

Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

1st June, 2016

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Wednesday, 8th June, 2016 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. **Routine Matters**

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

2. **Presentations**

- (a) Transport NI

3. **Regeneration**

- (a) Cultural and Creative Hub (Pages 1 - 6)
- (b) Western Quarter (Pages 7 - 14)
- (c) Response to DSD Consultation on Masterplan (Pages 15 - 24)
- (d) Car Parking Strategy (Pages 25 - 72)

4. **Finance**

(a) Year End Finance Report (Pages 73 - 80)

5. **Tourism and Events**

(a) International Update (Pages 81 - 86)

6. **Operational**

(a) Support for Business Start up and Enterprise (Pages 87 - 92)

(b) Zoo Improvement (Pages 93 - 98)

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Subject:	Council response to Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) masterplan
Date:	8 th June 2016
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie
Contact Officer:	Michael McKenna (Ext 2551)

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Department for Communities' (DfC) Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) Masterplan and seek approval of the draft Council response to the consultation in Appendix 1.</p> <p><i>Background</i></p>
1.2	<p>The draft Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) Masterplan was originally commissioned by the Department for Social Development in 2008 but was put on hold in while the adjacent York Street Interchange proposals were developed. In 2015 the Masterplan work was re-initiated by DSD and subsequently a draft plan has been issued for consultation.</p>
1.3	<p>The Masterplan area can be viewed in Appendix 2 and the entire draft masterplan can be viewed here: https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/greater-clarendon-sailortown-draft-masterplan-consultation</p> <p><i>Key Issues</i></p>
1.4	<p>Belfast City Council provided detailed comments at various times through the development of the masterplan via the project board, however, there are still some important comments included in the draft Council response. The main issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging the continued joint working arrangements and partnership approach

1.5	<p>between Belfast City Council and the Department on future regeneration initiatives across the city centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring alignment with the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy and the importance of connecting with existing communities • Ensuring the Masterplan has due regard for emerging development activity and the council owned sites in the area • Providing clarity regarding the status of the Masterplan in the context of other statutory plans and policies used by Belfast City Council in making planning decisions. • Encouraging engagement with the existing communities before finalising the Masterplan <p>Key points from the draft response are included in section 3 of this report.</p>
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider the attached draft response in Appendix 1 and agree its submission to the Department for Communities
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Background</p> <p>The Draft Masterplan has been created to provide an overarching framework for the future development of Sailortown. Although the work was originally initiated in 2008 it was delayed to allow the York Street Interchange proposal to become fully developed.</p>
3.2	<p>The aims of the masterplan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overarching framework for the development of the area; • Incorporate the on-going transport engineering and environmental work that has been undertaken in relation to the York Street Interchange; • Promote improved pedestrian and cycle links with the city centre and the Laganside area, by addressing poor physical connectivity; • Facilitate social and economic connections through the design of the environment and the improvement of key routes; • Encourage active ground floor uses to bring life and activity to key streets and spaces within the area; • Promote a scale and form of development that protects and strengthens the heritage and urban form within the area, with potential for statement buildings at the

intersections, creating sense of place and assisting orientation within the area;

3.3

The draft council response is included in **appendix 1** for Members' consideration, however, the key points include:

- The Department recently adopted, in part, the CCRIS as its policy framework for the future regeneration of Belfast City Centre and over recent months both the Department and Council have worked closely together. The Council is looking forward to continuing this positive working relationship in order to capture investment and make a real difference to the lives of those who live and work in Belfast and as a result are generally supportive of the Masterplan and what it is seeking to achieve.
- The draft masterplan and its key aims are broadly in line with the aspirations of the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, however, it would be beneficial to provide some more specific comments on the draft plan particularly since Council is responsible for a number of sites in this area
- The Masterplan area encompasses a number of important areas within the city including the emerging City Quays development, Ulster University Campus, York Street Interchange and the numerous planned developments around York Street and Dunbar link. It is important that the planned developments in these areas integrate not only with the city centre but also with adjacent communities
- The City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy identifies the Lagan Corridor as an important but underutilised part of the city and emphasises the need enhance connectivity to the river – it is important that the Masterplan recognises this.
- The masterplan recommendations include a number of uses for sites throughout the study area. It should be made clear that these illustrations are indicative and development proposals must be in accordance with BMAP and other relevant statutory planning policies which are the primary tools for Belfast City Council in undertaking its role as the planning authority
- The Key projects identified in the Masterplan are broadly in line with the aspirations of the Council's City Centre Strategy including encouraging more people to live in the city centre, improving the Dunbar link, the potential impact of a rail halt in this area, encouraging activity under the motorway flyovers and creating attractive squares and spaces. It is important that residential developments aim to provide balanced neighbourhoods that are well connected to the city centre and have access to important amenities
- The Council will welcome continued engagement with the department and other city stakeholders including involvement in the preparation of any future development

	<p>framework or action plan for this area including consideration of how to best maximise the benefit of the high levels of development activity planned in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council also encourages engagement with the local communities through the formal consultation exercise currently underway in order to shape the final document.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Draft Council response</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Map of the Masterplan Area</p>

Appendix 1

Draft Belfast City Council Response to Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) Masterplan

Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) Masterplan. In the response below we have set out some overarching comments in the context of the ongoing joined-up approach between the Department and the Council on issues relating to city centre regeneration followed by some specific comments on the draft masterplan.

Strategic Context

In preparation for the proposed extension of regeneration powers to councils as part of the local government reform process and recognising the opportunities emerging in the city at this time, Belfast City Council developed, in liaison with key partners including the Department for Social Development, the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (CCRIS).

The CCRIS provides a vision and strategic context for the future development and regeneration of Belfast City Centre for the next 10-15 years including enabling large scale developments to happen and harnessing the social benefits of such investment. The core principles which underpin the CCRIS include:

- Increase the employment population;
- Increase the residential population;
- Manage the retail offer;
- Maximise the tourism opportunity;
- Creation regional learning and innovation centres;
- Create a green, walkable, cyclable centre;
- Connect to the city around; and
- Shared space and social impact.

The Department for Social Development has recently adopted, in part, the CCRIS as its policy framework for the future regeneration of Belfast City Centre.

The related announcement made by the Social Development Minister, Lord Morrow MLA, reinforces the partnership approach being adopted in moving forward...

"a shared policy further strengthens this relationship and will now only serve to enhance both organisations in developing further initiatives which will provide a clearer vision on how the City can become even more attractive to major private sector investors and developers..."

“This joined up approach allows us to bring our expertise together to develop and form a shared vision on the best way forward for the regeneration and continued investment in the City of Belfast”..

As part of this joint approach to regeneration the Council were part of the Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) Masterplan project board and provided input throughout the process. We look forward to continuing this positive working relationship in order to capture investment and make a real difference to the lives of those who live and work in Belfast.

Comments on the draft Masterplan

The draft masterplan and its key aims are broadly in line with the aspirations of the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, however, it would be beneficial to provide some more specific comments on the draft plan.

The Masterplan area encompasses a number of important areas within the city including the emerging City Quays development, Ulster University Campus, York Street Interchange and the numerous planned developments around York Street and Dunbar link as well as the historic Sailortown neighbourhood. It is important that the planned developments in these areas which include multi-story car parks, hotels, grade A offices and purpose built managed student accommodation integrate with the city centre and connect with existing communities. The council is therefore supportive of the proposals to improve this area including the public realm in order to better connect with the rest of the city.

The City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy identifies the Lagan Corridor as an important but underutilised part of the city and emphasises the need enhance connectivity to the river. On that basis it is important that the masterplan not only promotes the movement of people in a north/south direction but also east -west movement to and from the river frontage. The aspirations of the CCRIS and the identified Inner North place and Special Action area are also relevant in this regard.

The masterplan outlines that the Council is developing a car parking strategy however, this work has not yet been finalised or through Council committee processes as a result we would request that paragraph 2.64 is amended to reflect that as part of this work we will be considering how car parking operates in the city and giving some thought to how it could be rationalised and perhaps even some development opportunities realised in the context of agreement in either the reduction of spaces in certain parts of the city or where alternative provision can be made elsewhere in more suitable locations.

The draft masterplan outlines potential opportunities that will emerge once the York Street Interchange (YSI) is completed although there remains some uncertainty due to funding and timing. The masterplan should consider the impact on development opportunities if the YSI is further delayed and perhaps some thought should be given to a phasing of schemes at the city fringe and UU quarters in the first instance which will be less impacted by the Interchange.

The masterplan contains a robust analysis and baseline section however, it is important that the main masterplan recommendations are not lost within the quantity of material provided in the document, perhaps the final document could streamline the research and analysis sections as appropriate.

The masterplan recommendations include a number of uses for sites throughout the study area. It should be made clear that these illustrations are indicative and development proposals must be in accordance with BMAP and other relevant statutory planning policies which are the primary tools for Belfast City Council in undertaking its role as the planning authority.

Furthermore, retail uses suggested for some sites must be of an appropriate scale and nature for these locations. C1 and C2 are very large sites that sit outside the City Centre but the associated imagery might suggest high rise developments will be acceptable, this could impact expectations on land value and suggest densities that would inappropriately compete with the city centre and which may not be considered acceptable in planning terms.

The Council is currently working closely with DRD to identify the potential impact of the York Street Interchange on the sites in our ownership. Within the masterplan area council is also in ownership of the Corporation Square and Exchange Street car parks and we have on license from DRD the corporation street car park. The draft plan proposes office, retail, hotel, leisure and residential as potential uses for these sites. We note that this is not formal planning policy or guidance but we suggest that retaining the current use of car parking might actually be a practical use in future in some instances, depending on the Interchange and other adjacent developments.

The site identified as CF1 is also within Council's ownership which, as part of our ongoing estate management, we are considering the potential of and how it links to other land in this area and other planned developments. As suggested above the final wording should be suitably flexible to allow a variety of appropriate uses in this location.

The Key projects identified in the Masterplan are broadly in line with the aspirations of the Council's City Centre Strategy including encouraging more people to live in the city centre, improving the Dunbar link, the potential impact of a rail halt in this area, encouraging activity under the motorway flyovers and creating attractive squares and spaces. It is important that residential developments aim to provide balanced neighbourhoods that are well connected to the city centre and have access to important amenities. Improvements along the Dunbar link would help to minimise the severance impact that is prevalent in certain locations along the inner ring road. Council would be keen to work with the Department and Transport NI to help explore any opportunities that might arise in this regard.

Proposed uses for sites beneath the flyover including art installations; environmental improvements; better use of space such as recreation use; and improved linkages between areas are broadly in line with the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy although these must have due consideration where land is currently being utilised e.g as a surface level car park

The Council will welcome continued engagement with the department and other city stakeholders including involvement in the preparation of any future development framework or action plan for this area including consideration of how to best maximise the benefit of the high levels of development activity planned in this area. The Council also encourage engagement with the local communities through the formal consultation exercise currently underway in order to shape the final document

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Subject:	Car Parking Strategy
Date:	8 th June 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Anne Doherty, Planning & Transport Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 update Members on the Council's draft Car Parking Strategy and to seek endorsement from Members of the high level recommendations summarised in Para 3.9 and set out Appendix 1, Chapter 5 & 6 prior to any agreed public consultation process.
1.2	The City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy identified car parking as a major issue for Belfast City Centre and recommended that the Council works with the Department for Infrastructure to develop and implement a strategy for car parking for Belfast. The Council commissioned consultants in October 2015 to develop a Car Parking Strategy and a project steering group, consisting of Council officers and representatives from DFI, was set up to assist with the development of the Strategy.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the findings from the baseline review and consultation process (Appendix 1) and agree the proposed draft vision, objectives and Council priorities as outlined in Para 3.9 and in this report.

