



Subject:	Infrastructure & Transport Update
Date:	13 th February 2019
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, City Regeneration and Development Lead Officer
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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	To update Members on the following infrastructure and transport matters: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Belfast Infrastructure Study2. Belfast Car Parking Strategy & Action Plan3. Translink Depot4. Review of Alfred Street / Upper Arthur Street Cycle Lane5. Transport Scheme Consultations
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the update on the Belfast Infrastructure Study and the intention to hold a Members' Briefing to present the out-workings of the Study.• Note the update on the Belfast Car Parking Strategy & Action Plan and agree to a future Members meeting with Dfl on the issue of problem parking.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the update in relation to discussions with Translink regarding the East Belfast Translink Depot and the proposal that the Council obtains further advice to ensure this work is approached from an optimal city regeneration perspective. • Consider the draft response to the Review of Alfred Street / Upper Arthur Street Cycle Lane outlined in Appendix 1 and if appropriate agree the response submission to the Department for Infrastructure. • Consider the various Transport Scheme Consultations being undertaken by the Department for Infrastructure as outlined in Appendix 1 and if appropriate confirm Council's support to these proposals.
3.0	Main report
3.1	1. <u>Infrastructure Study</u>
3.2	<p>At the September 2017 meeting of the City Growth & Regeneration Committee it was agreed that specialist support should be commissioned to develop a Belfast Infrastructure Study. The aim of the study is to identify the infrastructure required to support delivery of the growth ambitions of the Belfast Agenda to drive physical and social regeneration. It will also identify the key strategic projects required to facilitate economic growth, positioning Belfast to attract inward investment, encourage development, and enable an accessible, inclusive and sustainable environment for residents and visitors.</p>
3.3	<p>Arup were appointed to develop the Infrastructure Study in July 2018 and have been engaging with key stakeholders throughout late 2018 to establish baseline information and undertake a gap analysis.</p>
3.4	<p>The study is based around two main categories of infrastructure i.e. Utilities and Strategic Transport and comprises three main stages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baseline Review; i.e. capacity and current planned interventions, as well as how to support growth ambitions; 2. Infrastructure Priorities; timeframes, criticality and geographic clusters; 3. Delivery; including for example the potential to maximise resources by greater integration of proposed interventions.
3.5	<p>In addition, Arup is considering issues of Local Connectivity & Placemaking and exploring the potential for future traffic analysis using an area based planning approach to take account of the transport implications of large or multiple developments within a given area.</p>

3.6	A Visioning Workshop, attended by key delivery stakeholders from across various infrastructure sectors, took place at City Hall in November 2018. The workshop was intended to begin to agree a collective approach to infrastructure planning to achieve the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda.
3.7	Arup are currently preparing an Infrastructure Needs & Delivery Assessment to identify the key interventions required. The Needs & Delivery Assessment will prioritise infrastructure delivery and identify opportunities to cluster key infrastructure project delivery to maximise the benefit through collaborative delivery. A draft report is expected during early 2019 at which stage there will be further engagement with key delivery stakeholders.
3.8	It is proposed that a Members Briefing will be scheduled in the coming months to present the initial out-workings of the Infrastructure Study.
<p><u>2. Car Parking Strategy & Action Plan</u></p>	
3.9	Following Committee approval the Car Parking Strategy (CPS) was published in May 2018. The Strategy includes a number of recommended actions for the responsible statutory organisations to undertake to address the issues identified within the Strategy. An officer led Car Park Working Group has been established to oversee and report on the implementation of the recommended actions of the Car Park Strategy. These actions have been allocated into four main themes with a lead department / organisation appointed to oversee the delivery and reporting of the actions within each theme. A summary of the four main work streams to deliver the Action Plan are included below along with an update on the progress of the actions:
<p>(i) <u>Operational</u></p>	
3.10	The Operational work stream is managed by City & Neighbourhood Services Off-Street Parking Unit and includes operational issues covering Parking Orders, tariffs, ticketing and enforcement.
3.11	The Off-Street Parking Unit (OSPU) are progressing the development of the Belfast Off Street Parking Order, taking cognisance of the Belfast Parking Strategy and Action Plan findings. This will include a review of the current parking tariffs and Blue Badge parking elements, which may require a consultation process dependant on the outcome of the review. The OSPU will be engaging with key stakeholders such as, but not limited to,

