, to ensure the provision of resources in the 2011/12 financial year, rather than 2010/11.

Decision Tracking

Following ratification:

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - Development Committee Report 9th June 2010: Renewing the Routes Prioritisation Processes, Future Scope of Activity and Implementation options