2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to progress to a public consultation exercise which will facilitate further opportunities to shape the Car parking strategy before it is finalised.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Key Findings</p> <p>The development of the Car Parking Strategy followed a number of key stages from a baseline review and consultation process with key stakeholders through to the formulation of a draft strategy and action plan.</p>
3.2	<p>The draft Car Parking Strategy and action plan has been finalised and a copy is attached in Appendix 1. There are a number of key findings from the baseline review and consultation process which are outlined below for Members to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The baseline review has indicated that there is sufficient parking stock in Belfast and this should be maintained and closely monitored. There are 28,300 spaces publicly available (45% on street and 55% off Street) and demand indicates a requirement for 18,000 on average per day in Belfast. The Council has responsibility for 17 of the 59 off street car parks containing 1,476 parking spaces. • The number of car parking spaces provided in Belfast is considered to be high compared to other cities of similar size. • Whilst there is currently sufficient parking stock in terms of overall spaces the provision is fragmented and imbalanced across the city centre. The current location of car parking spaces, particularly surface car parking, is not necessarily aligned to either existing nodes of demand or to future redevelopment proposals, particularly in the context of the City Centre Regeneration Strategy. The provision and location of parking should reflect the changing shape of regeneration across the city. • There is a lack of information for visitors as to where available parking is located resulting in circulating traffic looking for available spaces contributing to congestion in the city which could be more efficiently managed. • Site audits have identified that some car parks are of low quality in terms of facilities and provision for users which leads to security and crime issues impacting on parking behaviour in the city. • There is a high level of all day parking in specific areas of the core city centre area that is inappropriate. This reduces the amount of short stay opportunities for shoppers, business meetings and other visitors.

- Parking is not seen as a major decision factor by investors, particularly as other cities do not have significant city centre parking although it was noted that many other cities have a range of alternative sustainable transport options.
- Commuter parking in city centre residential areas is a known issue and individual Residents Parking Schemes have been developed by DFI, however to date none of these schemes have been implemented.
- There is a high level of private non-residential parking spaces (10,422) provided in the core and fringe city area which encourages the use of the private car as the mode of transport. This is generally free car parking provided to employees as part of public and private office developments.
- There are a number of low quality surface car parking sites in the city centre where consideration should be given to maximising their wider regeneration potential particularly in the context of the City Centre Regeneration Strategy and redevelopment proposals. Consolidation of existing parking or alternative provision could potentially be facilitated as part of any new development or consideration given to the provision of new multi storey/underground car parks. This would allow better use of valuable city centre land and bring wider economic and regeneration benefits, as well concentrating traffic movements to fewer parking sites.
- Potential solutions that could be implemented through the introduction of new technology include more efficient enforcement, development of a Belfast parking website and app, improving parking information as you approach the city (city wide Intelligent Transport System, innovative wayfinding and upgrading payment methods).
- The review has found that parking tariffs in Belfast are comparable with cities such as Newcastle and Nottingham, but generally cheaper than cities such as Manchester, Dublin and Cardiff. Council site tariffs were found to be generally lower than those in adjacent private sites.
- Accessible parking in Belfast City Centre is limited in comparison to the number of standard spaces available. Blue badge holders can park for free on street if the blue badge is on clear display. A review of the existing provision of accessible parking has indicated that Blue Badge provision could also be considered within Belfast City Council off street car parks.
- Issues of parking in some district centres outside the city centre has been raised in particular the use of free car parks for all day commuter parking in areas such as East Belfast.

- The progression and promotion of sustainable travel options should also be considered in parallel including further Park and Ride facilities on both radial and high frequency public transport corridors; enhancement of the quality and volume of cycle infrastructure and parking; improved taxi facilities and coach parking and the development of the Belfast Transport Hub and the Belfast Rapid Transit system.

3.3 **Vision, Objectives and Priorities**

The draft vision and the set of objectives are outlined below which the strategy should seek to address along with the suggested Council priorities for consideration:

3.4 **Vision**

“Belfast is a city offering sufficient, high quality and appropriately located parking which supports economic development and regeneration within the city by balancing the requirements of residents, businesses, commuters and visitors.

3.5 **Objective 1**

Ensuring appropriate provision and location of car parking to support and improve the economic vitality of the City Centre and district centres.

Council priorities

- Review current provision to ensure an appropriate provision in the right location to support economic vitality.
- Consider how optimal use can be made of surface car parks to best support city centre regeneration in terms of alignment of provision with re-development and maximising valuable city centre land to deliver on wider regeneration outcomes.
- Identify opportunities to consolidate existing parking or alternative provision as an integral part of new development and consider provision of new multi storey /underground car parks where appropriate.

3.6 **Objective 2**

Ensuring car parking provision does not encourage less sustainable commuter travel, especially for journeys into the City Centre and supports access by public transport, cycling and walking.

Council priorities

- Work with stakeholders to consider how parking tariffs in the city centre core can be

	<p>reviewed to ensure sufficient short-stay parking facilities to support commercial and leisure activities and deter long stay commuter parking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with stakeholders to develop and improve the sustainable transport modes for travel to and within the city, in particular for commuters. • Consider options to control the amount of private non-residential parking (PNR) across the city.
3.7	<p>Objective 3</p> <p>Minimising the potentially negative impacts of parking on residential communities in the city particularly in inner city areas.</p> <p>Council priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Dfl and local communities to consider parking management for these areas, either through the implementation of on-street parking regimes or Residents Parking Schemes. • Identify surface car park sites suitable for consolidation and redevelopment in order to improve the built environment for inner city areas.
3.8	<p>Objective 4</p> <p>Work with stakeholders to improve the quality of parking and information available, ideally through technology and in particular develop a new parking signage and information system that supports parking and wider applications.</p> <p>Council priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring forward technological solutions to make it easier to navigate into and around the city and effective signposting in the City Centre. • Work with key stakeholders to ensure that key destinations have appropriate levels of disabled parking and family friendly provision. • Encourage car park operators to invest in their facilities to the extent that they will achieve the Park Mark standard. • Reduce supply of poor quality surface level space and replace with higher quality well-managed space.
3.9	<p>Key Recommendations</p> <p>The strategy has made a number of recommendations and proposals for consideration by elected members. The main strategy proposals are as follows:</p>

- The current parking supply in the city should be maintained and that new car parks should only be provided within the city where they replace existing spaces or where they are an essential part of a new development.
- All on-street parking spaces within the core city centre area should be controlled either by the extension of on-street pay and display or by residents parking schemes. The strategy is also proposing that on-street tariffs are reviewed to reflect demand and deter long stay parking.
- City centre surface parking sites should be considered in the context of the City Centre Regeneration Strategy and redevelopment proposals that maximise the use of valuable city centre assets in order to deliver on regeneration outcomes. This may involve the redevelopment and intensification of use of these sites and alternative provision made either as an integral part of redevelopment or transferred into multi-storey sites along or outside the inner ring road. The provision of multi storey car parks on the inner ring could potentially be supplemented by a shuttle bus connecting the main shopping and employment areas. This approach could be applied to a number of the Council's off-street surface car parks. Consideration would however need to be given to the responsibility for development and funding of any such multi storey car parks although this could also be viewed in the context of the release of valuable city centre sites and the income producing potential of multi storey car parks. Further consideration would be needed internally on whether the operation and control of these car parks in the future should be retained by the Council.
- The issue of the large amount of private non-residential parking provided across the city has been raised and the need for tighter controls. The strategy is advocating that the Council and other government departments should lead by example by reducing the amount of PNR this could be achieved in a number of ways eg consider offering alternatives sustainable travel options, charging for the spaces they provide for employees etc.
- There is a need to review the DFI's residents parking scheme proposals in city centre areas. Previously, the schemes have not received full community support mainly due to charging and access for visitors. The strategy recommends that there is a review of criteria for implementation, scheme design, operational times and community support in order to increase the potential for delivery.
- Long stay parking in some suburban areas should be charged in order to increase turnover and maintain space for local activities
- Actions should be taken to improve the quality of parking and information available such as new technology to improve ticketing and payment systems, more information

	<p>for visitors via electronic media including a dedicated website and app and a potential integrated signage system for the city.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council should provide disabled parking spaces for free in off-street car parks and review provision and this will have implications for the Council in terms of loss of revenue. <p>3.10 Department of Regional Development input</p> <p>It should be noted that many of the draft strategy recommendations will require further agreement from key stakeholders and in particular DFI. DFI is represented on the project steering group and will be providing formal comment on the draft strategy.</p> <p>3.11 Public consultation</p> <p>Subject to the Draft Strategy and Action Plan being endorsed by Committee and ratified by Council, it is intended that we will undertake a public consultation exercise from mid July to September 2016 which will facilitate further opportunities to shape the strategy before it is finalised. It is on this basis that members are asked to endorse the draft recommendations as set out in this report and provided in more detail in Appendix 1.</p> <p>3.12 Equality and Good Relations Implications</p> <p>Equality and good relations screening will be conducted in parallel with the proposed consultation processes.</p> <p>3.13 Resource Implications</p> <p>Additional resources may be required to assist with the public consultation on the draft strategy subject to agreement. If endorsed the recommendations will have future implications on Council revenue such as loss of parking revenue due to the redevelopment of city centre surface car parks, costs of improving car parks, introduction of charging in some free car parks in district centres and the introduction of free disabled car parking in Council owned off street car parks. These have not been quantified in the research and will be reported to a future Strategic Policy & Resources Committee once the strategy is finalised.</p>
4.0	Appendix 1 – Draft Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan
	Appendix 1

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Belfast Parking Strategy and Action Plan

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The city of Belfast is changing. It is growing and continues to seek more investment, more jobs, more opportunities, and to be a better place to live. The city's transportation network and in particular its parking have a key role to play in achieving a vibrant competitive city which can compete on a global scale.

In recognition of the role of parking in contributing to the success of the city, and as outlined in the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy published in September 2015, a strategy for city centre parking is needed. The actions and interventions proposed here will complement the Regeneration Strategy's following core principles: increasing the employment and residential population; managing the city's retail offer; maximising tourism opportunities; creating a green, walkable and cyclable city centre; create regional learning and innovation centres; and promoting shared space and social impact. The actions and interventions within this document include the innovative use of technology to make parking 'smarter' and promote better use of city centre space to provide the right environment for investment and for city user's and while enabling further city development.

On 1st April 2015 the Department for Regional Development (now renamed as the Department for Infrastructure – DfI) transferred all of its off-street car parks (excluding Park and Ride/Park and Share) to local councils as part of local government reform. The Council is therefore now responsible for the operation of 30 car parks that were previously operated by the DfI, however on-street car parking remains under DfI's control along with other transport responsibilities.