	<p>Members, DfI, Translink, IMTAC, Disability Action NI, Trading Associations in areas where a change in parking tariffs may impact and internal departments such as Legal, City Regeneration and Development, Events and Business Support/Corporate Finance.</p>
3.12	<p>The CPS also suggested providing additional Belfast Bike docking stations within or adjacent to parking facilities. At the January 2019 meeting of the City Growth & Regeneration Committee it was agreed to carry out a strategic review of the Belfast Bikes scheme. The review will consider existing scheme coverage and identify options for potential expansion, including considering the recommendations made within the Car Parking Strategy</p>
3.13	<p>(ii) <u>Parking Forum</u></p> <p>The Parking Forum theme covers the actions relating to the wider car parking offer, including off-street, on-street and private parking suppliers. It is proposed that the Parking Forum should consist of statutory and private car parking suppliers across the city to deal with the city wide improvements to the parking offer made within the Car Parking Strategy. These actions include the use of smart technologies and advanced information systems to facilitate ease of parking and payment, the introduction of a quality standard to parking facilities such as 'Park Mark' and the introduction of a shuttle bus to operate between Multi-Storey Car Parks</p>
3.14	<p>A number of meetings have been held with the statutory operators and operators of some of the large private multi-story car parks have been contacted with a view to bring forward a wider City Centre Parking Forum to provide a collaborative and coherent approach to the city's parking offer. It is intended to set up this formal Parking Forum to bring forward the actions over the coming months</p>
3.15	<p>An action within the Parking Forum Work stream was to initiate a shuttle bus service to connect the main city centre shopping and employment areas with the multi-storey car parks. In response to the severance of Castle Place following the Bank Buildings fire a free shuttle bus was established to provide improved connectivity links across the city centre. Following several weeks of service, and a sustained marketing campaign, uptake on the service was very limited, and hence the service was removed. It is however proposed that this action is kept under review and revisited in the instance of Multi-Storey Car Park development outside the city centre.</p>

(iii) Strategic Sites Assessment

- 3.16 This work stream is overseen by the City Regeneration and Development Team, with actions including the monitoring of parking stock across the city centre and identifying opportunities to consolidate surface parking to provide a more coherent parking offer while releasing development opportunities aligned to the objectives of the Belfast Agenda and the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy.
- 3.17 The CPS recommended a shift away from surface level car parking as it offers limited capacity and is not a good use of city centre land. The CPS identified a number of benefits from carefully planned rationalisation, including reduced traffic volumes from fewer circulating vehicles; reduced air pollution, improved road safety, and opportunities for regeneration.
- 3.18 At the May 2018 meeting of the City Growth & Regeneration Committee it was agreed that a Strategic Sites Assessment is undertaken to assess development and regeneration potential of Council's city centre surface car parks and adjacent public sector land and to consider locations best suited to support Departmental and Council needs (e.g. Programme for Government and the Belfast Agenda). Committee also agreed that the Strategic Sites Assessment would take due cognisance of parking income and the impact of potential development opportunities on current and future parking supply.
- 3.19 This comprehensive review is currently underway and a detailed report will be brought forward to Members in the very near future.
- 3.20 Members will also be aware that a number of new multi-storey car-parks (MSCPs) are introducing new supply to the city centre parking offer. A c.900 space MSCP opened during late January 2019 at City Quays and a c.575 space MSCP at Grosvenor Road received support from the NI Investment Fund in the same month. In addition, construction is expected to commence on the Ulster University MSCP in the coming months. The Strategic Sites Assessment Work stream will continue to monitor the allocation of the car parking offer across the city centre, taking into account upcoming development opportunities and large scale infrastructure projects such as York Street Interchange and the Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2.

(iv) Transport

- 3.21 The actions within this work stream are generally the responsibility of the Department for Infrastructure, although officers from across the Council regularly engage with DfI on transport and parking issues. The CPS recommended a number of actions including:
- a review of on-street parking controls including tariffs, controlled zones and ticketing & payment systems;
 - Improved enforcement of inappropriate parking and of car parks operating outside their planning conditions;
 - Review and implementation of Resident Parking Zones;
 - New Park and Ride sites and review of parking costs at P&R sites;
 - Improvements to cycling infrastructure including cycle parking provision, cycling routes and signage; and
 - Minimising traffic in the BMTP core.
- 3.22 The Department for Infrastructure are currently preparing the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Strategy (BMTS) which will provide the strategy required to bring forward a number of the actions of the Transport Workstream. The Director for Planning & Building Control represents the council on the Project Board overseeing the development of the BMTS and, once complete for consultation the BMTS will be brought to Members for consultation as part of the DfI consultation and approval process.
- 3.23 The Local Development Plan will contain policies relating to transportation and parking. The current draft Plan Strategy contains a policy outlining reduced parking standards within designated areas of parking restraint for residential and non-residential development. Designations will be considered as part a revised BMTP (led by DfI) and at the next stage of the LDP (Local Policies Plan). The LDP draft Plan Strategy also contains a policy to ensure major new development takes account of cyclists in terms of safe, convenience and secure cycle parking.
- 3.24 The recent introduction of the Glider service and future expansion proposals as part of the Belfast Region City Deal will continue to help achieve this ambition of reduced parking standards.

