



<b>Subject:</b>	Dfl public consultation on Sydenham to Holywood Walking, Wheeling and Cycling routes
<b>Date:</b>	9 March 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	To update Members that the Department for Infrastructure is running a public consultation on the Sydenham to Holywood Walking, Wheeling and Cycling routes from 11 February - 1 April 2022 by way of a short questionnaire.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Note that the Department for Infrastructure is undertaking a public consultation, by way of a short questionnaire (link in report below) on the Sydenham to Holywood Walking, Wheeling and Cycling routes.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note that there has been ongoing engagement by DfI with the East Area Working Group and Council officers in relation to the future delivery of the routes and that this is likely to continue to be an appropriate mechanism for future discussions. Members may however wish to respond directly to the current questionnaire and reports can be brought back to the relevant Committees as appropriate if these proposals progress further.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<p>On 3 June 2021, the Minister for Infrastructure published '<i>Planning for the Future of Transport – Time for Change</i>'. This document articulates the Minister's vision that active travel becomes a pillar of change within towns and cities to cut emissions, to improve health and wellbeing, and to better connect families and communities. It commits to the adoption of the sustainable transport hierarchy where prioritisation is given to sustainable travel by providing for walking and wheeling, then cycling, then public transport ahead of private vehicle use.</p>
3.2	<p>The Minister followed this by publishing '<i>Making Belfast an Active City – Belfast Cycling Network 2021</i>' on 4 June 2021. This document set out her ambition to make Belfast a more cycle-friendly city and provides a blueprint for the development and operation of the cycling infrastructure in the city for the next ten years. The Belfast Cycling Network proposes a number of routes between Belfast and North Down:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a greenway type route alongside the Belfast to Bangor railway line; and</li> <li>a walking and cycling path alongside Holywood Road and the A2 north of Tillysburn.</li> </ul>
3.3	<p>In February 2022 DfI opened a consultation on the Sydenham to Holywood link and are seeking views as to whether priority should be given to developing one of three routes (see Appendix 1) and noted that the first two routes are already within the Belfast Cycling Network, but the third route is not a part of the Network:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a path along the railway from Sydenham through Holywood Exchange (red)</li> <li>a path along Holywood Road through Holywood Exchange (green)</li> <li>upgrade the cycling route alongside the Sydenham ByPass (blue)</li> </ol>
3.4	<p>Each of the proposed routes is between 4.0 and 4.8km long and all of them start at the underpass vehicular entrance to Victoria Park and terminate near Kinnegar, Holywood. The routes would also provide a link between the existing Comber and Connswater Greenways and Holywood Exchange and the North Down Coastal Path. The preferred route will determine which scheme will be included in the Belfast Cycling Network delivery plan for construction in the short term and which scheme(s) will be included in the longer term.</p>

3.5	The link to the questionnaire is here <a href="#">Sydenham to Hollywood Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Routes - NI Direct - Citizen Space</a> and Members may wish to respond directly to this
3.6	Over the past couple of years, and in advance of the recent public consultation, there has been ongoing engagement with the DfI, the East Area Working Group and Officers on cycle routes and greenways. DfI presented the proposed Sydenham to Hollywood consultation routes at the AWG meeting on 3 February 2022 where it was agreed that after the completion of the public consultation, DfI would return to the AWG to present the consultation findings. Given the previous feedback and engagement with DfI, it is likely that the AWG will continue to be an appropriate mechanism for DfI, Members and officers across Physical Programmes, City & Neighbourhood Services and City Regeneration & Development to enable further discussions to progress to the next stage. DfI has noted that there is currently no budget to deliver the scheme at this time but would like to continue engaging with Council to work up options for delivery and once the routes have been agreed.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</b>
	None associated with this report.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</b>
	None associated with this report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix 1: Map of the proposed routes