Local Government Reform also provided local councils with a range of new place-shaping and economic powers including developing a new Local Development Plan as part of the wider planning function and community planning. This Strategy will seek to inform the development of future statutory plans and policies developed under the Council's new powers.

The current city centre parking strategy is set out in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) which continues as the statutory transport plan for Belfast. It was developed to manage the transportation issues and is currently under review.

1.2 Vision

As outlined in the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, fundamental to Belfast's success will be the city's ability to continue to attract investment and retain a competitive advantage over other cities. This means being competitive in terms of tax, rates, skills and incentives. But it also means having a lifestyle offering that will attract and retain people. The role of transport and car parking is clear: they are key elements of how a city functions, not only in terms of business but including the broader 'lifestyle' offering.

Car parking clearly is an important resource that supports the economic and social vitality of the city, however, it also can have some negative impacts that need to be effectively managed and addressed. Primarily these issues are associated with inappropriate parking provision. For example, a high proportion of all day commuter parking in the core of a city centre uses up valuable space that could be used for broader regenerative purposes and restricts parking opportunities for shorter term uses such as shopping, business and leisure activities. Similarly, the ability of commuters to park for free in predominantly residential areas prevents those residents from parking and negatively impacts on the quality of the area and can undermine on the viability of local businesses that depend on a turnover of parking spaces.

Our vision for this strategy is as follows:

“Belfast is a city offering sufficient, high quality and appropriately located parking which supports economic development and regeneration within the city by balancing the requirements of residents, businesses, commuters and visitors.”

This Strategy was developed through close working relationships between Belfast City Council (BCC), DfI and Transport NI (as the highway authority), as well as consultation with Elected Members, members of the public and other city stakeholders. A joint approach with these stakeholders will be needed in order to achieve the objectives within the Strategy that Belfast needs to continue growing and in order to fulfil its role as the capital city and the economic driver for the region.

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2 Context

This chapter firstly considers why people need to park as this is fundamental to understanding how the issues should be addressed. It then moves on to consider the impacts that peoples' parking choices have, as many parking issues are common in numerous towns and cities. It then considers parking within Belfast city centre, examining parking supply, location and the current approach to policy. This chapter also details the consultation that has taken place in preparation of this strategy.

2.1 Why People Park

For many people the private car is an important means of accessing Belfast, particularly for trips to work, shopping and leisure. Most of these trips result in an act of parking near to or at the intended destination. The availability of somewhere to park is therefore a key consideration for these users, however, parking cost and convenience are also significant influences as is the availability of practical alternatives including use of public transport.

Some users may only need to park for a few minutes or for a few hours, such as if they are attending a meeting, using their car as part of their job, going on a shopping trip or visiting a tourist attraction. However people who park for work often need to make use of a single parking space for upwards of eight hours per day.

Any consideration of parking needs to take into account the various reasons why people need to park their vehicles. It also needs to consider whether these parking acts need to be made at all if other transport options offer the user a viable alternative. A careful balance is needed between the level of parking provided and the comparative viability of using other forms of transport to make the same trip.

“A careful balance is needed between the level of parking provided and the comparative viability of using other forms of transport to make the same trip”

Within cities, it is the movement, connectivity and transportation of people that can be key drivers to promoting and sustaining economic growth. Parking is a crucial strand of delivering a 'joined up' city transportation strategy, and Belfast is no exception. As the city continues to grow, both in terms of population and employment, pressures on the transport network will increase and therefore careful ongoing management and planning are required.

2.2 The Impacts of Parking

Whilst an efficient city parking system can help to sustain a local economy, there are a number of considerations needed in order to reduce the adverse impacts that parking often creates. These can be attributed to a combination of user behaviour and the level of infrastructure provision. For example, some users may have always parked in particular locations as they have been able to, yet there may now be unacceptable local impacts associated with this activity. In other areas, an over-supply of free or cheap parking can increase traffic congestion on adjacent roads.

When excessive demand materialises on a road network with limited capacity, it results in congestion for all road users. This impacts on journey time reliability, delivery timeframes for goods and services and adds to driver frustration. There are also impacts on the environment through increased air and noise pollution.

Cities typically experience large demands on their transport systems, and an abundance of parking supply can create high competition for limited road space due to large numbers of drivers looking to park their vehicles. As can be seen at many out of town shopping centres, there is an intrinsic link between abundant parking provision and large private car demand. Yet in comparison with such out of town sites, cities offer more viable travel alternatives to the private car through public transport provision.

“Cities typically experience large demands on their transport systems, and an abundance of parking supply can create high competition for limited road space due to large numbers of drivers looking to park their vehicles.”

Careful consideration of parking supply within cities is needed in order to achieve an appropriate balance that meets demand yet does not encourage less sustainable travel, particularly for commuters. As city economies grow, working and resident

populations both increase and this causes additional pressure on existing transport networks. In order to maintain the effectiveness and lifespan of a city's transportation system, people need to be able to make an informed choice on their method of transport to work/study, and ideally users should see mass transit systems such as bus or rail travel as their preferred choice from both a cost, convenience and travel time perspective.

As such, parking price within cities needs to be at a level sufficient to sustain the market yet also at a level that does not induce excessive demand, thereby undoing efforts to increase use of more sustainable transport modes. It also needs to be sufficiently competitive so that it does not disadvantage and price out certain users for whom sustainable modes are not currently a viable option. This balance can be difficult to achieve when the majority of the parking provision is in the hands of the private sector.

“...parking price within cities needs to be at a level sufficient to sustain the market yet also at a level that does not induce excessive demand, thereby undoing efforts to increase use of more sustainable transport modes.”

A close link between land use and transport planning is essential. This means that new development is located in areas that have suitable means of access by a variety of transport modes and ensures prime development land is not inappropriately used by low quality surface-level car parking. As the transport impact of land uses are examined by the type of development being proposed and the proximity to the transport network, this reduces the adverse impacts of private car use and parking.

Many city buildings such as offices provide their own parking spaces, such as basement parking or lock-up car parks mainly for employee use. Such spaces are typically not publically available and are termed 'Private Non Residential' (PNR). Whilst this provides additional parking capacity within cities to accommodate the demand which is arising from development, the level of PNR parking needs to be carefully considered in order to avoid inadvertently maintaining car dependence and adding to traffic congestion. In city centre locations where public transport access is good, the need for large numbers of PNR spaces is questionable.

Parking space also needs to be provided for tourist coaches, preferably close to attractions so that passengers can be dropped off. Lack of coach parking space can cause tour operators to think twice before planning city excursions, however, it can be difficult for local authorities to find suitable parking locations within heavily built up city centres. Similarly, tourists and other visitors arriving by car can often be unaware of parking locations and a lack of signage and information can compound this issue.

All day parking, where a vehicle is continuously parked in the same spot, can take place in inappropriate locations. This includes commuters who park in mainly residential areas; preventing local residents from parking, adding to the cluttered feel of individual streets, decreasing perceived safety levels and reducing access for the likes of emergency service vehicles.

A high proportion of all day parking can also use up valuable space for people who need to park in the city for short durations such as for business meetings or for shopping. Typically this is more an issue with on-street rather than off-street parking spaces, but the result is that the turnover of high value spaces is low which means that people spend time circulating to find a space or are ultimately dissuaded from visiting an area altogether.

“A high proportion of all day parking can use up valuable space for people who need to park in the city for short durations such as for business meetings or for shopping.”

The majority of parking acts require some sort of enforcement system to ensure effectiveness. Enforcement can assess whether parkers have stayed beyond the maximum time limit stipulated on the adjacent signage, or if they are parked on urban clearways or on double yellow lines, etc.

However it is virtually impossible to enforce all parking acts within any given city, and limited enforcement resources can only deal with a certain amount of parking infringements. City areas are generally split into those with parking restrictions and those where parking is unrestricted. Typically the areas with restrictions are city or local centres; however any restrictions are reliant on enforcement.

Aside from not abiding by parking regime rules, users have been known to abuse the system in other ways such as 'feeding the meter' which enables users to stay in the same space beyond the time limit stated. Similarly, misuse of Blue Badges (which is a

nationwide problem) enables people without genuine disabilities to park on-street all day for free. The effects of this behaviour are reduced space turnover, impacts on traffic progression, circulating traffic looking for a parking space as well as annoyance to local residents and businesses.

Increasing volumes of cyclists are being seen throughout the UK and Ireland, with many cities also implementing bike hire schemes. In order to sustain this recent level of growth the overall offer to cyclists needs to be improved, and this includes provision such as dedicated cycle lanes and cycle parking. In the absence of suitable and secure parking, cyclists often have to lock their bikes to street furniture which adds to the feel of cluttered streets and leaves their bikes exposed to the elements.

“In order to sustain the recent level of growth in cycling, the overall offer to cyclists needs to be improved, and this includes provision such as dedicated cycle lanes and cycle parking.”

This lack of parking provision for cyclists can add to crime levels and perceived safety fears, which can also be apparent in low standard car parks. If such sites are located in areas of high vehicle or personal crime, are poorly lit and surfaced or unmanned and without CCTV, users feel unsafe and therefore park elsewhere. A lack of provision for disabled users and adults with children can also decrease car park attractiveness. Disabled or limited mobility users in particular are often dissuaded from paying for parking off-street when they can park for free on-street and closer to where they want to go to.

Taxis perform a vital public transport service within cities. They offer convenient door to door transport at all times of the day. To ensure this availability to customers, public hire taxis need sufficient on-street rank space to be able to wait and private hire taxis also need parking space while they await instruction on customer pick up.

Where the public hire rank space provided is not commensurate with taxi supply, overcrowding occurs and this can impact on the local area and impinge traffic flow. This detracts from the overall taxi offer, ultimately affecting the local economy.

2.3 Parking in Belfast

2.3.1 Parking Supply and Demand in the City Centre

The first consideration is how much parking supply and demand there currently is within Belfast. Within the city centre's Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), which is divided into core and fringe sub-zones, there are approximately 28,300 publicly available parking spaces, split as 45% on-street and 55% off-street. These zones are shown in **Figure 1**.

Within the core and fringe zones there are 12,800 spaces where on-street parking can take place, of which only 14% are currently 'controlled' i.e. have an enforced time limit or payment regime, predominantly located within the core zone. This means that there are 9,100 (80%) uncontrolled spaces located in fringe areas such as the lower Shankill and Crumlin Roads as well as Donegall Road and Lower Ormeau. There are also nearly 1,900 spaces within the core that remain uncontrolled.

