



Subject:	Transport Hub Update
Date:	5 December 2018
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, City Regeneration and Development Lead Officer

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 provide Committee with an update on progress of the proposals for the Transport Hub.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the update in relation to the planning application for the proposed Transport Hub and its strategic importance in the regeneration and growth of the city.• Note that, in light of its strategic and economic significance, the Council's SP&R Committee agreed on 23rd November, to provide its support to the proposed development and to note that this is in the context of the comments already made from a planning perspective, as agreed by the Planning Committee on 11 September 2018 and 17 October 2017;

- temporary structures and compounds for bus operations during construction.

3.4 The application is currently being considered by DfI and a decision is expected before the end of 2018. The Council, as the local planning authority, responded formally to the consultation supporting the application, following meetings of the Planning Committee on 17th October 2017 and 11 September 2018.

Key Issues.

3.5 By way of policy background, the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) sets out the Council's collective ambition for the continuing growth and regeneration of the city core and its surrounding area and includes a road map of policies and projects to underpin this growth, with the Transport Hub highlighted as a key strategic project in this overall regeneration. The Strategy was shaped by extensive engagement with city stakeholders from all sectors.

3.6 Transport and connectivity will play a key role in the economic growth and regeneration of Belfast by enhancing access and serving as one of the key elements to catalyse growth and support Belfast as a successful modern city. BCCRIS underscores the importance of this in terms of city wide regeneration.

3.7 The proposed Transport Hub is located in one of the identified signature areas of the BCCRIS i.e. the South Centre and the significance of the Transport Hub becoming the gateway to the city centre and its immediate vicinity is emphasised in this. It highlights that the proposal for a new Transport Hub at this location is to be welcomed as a major improvement in convenience and connectivity of the regional rail system and associated transport links, with significant increases in passenger traffic anticipated. It also emphasises that the opportunity is not just one of transport engineering but is a chance to redefine the gateway to Belfast's city centre and act as a major regeneration opportunity for the entire city centre and neighbouring areas.

3.8 The Transport Hub is also identified in the Belfast Agenda as a key element of the City Development growth ambitions. It highlights the importance of improved connectivity and that we will seek to maximise the opportunities of the Transport Hub and provide the development of sustainable transport.

3.9	<p>The Council's Planning Committee responded to the planning application as consultee and the response was agreed by the Planning Committee on 27th October 2017 and again on 11 September 2018. A copy of the response is attached at Appendix 1.</p>
3.10	<p>Translink is also liaising with Council to bring forward various aspects of the development. There has been ongoing liaison on the Buy Social clauses and a draft Memorandum of Understanding has been prepared and will be implemented upon planning approval and appointment of the contractor. This Memorandum of Understanding agrees partnership-working arrangements for Council and Translink to deliver employability and skills interventions that will optimise the ability of those long-term unemployed and economically inactive within Belfast to access employment opportunities arising from the Buy Social requirements within the Belfast Transport Hub. This will initially focus on embedding the Construction Employment Academy model within the enabling works and construction phases of this redevelopment as a demonstrator project for the wider partnership to optimise the employment opportunities resulting from the wider redevelopment of the surrounding area.</p>
3.11	<p>The Construction Employment Academies will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholder engagement with the range of employability, community and training providers across the city to prepare individuals for upcoming Construction Employment Academies;• Targeted animation within local communities close to the vicinity of the development to identify individuals interested in the job opportunities;• Outreach animation across the city to identify individuals interested in the job opportunities;• Belfast City Council will provide resources to deliver Construction Employment Academies and co-designed with Translink and the relevant contractor/subcontractor for the identified employment opportunities;• The Construction Employment Academy includes job roadshows, site visits, training and employability skills development delivered close to the vicinity of the development;• Guaranteed job interviews with the contractor; and• Working with the appointed contractor/s to identify wider employment opportunities within the construction of the Belfast Transport Hub and ensure the contractor has access to the Construction Employment Academy model to meet these employment needs;

3.12	This is planned to ensure a focus on achieving sustainable employment outcomes that contribute to achieving the goals of the Belfast Agenda.
3.13	It is clear that the Transport Hub will bring about significant regeneration, economic and environmental benefits to the city and aligns with the Council's ambitions within the Belfast Agenda and the Belfast Regeneration and Investment Strategy. The Council will however continue to work with Translink to ensure that delivery of the Transport Hub generates the greatest possible regeneration benefits to local residents in terms of jobs, training and economic impact.
3.14	<p><i>Wider masterplan development scheme (Weavers Cross)</i></p> <p>The full application for the wider regeneration scheme has not yet been submitted to the Council. The site sits within the wider context of a regeneration masterplan, referred to collectively as Weavers Cross, which will be submitted in outline planning application form. The proposed regeneration masterplan for this wider area is expected to consist of a mix of commercial and residential development. Initially both the outline and full applications were to be submitted in tandem but the outline application for the wider site is yet to be submitted pending planning approval for the Transport Hub.</p>
3.15	Further reports on the wider Weavers Cross regeneration proposals will be brought back to the City Growth & Regeneration Committee in due course and officers are continuing to engage with Translink on this. In addition, it is expected that the outline application for the wider site will be processed and determined by the Council. Prior to the submission of an outline application for the wider development, the applicant will be required to undertake pre-application community consultation as the proposal will be for Major development.
3.16	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>No direct resource implications associated this report.</p>
3.17	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>No specific equality or good relations implications at this time.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Planning Addendum report 11 September 2018.