3.25	<p>An update on progress on some of the actions within the Transport work stream, and in response to various Notices of Motion and committee discussions around problem parking, are included below.</p>
	<p><u>Belfast Rapid Transport:</u></p>
3.26	<p>The Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 1 scheme went live in September 2018. Operating with the G1 Service (East-West) and the G2 Service (Titanic Quarter) Translink advise that the Glider Service has seen successful uptake with an increase of some 20% along the G1 route. The department are responding to this increase in uptake by procuring additional Glider units to operate the service. Translink also advise that a detailed Project Evaluation will be undertaken after one year of service and details will be provided to Members.</p>
3.27	<p>With the inclusion of BRT Phase 2 (North-South) within the Belfast Region City Deal application the department propose to progress plans to bring forward the phase 2 service in line with the City Deal requirements.</p>
3.28	<p><u>Yorkgate Train Station</u></p>
	<p>There are emerging proposals being considered by the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company / Translink in relation to the potential upgrade of the existing facilities at Yorkgate, aimed at providing enhanced facilities to cater for current and increased future demand, particularly with the opening of the new UU Campus. Further details can be brought back to Committee in due course.</p>
	<p><u>Park & Ride Facilities:</u></p>
3.29	<p>To support the uptake in public transport usage DfI are in the process of implementing a number of schemes to facilitate improved Park and Ride facilities including:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently expanding the P&R facilities at Blacks Road ▪ Currently exploring options to expand the existing P&R facilities at Sprucefield, Newtownards and Cairnshill; ▪ Currently exploring options to develop a new P&R in the Tillysburn area; ▪ Currently expanding motorway bus lanes on the M1 & M2 to P&R locations; ▪ Additional P&R improvements to be considered as part of BRT Phase 2
3.30	<p>The Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company also have a Park & Ride Strategy aligned to their rail services with the objective of increasing Park & Ride facilities across the province in conjunction with increased rail use.</p>

3.31	<p><u>Residents' Parking Zones:</u></p> <p>Dfl have completed one Residents' Parking Zone in the Rugby Road area, which opened in April 2018. The Department are to carry out a project evaluation following 12 months of operation taking into account the lessons learnt and subsequently a review of the Resident's Parking Zone Policy will be completed to address how schemes are delivered going forward.</p>
3.32	<p>Dfl are also currently designing options to progress a Residents' Parking Zone in the Iveagh Drive area and intend to commence consultation with the public in March 2019.</p>
3.33	<p>Members may recall that there was a Dfl /Members meeting in May 2018 to discuss problem parking. As a follow up to this and in light of various concerns that Members have raised on the issue of problem parking Dfl have advised that they will facilitate a further meeting on this issue and Members will be notified accordingly when Dfl confirm a date. Dfl have also confirmed that they will provide an update on infrastructure related issues including car parking at their next Bi-annual Report update meeting at Committee in June.</p>
	<p><u>3.Translink Depot Relocation</u></p>
3.34	<p>At the October 2018 meeting of the City Growth & Regeneration Committee, the Committee agreed that the Council would engage with Translink to discuss the potential relocation of the bus depot from the current East Belfast location, with a report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.</p>
3.35	<p>Officers have subsequently engaged with Translink to understand the logistical and operational requirements of a depot to deliver the eastbound services.</p>
3.36	<p>The current site sits just outside the East Bank Development Strategy boundary and Members will recall that the Strategy highlighted the importance of connectivity to surrounding areas and the identification of key sites for development. The potential regeneration contribution of this site and strategic linkages to the proposed Belfast Waterside scheme (former Sirocco Works) and surrounding development opportunities warrants consideration in the context of the wider East Bank area to ensure optimal use of land within a city centre context. It is recognised however that this must take into account operational requirements.</p>

3.37	<p>Translink have agreed in principle to working collaboratively with the Council in terms of a feasibility exercise to identify potential sites that could deliver their operational and logistical needs although this in the acknowledgement that the relocation of the facility is not currently included within the Translink Business Plan.</p>
3.38	<p>In order that this work is approached from an optimal city regeneration perspective it is proposed that the Council obtains specialist advice to ensure a comprehensive assessment of viable alternative sites and to understand the regeneration potential of the existing site. It must be highlighted however that the work would remain exploratory only at this stage and would be used to inform future discussions should Translink decide they wish to pursue any relocation option.</p>
<p><u>4.Review of Alfred Street / Upper Arthur Street Cycle Lane</u></p>	
3.38	<p>The Alfred Street / Upper Arthur Street Cycle Lane scheme was supported by Council at the September 2015 meeting of City Growth & Regeneration Committee as part of the proposals to improve the city centre cycle network.</p>
3.39	<p>The scheme has been operational since March 2016 and Dfl is carrying out a review to consider what improvements can be made to the operation of the scheme at this location. It is suggested that Dfl consider changes to the design of the segregation along this route to prevent vehicles entering and parking in the lane and also to improve the amenity of the streets within the Linen Conservation Area. The proposed response is outlined in Appendix 1.</p>
<p><u>5.Transport Scheme Consultations</u></p>	
3.40	<p>Dfl have requested feedback from the Council on a number of minor transport schemes throughout the city including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 proposed waiting restrictions; • a taxi bus rank at King Street; • proposed abandonment at Whitla Street; and • proposed abandonment of the Westlink backpath between Albert Street and Cullingtree Road.

3.41	<p>It is suggested that the Council support these proposals in order to improve accessibility, traffic progression and road safety in the city. Further details on the proposals are set out in Appendix 1</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The financial implications of the studies and advices referred to above will be met from</p>
3.42	<p>within the current departmental budget.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>No specific equality or good relations implications at this time.</p>
3.43	
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Response to the review of Alfred Street / Upper Arthur Street cycle lane & details of Dfl Transport Scheme Consultations.