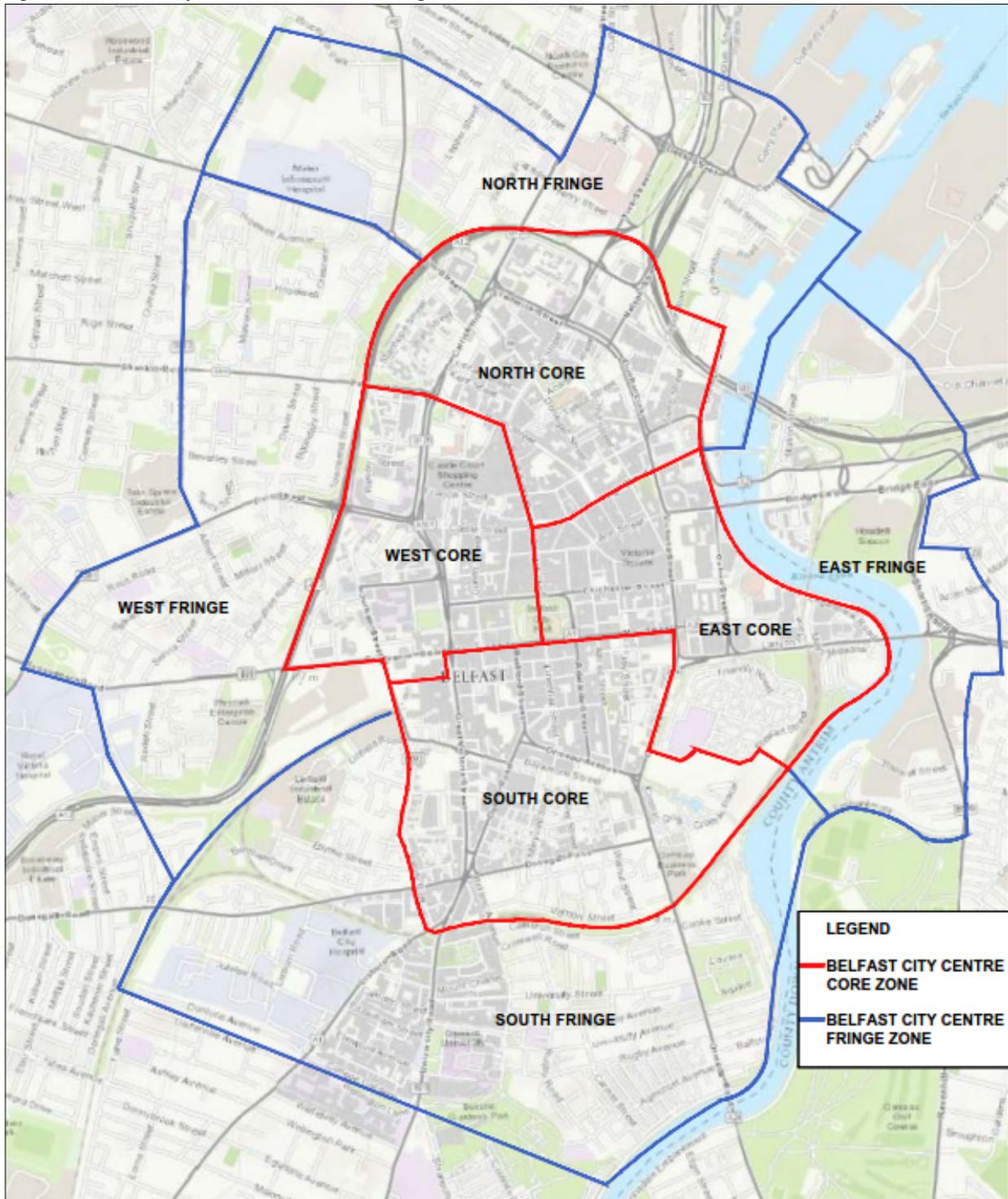
There are a further 15,465 off-street spaces within the core and fringe provided in 58 car parks. The city council recently received responsibility for 1,476 of these off-street spaces within 17 car parks (two of which are free), with the remaining 13,989 being provided within 41 car parks predominantly provided by private sector operators.

Fourteen multi-storey car park (MSCP) sites provide around 58% of the total number of off-street spaces within the core and fringe, again predominantly provided by private sector parking operators although a small number are provided by public sector bodies.

The remaining 44 sites are small surface level car parks which typically provide fewer than 100 spaces each. The condition of some of these sites is low quality, with poor signposting on approach. It should be noted that some of these surface sites could be redeveloped; therefore the use of these sites for parking purposes could be seen to be on a temporary basis. If redeveloped, these sites could be put to more appropriate uses.

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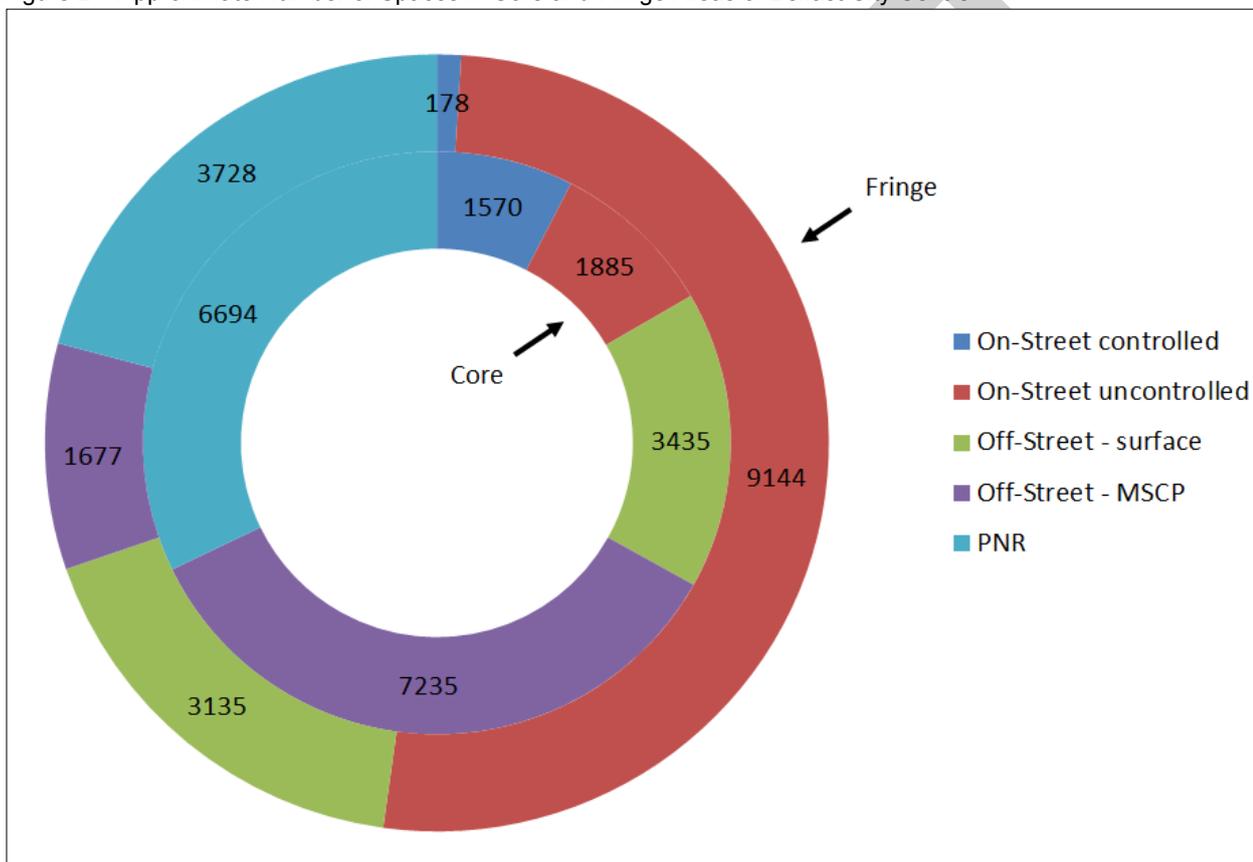
Figure 1 – Belfast City Centre Controlled Parking Zones



There are also a number of car park sites that are not generally publicly available but privately owned or contract operated. Often these are associated with businesses and offices and are termed as 'Private Non Residential' (PNR) spaces. Within Belfast city centre's core and fringe zones there are over 10,400 PNR spaces, split as around 6,700 within the core and 3,700 in the fringe.

This gives a total parking supply of 38,681 spaces within the city centre core and fringe. Note this excludes those provided at supermarkets and out of town shopping centres. The breakdown of spaces in the core and fringes respectively is shown in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2 – Approximate Number of Spaces in Core and Fringe Areas of Belfast City Centre



Day to day demand for off-street parking spaces typically uses up 50-60% of capacity at any one time, according to biennial surveys undertaken by DfI that have taken place over the last decade. On-street spaces typically have higher occupancies at between 70-80% on average, with around 90% of spaces in the core and 70% of spaces in the fringe being used.

According to the DfI surveys, the level of parking in the city centre has remained relatively constant over the last decade. This means there are around 18,000 parking acts within the city centre at any one time on a typical day. This equates to around 9,000 parking acts in each of the core and fringe areas, and this excludes PNR usage figures.

It should be noted that the south fringe area shows the highest level of on-street parking of all of the areas considered (~4,000 acts at any one time). This includes areas around Queens University and City Hospital where no parking

“According to DfI surveys, the level of parking in the city centre has remained relatively constant over the last decade. This means there are around 18,000 parking acts within the city centre at any one time on a typical day... and this excludes PNR usage figures.”

regime is currently in place. Within the core, the level of off-street parking is relatively equally spread out however the demand for on-street spaces in the south core area (which includes the likes of the Linen Quarter, Donegall Pass and Sandy Row) is double that of other core areas. This is considered to be due to the majority of city centre offices being located in this area and limited parking regime implementation.

Figures for the use of PNR spaces are not available; however anecdotal evidence would suggest reasonably high use of these spaces since many are provided by businesses and public sector bodies for employee use.

It is therefore apparent that with typical demand for around 18,000 spaces and a supply of 28,300, there is sufficient overall public parking supply within the city centre. Occupancy in core areas, which are largely subject to parking charges is around 65%, whereas in fringe areas where costs are significant lower occupancy is around 70%.

It is acknowledged that some car parks are full however others sit with lower occupancies. Also it means that there are areas of on-street provision completely saturated, largely as a result of the lack of any parking regime in those areas. It is therefore clear that the provision of parking is fragmented and imbalanced across the city centre.

“It is clear that the provision of parking is fragmented and imbalanced across the city centre.”

In addition to the abundance of free parking opportunities on the edge of the city centre, the provision of PNR spaces provided is also considered to add to the attractiveness of driving into the city centre as these spaces are often offered to employees at no or modest cost. This also guarantees that people will always get a secure parking space upon arrival and therefore entrenches behaviour.

“In addition to the abundance of free parking opportunities on the edge of the city centre, the provision of PNR spaces provided is also considered to add to the attractiveness of driving into the city centre as these spaces are often offered to employees at no or modest cost.”

The proportion of PNR spaces provided in Belfast is considered to be high in relation to other similar size cities; in Belfast there is one PNR space per 46 people, whereas in Cardiff it is one space per 50 people and in Newcastle-upon-Tyne it is one space per 70 people.

The number of spaces provided overall in Belfast is considered to be high compared to other cities of similar size. In Newcastle-upon-Tyne city centre there are around 9,500 off-street spaces provided, compared to 15,482 in Belfast. Provision in Cardiff is even lower, with an estimated 6,860 public parking spaces in the city centre.

This demand for parking affects the city centre in a number of ways. Most obviously it adds to traffic volumes and therefore congestion at key locations. This has impacts on noise and air pollution. Users often circulate in their vehicles looking to find a space. On-street spaces are highly valued yet it is more difficult to find a free space and users do not appear to be as familiar with nearby off-street alternatives.

