



Subject:	Better Bedford Street 100 Day Challenge
Date:	12 th September 2018
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, City Regeneration and Development

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 summary is to update members on the Better Bedford Street 100 Day Challenge
2.0	Recommendations
	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Note the ongoing 'Better Bedford Street 100 Day Challenge' project, which is a collaborative project involving a number of stakeholders aimed at improved place making in Bedford Street with temporary design solutions and a series of animation and event activities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note that the project includes a programme to capture lessons learned which can be incorporated back into future urban design and animation projects within the city. - Note the Council's resource commitments in terms of officer involvement and financial contribution to the project.
3.0	Main report
3.1	A project aimed at improving place making within areas of town and city centres has been developed by the Strategic Design Group, led by the Department for Infrastructure Planning Group, and the Ministerial Advisory Group for Architecture and the Built Environment and includes local councils, private sector organisations and other bodies working to improve the built environment. The aim of the Group is <i>“Working together to promote successful, inclusive, well designed places which inspire civic stewardship and have an enduring positive impact on people’s lives.”</i>
3.2	Bedford St, Belfast was selected for a 100 Day Challenge pilot project due to the numerous issues within the area including congestion, pedestrian connectivity, cluttered streets, lack of cycle lanes and under-utilised or poorly allocated street capacity. Through this pilot project the group is providing an example of how the Living Places planning guidance can work in practice. The guidance sets out 10 principles for better place making. The group has sought to demonstrate that temporary changes can be brought about quite quickly and plans to use this example to drive change elsewhere.
3.3	The focus of the project is to push collaborative stakeholder working, innovative urban design, and public and private sector commitment to improve the urban environment and provide a test bed to inform future projects. The project will aim to provide temporary design solutions in the urban environment within a 100 day period from conception to installation.
3.4	The project is further supported, and sponsored by the Department for Infrastructure, the Department for Communities and the Central District BID as well as a number of public and private stakeholders. Belfast City Council officers have been involved in the scoping, planning and design of the project.
3.5	The ‘Better Bedford Street’ challenge will utilise temporary urban design solutions to challenge the current situation and will serve as a testbed for innovative solutions that will help to inform emerging design solutions for the proposed Streets Ahead 5 project and other

projects across Northern Ireland. It will support many of the key concepts from the Belfast City Council's Linen Quarter Masterplan.

3.6 The project will involve a number of different strands including:

More Space for People

3.7 DfI are currently widening the footpaths along Bedford Street by taking over 9 existing on-street parking bays for a period of 3 months. The effect on car parking within the area will be surveyed continuously throughout the project. These spaces will provide widened footpath locations that can then be utilised for engaging and useful space. The project will also endeavour to remove or relocate obstructive street furniture and remove street clutter, promoting pedestrian routes along footpaths and at key crossings.

Engaging and Useful Space

3.8 A call-out for design teams from statutory stakeholders, private sector, local businesses and students will be held to design and build innovative urban design ideas for 9 'parklets' along the extended footpath locations. Design teams will creatively animate each part of the street in its own unique way, in doing so providing colour and greenery as well as places to sit and enjoy;

Bring the Place to Life

3.9 A number of events and activities will be taking place on Bedford Street through August and September including

- Free lunchtime street music supported by Belfast City Council's 'City of Music'
- an extension of 'Alive After 5' into the Linen Quarter;
- providing a written history of the 'Linen Quarter Story';
- Opening a pop-up shop 'Linenopolis' to promote innovative linen products and the Linen Story;
- Commissioning Street Ambassadors to promote the location, hospitality and events;
- Development of a 'Linen Festival' from 17th-23rd September which will include street music, animation and activities and an extension of Culture Night
- General street cleaning and removal of anti-social graffiti,
- Launching a new Corporate Social Responsibility pilot with a specific aim of reaching out to the surrounding communities.

Learning & Informing

3.10 The group has sought to demonstrate that temporary changes can be brought about quite quickly and plans to use this example to drive change elsewhere. With this in mind, preparations have been made to record the lessons learned which will be shared widely.

3.11 The group, supported by PLACE, local design consultants, Belfast City Council and the local universities has developed a programme to capture the lessons learned and incorporating this back into future projects. These initiatives include:

- Cameras & wifi providers placed at strategic locations along Bedford St to track pedestrian movements, crossing habits within the street, parking habits, linger points and pedestrian interaction with the street environment. Live data will be monitored against baseline data gathered prior to the project going live
- User surveys of the street users will be undertaken through the project including pedestrian, tourist, drivers, businesses and delivery operators.
- Social media will track and record trends and interaction with the project hashtags
- Engagement with activities will be recorded and reported on
- A documentary video is currently being filmed for the project & will record and report on lessons learnt throughout the project
- A report will be presented to the Strategic Design Group to inform the future evolution of the group and the wider implementation of future public realm schemes including Streets Ahead 5
- A report will also be presented to the WHO Healthy Cities Conference to be held in Belfast in Oct 2018

Financial & Resource Implications

3.12 Members are asked to note the allocation of officer time to contribute to the design and planning of the Better Bedford Street Challenge. Officers are currently engaging with the Better Bedford St Project to confirm the financial ask from Council. The financial commitment will be met from the City Regeneration and Development team's budget for City Animation as agreed by the City Growth & Regeneration Committee in April 2018 and will be up to a maximum of £25k for this project.

3.13	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> The Project Sponsors are assessing equality, and other implications throughout the project, and have incorporated appropriate Section 75 and equality groups within the stakeholder reference groups.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Map – Better Bedford Street - Footway Widening (Phase 1 & 2)