It also means that some people park in unsuitable areas such as streets within city centre residential areas. Many of these streets, while sitting within the existing Controlled Parking Zone, do not have any time limits or parking regime. Despite there being parking capacity in dedicated sites nearby, commuters can park all day for free, just a short walk from the city centre. Consultation feedback and observations have shown that these areas fill up very early in the morning with commuter parking.

Belfast also experiences the typical parking enforcement issues whereby some parkers stay beyond their time limits, do not pay for parking when they should or feed the meter. This means that some on-street spaces are used for longer than they should be which reduces parking opportunity for others and ultimately could have an impact on the viability of the local economy.

Blue Badge holders are able to park for free on-street and there is evidence to suggest that this is a common practice in the city centre and it means users can often park much closer to their destination. Since Blue Badge holders also have to pay use off-street car parks, there is currently little incentive for them to use them.

2.3.2 Parking Duration in the City Centre

The volumes of people parking in the city centre suggest a significant proportion of long stay, all day parking. This is mainly associated with work related trips which normally arrive early morning and then leave in the evening.

The current on-street parking regime is designed to prohibit all day parking by limiting stays to one, two or up to four hours, depending on location, for any one parking act. This aims to maintain space turnover which increases parking opportunities within the core of the city centre.

High quality off-street sites are better suited to all day parking, particularly those located outside of the central area, with multi-storeys offering the most efficient use of space in this regard. Recent surveys of the City Council's surface car parks have shown that nearly 90% of the total number of spaces are occupied at around midday, which appears the busiest time of day for parking at these sites. The surveys have also shown that some sites have very high turnover whilst others have low turnover and therefore a high proportion of all day parkers.

However there is no clear pattern apparent between the distance from the centre of the city (i.e. City Hall) and the proportion of all day parkers. An efficient system would have a lower proportion of all day parkers the closer towards the city core. This appears to be the case for car parks located on the edge of the city centre such as Corporation Street and Corporation Square where up to half of parkers park all day, however car park sites that are much closer to City Hall such as Cromac Street and Charlotte Street show up to 30% all day parking (i.e. around one in four spaces at these car parks are used all day, reducing availability for short stay parkers). Other sites nearby such as Hope Street North and Bankmore Street have less than 5% all day parkers, however all four sites are a similar distance from City Hall.

“There is no clear pattern apparent between the distance from the centre of the city (i.e. City Hall) and the proportion of all day parkers. An efficient system would have a lower proportion of all day parkers the closer towards the city core.”

It would appear that the convenience and modest cost of parking at the likes of Cromac Street and Charlotte Street all day is the reason for this behaviour. Tariffs therefore need to be re-examined to ensure that all day parking takes place in appropriate locations. This is particularly important as the Cromac Street and Charlotte Street sites are located within an Air Quality Management Area.

A number of privately operated car parks also operate contract and season ticket parking. This means that a proportion of the overall spaces within a car park are set aside for this purpose, however for some of these sites the number of contract/season tickets offered is in excess of that stated within planning conditions.

2.3.3 Facilities & Payment

A review of each of the individual car parks has shown significant differences in terms of quality; for example only around one in five car parks have provision for parents and children, with less than half providing dedicated spaces for disabled users.

Some car parks are completely unmanned and have no CCTV. In certain areas of the city centre there are high instances of vehicle crime and this inevitably has an impact on parking behaviour.

This means that car parks located within some areas of the city centre are not attractive to use and may be a reason for lower occupancies in these areas. At the other end of the scale, a number of the large city centre multi-storey car parks have achieved the 'Park Mark' standard, which is a scheme aimed at reducing crime and the fear of crime in parking facilities by encouraging car park operators to raise standards.

“Only around one in five car parks have provision for parents and children, with less than half providing dedicated spaces for disabled users.”

Current payment technologies for parking in Belfast include cash, credit/debit card, pay by phone, web and smartphone 'app'. Traditional cash pay and display machines are also provided on-street and off-street, however more modern systems are now available which could be further investigated.

Use of the 'parkmobile' service, which can currently be used at all Dfl on-street and BCC off-street sites, has shown an increase in popularity recently and this is considered to be associated with the ease of use and payment that it provides. Ease of payment assists operations and maximises usage and revenue for providers. Some city centre residents and businesses also rent out their parking spaces to commuters via websites, often at attractive rates.

"Use of the 'parkmobile' service, which can currently be used at all Dfl on-street and BCC off-street sites, has shown an increase in popularity recently and this is considered to be associated with the ease of use and payment that it provides"

The average cost of parking across the city centre is largely commensurate with cities of similar size or characteristics such as Newcastle, Middlesbrough and Nottingham; however Dublin, Manchester and Cardiff all have higher parking costs. For the Council's car parks, which were recently inherited from Dfl, tariffs have remain largely unchanged for a number of years and there does not appear to be a strategic approach to the pricing of each car park.

2.3.4 Parking information

Belfast does not currently benefit from an integrated city-wide parking signage system. While there are some localised areas that provide modern electronic signage upon approach to car parks such as Victoria Square and Titanic Quarter, fixed plate signage is used in most locations to advise users of parking locations as they approach them.

"Belfast does not currently benefit from an integrated city-wide parking signage system... There is an absence of information for users as they approach the city from further afield."

There is an absence of information for users as they approach the city from further afield; therefore those who are unfamiliar have to rely on signage information which is located just a few metres from individual car parks. This results in people circulating the city centre looking for parking spots.

Integrated parking guidance and information systems monitor individual parking locations electronically. Data is then fed through to a communication system which advises motorists of the availability and location of parking via a network of variable message signs. Allowing the public to access this parking information before they start their journey can help them make a more informed decision and also influence their modal choice.

This could result in better management of demand and supply, potentially reducing environmental impacts through lower vehicle emissions. It would also raise the overall attractiveness of the city, leading to improved revenue generation, better utilisation of off-street car parks and improved accessibility to short stay on-street parking areas.

2.3.5 Coaches / Tourism

The tourism industry and in particular the coach tourism industry is vital to both sustaining and growth of the Northern Ireland economy. Local coach operators invest millions in vehicles and bring much needed revenue both in terms of what they spend and the numbers of tourists brought into the country.

"There is a need for off-street coach parking facilities and convenient signage for coaches and passengers, so that visitors keep coming back and attract further visitors."

There is provision for 19 coach parking bays in the city. While these are essential to have for short term city centre parking particularly for day time parking, demand regularly exceeds supply. There are a lack of facilities in Belfast and also a perceived lack of enforcement of the existing facilities. Furthermore, there is a need for off-street coach parking facilities and convenient signage for coaches and passengers, so that visitors keep coming back and attract further visitors.

2.3.6 Cyclists

Dfl data has revealed that there are over 700 cycle parking locations in Belfast city centre. However with the increase in the popularity of cycling both from users using their own bikes and the recently implemented Belfast Bikes hire scheme, there is a need to enhance the quality and volume of cycle parking.

This should ideally include weather-protected and secure cycle parking in the locations where people want to park their bikes, and the implementation of additional Belfast Bikes docking stations at key attractors such as transport hubs, shopping centres and centres of employment.

2.3.7 Taxis

Public hire taxis in Belfast benefit from a number of ranks from where they can pick up customers. However it has been acknowledged that there is significant competition for kerb space across the city centre and that ranks need to be better distributed across the city centre so that they more closely align with footfall in particular areas.

There are particular areas where localised issues occur due to taxi supply being in excess of the rank space provided. This pressure is likely to increase with the introduction of single tier licensing whereby private hire taxis will also be able to use ranks.

2.3.8 Outside of the city centre

The Council also provides a further 720 spaces in 14 car parks outside of the city centre. Ten of these car parks are located in east Belfast and four are located in south Belfast. The East Belfast sites are primarily located off the Newtownards Road.

Recent surveys have shown that the average weekday occupancy of these 14 sites is 78%, with six sites having occupancies of 90% – 100%. Only two of the 14 sites have a form of charging.

Surveys have also shown that between 30% – 80% of people parked for more than four hours at eleven of the sites. Therefore nearly all of these free sites are showing high levels of all day parking and this may be due to people parking due to their involvement in local activities but it may also include people parking before catching the bus into the city centre.

“Nearly all of the free sites are showing high levels of all day parking and this may be due to people parking due to their involvement in local activities but it may also include people parking before catching the bus into the city centre.”

Many of these car parks are located adjacent to key arterial routes. The all-day parking that occurs at these sites has impacts on adjacent shops and businesses by reducing opportunities for customers to park. It is clear that the lack of charging at these sites encourages longer duration parking, which reduces space turnover and availability.

2.3.9 Residents Parking

There are some areas within the Controlled Parking Zone such as The Markets, Sandy Row etc where the level of driveway parking provision is not generally commensurate with car ownership levels in these areas. The lack of an on-street regime encourages commuters to park in these predominantly residential areas.

The impacts on residential communities also extend further out of the city centre. Areas such as the Lower Malone, Stranmillis and College Park Avenue / Rugby Road also experience issues from people who work and therefore park in the area but who do not live locally, as well students utilising the surrounding education institutions. This results in excessive parking demand throughout the day.

Compared to the city centre residential areas these outer areas only generally benefit from historic on-street parking provision.

“Areas such as the Lower Malone, Stranmillis and College Park Avenue / Rugby Road also experience issues from people who work and therefore park in the area but who do not live locally, as well students who live in the area but in dwellings that have multiple occupants. This results in excessive parking demand throughout the day.”

This means that when space is occupied by workers or students, local residents find it difficult to park outside or near to their houses. Parking is also at a premium for local businesses in these areas. There is also reason to believe that commuters are travelling into these areas from further afield and then getting the bus or walking into the city centre.

These largely residential areas, in addition to those within the city centre, have been subject to consideration for Residents Parking Schemes in the recent past. Residents Parking Schemes assign on-street spaces to residents and local businesses by way of a permit, thereby preventing use of the space by non-residents and businesses outside the area.

However, none of the Belfast schemes have been implemented to date. It is considered that in the absence of such schemes, these issues will remain and there is reason to believe that as the city grows the problem will intensify and expand to other areas.

2.3.10 Park and Ride

Parking on or adjacent to the major radial routes into the city centre has received attention in part due to the implementation of the Quality Bus Corridors. On-street parking provision on the likes of the Ormeau Road and Newtownards Road is enforced by the use of Urban Clearways and bus lane operation restrictions during peak periods.

A large number of Park & Ride sites have been implemented in the last decade by Translink and DfI. These provide parking nodes for users to avail of bus and rail services into the city centre and include sites at Dundonald, Cairnshill and Sprucefield. Parking is free and users only pay for the cost of travel, thereby removing car traffic from radial routes and the city centre.

However there are some disparities between the cost of onward public transport travel from these sites and the cost of city centre parking. If it is possible to park in the city centre for less than it would cost to take a bus from a Park & Ride site, users will be unlikely to make the switch. For example, users who currently make use of free on-street parking in city centre residential areas such as the Markets or who benefit from a cheap city centre PNR space or would, in either instance, be highly unlikely to start using Park & Ride.

Whilst DfI has developed a Park & Ride Strategy for the city, careful consideration of the comparative costs for users is required. This could be addressed in a number of ways rather than just making public transport fares cheaper; for example it could provide improved bus journey times through implementation of further priority measures, or if city centre parking is made less cost attractive this could attract users over to Park & Ride.

Similarly, some radial routes into the city centre such as Castlereagh Road do not benefit from significant Park & Ride provision, yet this could influence the proportion of car journeys made along this corridor.

2.3.11 Policy

Key relevant policy documents which have shaped, and will continue to shape transport, parking and planning policy include the following:

- Regional Development Strategy 2035;
- Regional Transportation Strategy 2002-2012;
- Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015;
- Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan 2015;
- Belfast City Council Transport Policy;
- DOE Parking Standards;
- Belfast Air Quality Action Plan 2015 – 2020;
- Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland; and
- Planning Policy Statements (PPS3 and PPS13).

These policies, which the strategy aims to support, are typical of those implemented in many other UK and Ireland cities, and in relation to parking they are generally in accord and include concepts such as managing demand, reducing supply of all day parking, having parking controls and areas of restraint, and influencing parking behaviour.

“...careful consideration of the comparative costs for users is required. This could be addressed in a number of ways... for example it could provide improved bus journey times through implementation of further priority measures, or if city centre parking is made less cost attractive this could attract users over to Park & Ride.”

“[Current] policies are typical of those implemented in many other UK and Ireland cities, and in relation to parking they are generally in accord and include concepts such as managing demand, reducing supply of all day parking, having parking controls and areas of restraint, and influencing parking behaviour.”

Specific actions include reducing the supply and increasing the cost of commuter and long stay parking in Belfast city centre; reducing the reliance on the private car; introducing strategic Park & Ride sites at key locations; restraining the level of (PNR) parking provided for new city developments; introducing residents only parking schemes; cycle parking.

Of particular note is the Air Quality Action Plan which sets out measures to be implemented throughout Belfast to attain compliance of the nitrogen dioxide EU limit under a clear timetable. As such Belfast City Council identified four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) namely:

- M1 Westlink;
- Cromac St & Albertbridge Rd;
- Upper Newtownards Rd; and
- Ormeau Road.

As such it is noted that a number of car parks are located within or adjacent to these four areas. As traffic volumes and congestion have a direct bearing on air quality, the role that these car parks have on these individual areas should be of significant concern.

The Parking Standards applied to new developments also have a significant bearing on the level of parking provided. Whilst on the whole the current policy is similar to that employed in many other UK and Ireland cities, the standards applied within areas of parking restraint are generic and not specific to the development type. This means that in some instances the level of parking required in the standards is not actually suitable for the development being planned. Therefore adding greater clarity to the parking standards could result in more appropriate levels of parking associated with new developments.

2.4 Consultations

This Strategy was developed with extensive consultation with key city stakeholders including local elected members; residents, the public sector (DfI, Transport NI, Translink); and the private sector (commercial property agents, the Belfast Chamber of Commerce) over a range of workshops and one-to-one targeted meetings. The input from these sessions has been critical to the development of this strategy and has been used to inform the objectives, key issues and proposed interventions. Further engagement and cooperation will be essential in delivering the actions outlined in this document.

Key themes did emerge throughout the consultation process. It was acknowledged that staff parking is an ongoing issue for large businesses in the city and despite sustainable initiatives an element of staff will always drive and pay a premium to do so. Consultees also stated that the emerging strategy should be benchmarked against successful UK city comparisons.

A clearer message on the promotion of Park and Ride facilities could aid in alleviating staff parking problems. Park and Ride was identified as having strategic importance and it was suggested that it needs to be included on both radial and high frequency public transport corridors.

Stakeholders recognised that Belfast has sufficient parking stock however better signage for drivers, the removal of small surface car parks and provision of additional multi-storeys were highlighted as a potential solution, especially located on the inner ring. The provision of a cycle hub and additional car parking was also highlighted by some consultees. Varying tariffs, providing better information and the creative use of tariffs through pilot schemes to assess impact was highlighted as a potentially useful exercise.

Some stakeholders were of the view that university proposals could cause issues in the city and it was also requested that additional consultation be carried out with city centre resident's associations to discuss issues around the implementation of residents parking schemes. A separate discussion with residents associations was therefore held in order to ascertain from residents why they thought that residents parking schemes had not been implemented in the city to date and how this could possibly be aligned with the emerging parking strategy.

Residents called for greater clarity on the requirements for their input at both the informal and formal stages and how objections to any scheme proposals were prioritised. They felt that the high level of occupancy of housing in some areas exacerbated parking problems. There was also a perception that the views of businesses and landlords often received priority over residents, despite the schemes being provided mainly for the benefit of local residents.

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3 Key Issues and Challenges

3.1 Key Issues

The baseline review has indicated that there is sufficient parking stock in Belfast and this should be maintained and closely monitored. There are 28,300 spaces publicly available (45% on street and 55% off street) and demand indicates a requirement for 18,000 on average per day in Belfast. The Council has responsibility for 17 of the 59 off street car parks containing 1,476 parking spaces. The number of car parking spaces provided in Belfast is considered to be high compared to other cities of similar size.

Whilst there is currently sufficient parking stock in terms of overall spaces the provision is fragmented and imbalanced across the city centre. The current location of car parking spaces, particularly surface car parking, is not necessarily aligned to either existing nodes of demand or to future redevelopment proposals, particularly in the context of the City Centre Regeneration Strategy. The provision and location of parking should reflect the changing shape of regeneration across the city.

There is a high level of all day commuter parking in specific areas of the core city centre area that is inappropriate. This reduces the amount of short stay opportunities for shoppers, business meetings and other visitors.

There is a high level of private non-residential parking (10,422 spaces) provided in the core and fringe city area which encourages the use of the private car as the mode of transport. This is generally free car parking provided to employees as part of public and private office developments.

The review has found that parking tariffs in Belfast are comparable with cities such as Newcastle and Nottingham, but generally cheaper than cities such as Manchester, Dublin and Cardiff. Council site tariffs were found to be generally lower than those in adjacent private sites.

There is a lack of information for visitors as to where available parking is located resulting in circulating traffic looking for available spaces contributing to congestion in the city which could be more efficiently managed. Site audits have identified that some car parks are of low quality in terms of facilities and provision for users which leads to security and crime issues impacting on parking behaviour in the city.

Commuter parking in city centre residential areas is a known issue and individual Residents Parking Schemes have been developed by DFI, however to date none of these schemes have been implemented.

There are a number of low quality surface car parking sites in the city centre where consideration should be given to maximising their wider regeneration potential particularly in the context of the City Centre Regeneration Strategy and redevelopment proposals. Consolidation of existing parking or alternative provision could potentially be facilitated as part of any new development or consideration given to the provision of new multi storey/underground car parks. This would allow better use of valuable city centre land and bring wider economic and regeneration benefits, as well concentrating traffic movements to fewer parking sites.

Parking is not seen as a major decision factor by investors, particularly as other cities do not have significant city centre parking although it was noted that many other cities have a range of alternative sustainable transport options.

Potential solutions that could be implemented through the introduction of new technology include more efficient enforcement, development of a Belfast parking website and app, improving parking information as you approach the city (city wide Intelligent Transport System, innovative wayfinding and upgrading payment methods).

Accessible parking in Belfast City Centre is limited in comparison to the number of standard spaces available. Blue badge holders can park for free on street if the blue badge is on clear display. A review of the existing provision of accessible parking has indicated that Blue Badge provision could also be considered within Belfast City Council off street car parks.

Issues of parking in some district centres outside the city centre has been raised in particular the use of free car parks for all day commuter parking in areas such as East Belfast.

The progression and promotion of sustainable travel options should also be considered in parallel including further Park and Ride facilities on both radial and high frequency public transport corridors; enhancement of the quality and volume of cycle infrastructure and parking; improved taxi facilities and coach parking and the development of the Belfast Transport Hub and the Belfast Rapid Transit system. Belfast has recently had success in relation to cycling with the introduction of Belfast Bikes aiming to provide low cost and accessible travel throughout the City. Usage is increasing and additional docking station locations are currently being developed, however improved parking opportunities and knowledge of their location hinders usage throughout the City.

There is an immediate need to look at setting up a city centre coach park. It is one of the key elements of the city's tourism infrastructure that is missing and would fit very well within BCC's current city regeneration plans.

Although positive steps have been taken to address the environmental issues caused by vehicle traffic in the City, some areas still experience issues. The Council currently has four Air Quality Management Areas and has noted reductions in some pollutants, however parking activity in these areas may be contributing to the issues.

3.2 Challenges and Opportunities

Major Masterplans, regeneration projects, highways schemes, planning applications and development proposals have been considered in terms of loss/gain of parking provision within the city. Despite possible forthcoming losses of parking provision (i.e. over 1,000 spaces overall across the city), these projects will add to the overall attractiveness of the city. They will also change the use of some current surface parking sites to more appropriate uses.

Development proposals do include additional parking, largely in the form of multi-storeys which will be publically available (i.e. around 2,000 spaces), however it should be noted that this will primarily accommodate the additional traffic generated by these developments.

In particular it is anticipated that there will be a net loss of provision in the north of the city centre due to a number of development and transport scheme proposals in that area. These will result in the loss of around 850 existing spaces however this could be compensated to some extent by provision of around 1,390 spaces, although these will primarily serve development. Ulster University is relocating to the northern side of the city centre which will cause an influx of students to the city therefore consideration should be given to the impact on parking and public transport. The opportunity exists to influence travel behaviour at the onset, away from private car use and parking via further investment and upgrade to existing public transport facilities in that area.

It has also been identified that electric vehicle (EV) use is increasing in Northern Ireland and additional charging points could assist in wider EV uptake, with associated air quality benefits arising as a result.

The need for Residents Parking Schemes is evident however their delivery has stalled. While there are still intentions to implement these schemes, it is clear that a revised approach is needed in order to gain stakeholder support. This needs to consider a number of factors and leadership is required on all sides.

The upgrade of Great Victoria Street Station as part of the £120m Belfast Transport Hub proposals will provide additional services for both bus and rail travel in the city, making the use of other modes to travel more attractive and therefore encouraging the use of more sustainable transport modes other than the private car.

The implementation of the £98.5m Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) system, which is a new bus-based public transport service will help to address the current and future transport needs in Belfast and support sustainable economic growth and regeneration. BRT will provide a modern, safe, efficient and high quality service which will encourage people to travel by public transport. It will help to integrate communities and link people to jobs, shops, leisure, health and education services.

The BRT network will initially include three rapid transit routes, which will link East Belfast, West Belfast and Titanic Quarter via the city centre. Construction of the BRT infrastructure commenced in 2014 and should be complete by 2018.

DfI recently published their Bicycle Strategy which seeks to transform cycling in Northern Ireland over the next 25 years. Its three pillar approach seeks to build a comprehensive bicycle network, support people who choose to cycle and promote the bicycle as a mode of transport for every day journeys. An integral element of the delivery of the bicycle network is cycle parking, and surveys have shown that public awareness of bike routes and parking is currently low, particularly amongst local residents. The opportunity therefore exists to assist with delivery of this key element of the Bicycle Strategy and increase cycling levels amongst the resident population.

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4 Objectives

4.1 Vision

Our vision for this strategy is as follows:

“Belfast is a city offering sufficient, high quality and appropriately located parking which supports economic development and regeneration within the city by balancing the requirements of residents, businesses, commuters and visitors.”

To enable this to happen, a number of objectives have been developed that the strategy should meet. These are based on the wider aspirations and goals of Belfast City Council and also follow the analysis of the issues and challenges identified and discussed in the previous two chapters.

4.2 Objective 1

Ensuring appropriate provision and location of car parking to support and improve the economic vitality of the City Centre and district centres

The appropriate level of parking within the city has a crucial part to play in its economic vitality. However, an overabundance of parking will add to the current traffic congestion problems, which will detract from the attractiveness of the city from an investment perspective as well as being detrimental to the urban environment.

The location of parking also has a crucial part to play. One large multi-storey parking site performing the same function of four or five small surface sites is a better use of valuable city centre land and more efficient in terms of traffic movements and it also frees up those surface sites for regeneration and development.

Council priorities

- Review current provision to ensure an appropriate provision in the right location to support economic vitality.
- Consider how optimal use can be made of surface car parks to best support city centre regeneration in terms of alignment of provision with re-development and maximising valuable city centre land to deliver on wider regeneration outcomes.
- Identify opportunities to consolidate existing parking or alternative provision as an integral part of new development and consider provision of new multi storey /underground car parks where appropriate.

4.3 Objective 2

Ensuring car parking provision does not encourage less sustainable commuter travel, especially for journeys into the City Centre and supports access by public transport, cycling and walking

Parking availability, cost and ease of use have a direct impact on people’s choice of mode of transport and therefore there is potential to cause traffic congestion and to undermine the viability of sustainable transport options. The level of parking provision is therefore a key demand management tool, as managing the amount of parking provides a form of restraint that can help to limit traffic levels and also strongly influence modal shift.

Council priorities

- Work with stakeholders to consider how parking tariffs in the city centre core can be reviewed to ensure sufficient short-stay parking facilities to support commercial and leisure activities and deter long stay commuter parking.

- Work with stakeholders to develop and improve the sustainable transport modes for travel to and within the city, in particular to deter all day commuter parking.

4.4 Objective 3

Minimising the potentially negative impacts of parking on residential communities in the city particularly in inner city areas

Commuters use inner city residential areas in Belfast to park in order to avail of effectively free parking facilities within walking distance of a workplace. This has negative effects on residential communities in terms of accessibility to residents' homes, area safety and access for services e.g. ambulances. These latter schemes have been investigated throughout the city but none have been implemented to date. A review of criteria for implementation, scheme design, operational times and community support should be considered in order to increase the potential for delivery.

Council priorities

- Work with DfI and local communities to consider parking management for these areas, either through the implementation of on-street parking regimes or Residents Parking Schemes.
- Identify surface car park sites suitable for consolidation and redevelopment in order to improve the built environment for inner city areas.

4.5 Objective 4

Work with stakeholders to improve the quality of parking and information available, ideally through technology and in particular develop a new parking signage and information system that supports parking and wider applications

The provision of high quality and safe car parks is an important element as it is often the first impression for visitors to the city. Better provision in terms of parking information and quality should be sought and importantly the need to ensure parking is sufficiently attractive to those with limited mobility or with families.

Council priorities

- Bring forward technological solutions to make it easier to navigate and park in the City Centre.
- Work with key stakeholders to ensure that key destinations have appropriate levels of disabled parking and family friendly provision.
- Encourage car park operators to invest in their facilities to the extent that they will achieve the Park Mark standard.
- Reduce supply of poor quality surface level space and replace with higher quality well-managed space.

4.6 Complementary Objectives

There are also a further three complementary objectives:

- C1. Promote sustainable commuter travel, especially for journeys into the City Centre and support access by public transport, cycling and walking**
- C2. Identify opportunities to provide secure bicycle and coach parking in appropriate city centre locations**
- C3. Ensuring appropriate provision for taxis within the city centre**

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5 The Strategy

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a high level overview of the key features of the strategy that are priorities for the Council. Specific actions are then detailed in Chapter 6, including those associated with the complementary objectives.

5.2 Parking Provision

Parking provision has a significant impact on economic vitality and should also not encourage less sustainable commuter travel. The strategy addresses three broad areas in relation to parking provision within the city:

i. Parking Supply:

- a. The current level of city centre parking supply will be maintained in order to provide opportunities for short stay parking, however demand will be regularly monitored.
- b. All on-street parking in the city centre core should become restricted.
- c. City centre surface parking sites should be redeveloped for other uses and parking acts migrated into multi-storey sites located alongside the Inner Ring.
- d. New car parks within the city will only be provided where they replace existing spaces or where they are an essential part of new development proposals.
- e. Parking standards for new development across the city should not encourage car commuting and the associated overspill onto neighbouring streets.
- f. The amount of private non-residential (PNR) parking provided across the city will be more tightly controlled in order to influence traffic demand in the city centre

ii. Parking Location:

- a. Long stay parking should only occur in off-street sites away from central areas of the city centre, on the edge of the Inner Ring.
- b. Central areas should only be used for short stay parking.
- c. On-street parking should only be used for short stay parking and for those with Blue Badges.

iii. Parking Price:

- a. Tariffs for on and off-street parking should be reviewed, including consideration of variable pricing.
- b. Pricing should reflect the desirability of central areas.
- c. Long stay parking in suburban areas should be charged in order to increase turnover and maintain space for local activities.
- d. Pricing should encourage space turnover in desirable areas.
- e. Parking cost should be comparable with other transport options such as public transport.

5.3 Residential Communities

The need to support the city's residential communities through parking interventions is also an important objective. As part of the strategy, a review of criteria for implementation, scheme design, operational times and community support should be considered in order to increase the potential for delivery.

The Council will work with the relevant agencies and stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of residents parking schemes within applicable areas of the city centre.

5.4 Parking Information and Quality

In order to improve the quality of parking and information available, the strategy will address the following:

- Investigate options for utilising technology to improve ticketing and payment systems.
- Provide more information for visitors via electronic media including a dedicated website and app.
- Assess the feasibility of an integrated signage system for the city centre and wayfinding for individual areas.
- Look to integrate parking payment and management technologies with information systems within a single comprehensive city wide system.
- Raise the standard of parking facilities, including those with families or limited mobility.
- Encourage car park operators to invest in their facilities to so that they can achieve the Park Mark standard.

6 Strategy Actions

This chapter identifies specific actions and measures that will underpin the strategy and support each of the objectives. The actions are those that are priorities for Belfast City Council, although some of the actions themselves rely on delivery by and cooperation from other stakeholders. A further set of complementary measures are identified in section 6.4, and these are to be considered by other stakeholders.

6.1 Parking Provision

6.1.1 On-Street

In terms of on-street spaces, within the city centre core, there are still a number of locations where un-controlled parking remains (in fact there are still more uncontrolled than controlled spaces). While responsibility for on-street parking still lies with DfI, the Council will work with this organisation to seek to achieve delivery of the following actions.

All on-street parking spaces within the core should become controlled, either through the implementation of parking regimes or residents parking schemes. This will help to remove the bulk of all day parking from these areas and open up space for short term parking. It will also help to rebalance demand across the city centre.

Within the city centre fringe, parking studies should be undertaken to assess whether a form of parking restriction is required in each of the four sub-zones.

Furthermore, tariffs for on-street parking could be examined at a more strategic level. It is apparent that parking costs within Belfast are competitive compared to other similar sized cities, and the premium nature of on-street spaces should be reflected in the cost.

For example, charges could be based on the distance from City Hall, with an increasing cost based on proximity. This would ensure that turnover of the most valuable spaces would increase and the increased costs would deter users who might want to feed the meter.

It is apparent that there is particularly high demand for charged on-street spaces in the south core area (Linenhall Quarter). Consideration of tariffs in this key business district should be heavily biased towards short stay parking in order to free up spaces for others.

Variable pricing should also be examined in order to influence parking demand at key times of the day or year. Similarly the operational hours of on-street spaces should be reviewed with a view to achieving a better match with demand. For example this could mean lowering tariffs during late afternoon hours in order to stimulate the evening economy (most on-street and BCC sites are free after 6pm anyway).

The ticketing and payment systems should be reviewed to assess whether further investments could improve revenue raising. This would be in addition to the current provision delivered via 'parkmobile' for DfI on-street and BCC off-street sites.

For example, a cashless and ticketless payment system could result in improved revenue taking and reduced waste. Users would purchase their parking act via phone or mobile app and provide their location and vehicle registration number. This could facilitate more targeted enforcement by enabling officers to only target those vehicles with registration numbers that the system was telling them had overstayed their time limits.

Similarly, parking bay monitors are a more efficient way of managing high demand spaces. They detect when a vehicle is parked in an individual bay and can alert the parking provider when the parking act has extended beyond its time limit. This means that instances of 'feeding the meter' can be reduced and it also means the enforcement can be more targeted. As such, **DfI should consider a pilot of parking bay monitoring for the areas of highest on-street demand i.e. Linen Quarter** as this is the type of area that is most likely to justify any such investment.

Free on-street parking for Blue Badge holders should remain. As such, these should be the only 'long stay' parkers parking on-street. Providing free parking for blue badge holders in off-street car parks is discussed in the next section.

The actions are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 – On-Street Actions

No.	On-Street Action	Meets Objective(s)
1	All on-street parking spaces within the core to become controlled. DfI to undertake parking studies within the city centre fringe.	1 2 3
2	Tariffs for on-street parking to be examined at a more strategic level	1
3	Variable pricing to be examined	1
4	Review of ticketing and payment systems	1 4
5	DfI to consider a pilot of on-street bay monitoring	1 4
6	Free on-street parking for Blue Badge holders to remain	1

6.1.2 Off-Street – Public Parking

It is evident from parking surveys over the last few years that, while some individual car parks operate at capacity, there is ample spare capacity in the overall provision.

More recent surveys have indicated a slight increase in parking demand in the last couple of years, and this may continue however the historic trend has been flat. It is apparent that there are key areas where charged on-street demand is high and at capacity. On-street users who are parking for significant durations need to be encouraged, where possible, to move to off-street sites in order to free up capacity.

Future proposals also need to be factored in. These include the impacts of the closure of some car parks due to development, transport schemes and regeneration initiatives. The extension of charged on-street parking areas within the CPZ in tandem with the implementation of Residents Parking Schemes in the city centre core, fringe and also in areas of South Belfast could result in commuters relocating their parking acts into the city centre.

Whilst the opportunity is evident for these users to switch to more sustainable transport, Northern Ireland has traditionally been highly car dependent and the increasing proportion of jobs that Belfast offers in relation to the rest of the country may see an increase in parking demand. Other localised factors such as the relocation of Ulster University to the north of the city centre need to be factored in. A seemingly high proportion of local university students nowadays live at home while studying and therefore have to travel to campus on a daily basis.

As such it is proposed that the current parking stock is maintained, although with demand levels regularly monitored.

As the development market continues to improve, individual surface sites (in both private and public ownership) may become available for development, and these will be considered on a case by case basis to determine the impact on the overall parking stock.

It is clear that the overall parking experience needs to improve for users. Four out of five car parks in Belfast are surface car parks which offer very limited capacity and a lower quality experience than multi-storey car parks (MSCPs). In comparison with

many other cities, the majority of Belfast's current MSCPs are modern. They also represent a good use of city centre space in terms of the number of spaces they provide for their area.

There should therefore be a shift away from surface car parking into multi-storeys. There are currently 14 MSCPs in the city centre compared to 45 surface sites. The vast majority of these surface sites, irrespective of individual ownership, represent development opportunities. Most of the MSCPs are already located on or near to the Inner Ring; however there are some gaps in provision in certain areas such as the north of the city at North St and Donegall St; in the south-east at Cromac St and Ormeau Rd. These areas already experience parking demand or will soon experience more of it due to forthcoming development. There are already plans in the pipeline for additional MSCPs in certain locations, however these will be constructed to accommodate a mix of development and non-development associated parking.

It is therefore recommended that additional MSCPs are provided to complete the 'ring' of sites around the Inner Ring. These should only be provided when a number of adjacent surface sites are closed. It is evident that large additional capacity is not needed from a demand perspective, therefore providing additional MSCPs is for strategic rather than demand based reasoning. This will 'mop up' these individual areas and concentrate traffic movements to fewer parking sites. It will also free up these surface sites for development. Parkers using these MSCPs will be able to make the short walk or cycle into the city core.

The individual BCC car parks should be gradually 'migrated' to these MSCPs as opportunities arise, however the Council should seek to maintain a level of influence in the patterns of usage at these MSCPs.

Figure 3 illustrates this concept. MSCPs located on the main radial routes will catch traffic before it enters the city core, after which users can walk or hire a bicycle through to their destination. This reinforces the area within the Inner Ring as being considered to be the 'walking zone'. As this understanding develops, perceptions will change and there will be gradual acceptance that the core is primarily for people rather than for parking.

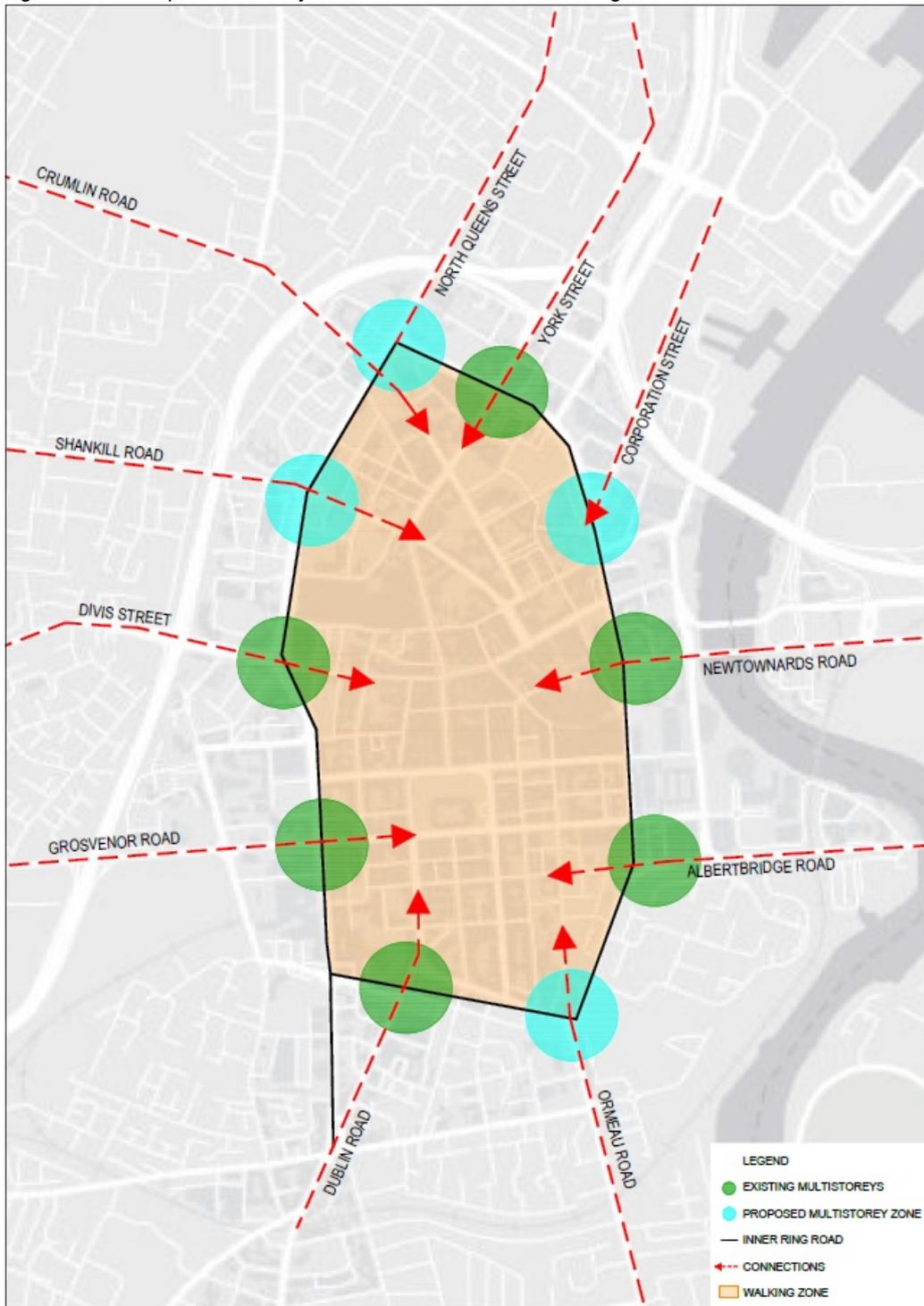
The selection of individual MSCP locations will require careful consideration in order to avoid any detrimental impacts on air quality within the vicinity. However, advocating that surface car parks are eventually rationalised into MSCPs should result in reduced traffic volumes from fewer circulating vehicles. This will have benefits of reducing air pollution and improving road safety, particularly in those areas that are within AQMAs.

Furthermore the freeing up of city centre space for other use offers the potential to further 'green' the city and make it more liveable and walkable. The removal of unsightly swathes of surface parking will improve the feel of individual areas and encourage activity, permeability and footfall.

To add to the overall quality of the parking offer and thereby increase the willingness of users to pay, **BCC should encourage car park operators to invest in their facilities to the extent that they will achieve the Park Mark standard.** This will include examining how car parks can be improved to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and should also consider how provision can be improved for disabled users and parents with children. This will include increasing the number of dedicated spaces set aside for disabled users and families.

As a minimum, this will be expected to be achieved for all 14 MSCPs in order to enhance attractiveness. Given the gradual shift away from surface car park use to MSCP sites, operators should be able to see the value in such investment.

Figure 3 – Concept: Multi-storey Car Parks located on Inner Ring



It is acknowledged that migrating parking out towards the Inner Ring would result in greater walk distances to key shopping and employment areas. While the intention is that this would provide health benefits for car park patrons, it is acknowledged that some users may have more limited mobility such as parents with young children. To address this, **an Inner Ring Shuttle Bus could be provided which would connect all of the Inner Ring MSCPs and the main shopping and employment areas.**

This would operate at a high frequency and short journey time throughout the day and be free for car park users on presentation of a valid ticket. The costs for this service would be met by the participating car park operators who would see the added value that it would bring. The service could also connect into city centre transport hubs such as Europa and Great Victoria St in order to promote public transport use.

Key to the delivery and management of parking across the city centre is the dialogue and cooperation of car park operators. While the vast majority of parking is provided by the private sector, there needs to be acknowledgement that parking requires careful management. For example, reducing parking prices could just encourage traffic back into the city centre and therefore add to congestion.

For this reason it is recommended that a Parking Forum is developed which will include stakeholders from both the private and public sector. This will help to ensure a partnership approach to parking and achieve consensus as part of the overall transportation strategy for the city.

As BCC has a stake in off-street parking, participation in the Parking Forum will ensure that influence can still be exercised with regards parking pricing, as well as ensuring an increased likelihood of delivery of the actions detailed in this parking strategy.

Collaboration within the Forum will result in greater clarity and information for users, encourage compliance with planning conditions, raise standards and manage parking prices.

A key action of the Parking Forum could be the development of a parking 'app' which could encompass all off-street parking sites within the city centre. Building on the popularity of existing apps such as 'parkmobile' (which is already in use at various sites), the dedicated city parking app could include information on the location of car parks (including Park & Ride sites), their typical occupancies at certain times of the day and their costs. This would provide information at the fingertips of users, enabling them to decide before they start their journey on where they would like to park. The system could also be used to pre-book and pay electronically for parking, increasing user confidence about parking availability.

This app should be developed through a public-private sector partnership and could utilise local software development expertise. The app could then be marketed widely, enabling tourists to make use of it as they plan their trip to the city. Some parking apps include GPS routing to individual sites, thereby wastage mileage while users try to find a site, and this could also be included subject to users obeying traffic laws regarding mobile phone use while driving.

Private sector parking providers should be encouraged to consider investing in parking technology. For example, CCTV camera systems at the entrance to car parks can be used to record vehicle number plates on entry and exit, with the parking fee then drawn down directly from the user's online account. This would provide efficiencies in terms of back office systems and provide a better service for customers.

The potential to extend free parking for Blue Badge holders to off-street sites was recently considered by DfI however with the transfer of these sites to local councils it was recommended that councils take this matter forward. **As such the extension of free parking for Blue Badge holders to off-street sites should be considered by the Council** in order to weigh up the potential impacts.

6.1.3 Off-Street – Parking for Development

The level of PNR parking within the city centre is considered to undo many of the efforts being made to promote sustainable transport and the mass movement of people into and out of the city. If users can avail of free or cheap work-based city centre parking, they will inevitably continue to commute by car.

Whilst the level of PNR provision between older and newer developments has gradually declined as a result of planning policy, there still remains extensive provision. Some of this is provided by public sector bodies, yet this goes against broad government policy which seeks to reduce the dependence on the private car. **Government and local authority bodies should therefore lead by example and seek to remove PNR spaces or charge users for use of the PNR spaces that they provide.**

This will encourage users to consider other modes or parking opportunities, resulting in benefits to the city in terms of reduced congestion and therefore improved economic vitality. It is apparent from consultation that the provision of city centre parking for employees is not a critical factor in foreign direct investment decision making.

The level of contract parking offered by some existing city centre parking operators is over and above that stipulated within development planning conditions and the **enforcement of these conditions needs to be improved** in order to manage parking demand.

Whilst the level of parking stipulated for new development within the current Parking Standards is broadly in line with that requested in other UK and Ireland cities, **it is recommended that the current Parking Standards for development within areas of parking restraint should be re-examined in order to provide greater clarity by development type.**

Table 2 lists the Off-Street actions for public parking and that provided for development.

Table 2 – Off-Street Actions for Public and Private Parking

No.	Off-Street Public and Private Parking Action	Meets Objective(s)
7	Maintain current parking stock, although with demand levels regularly monitored	1 2
8	Additional MSCPs are provided to complete the 'ring' of sites around the Inner Ring. These should only be provided when a number of adjacent surface sites are closed	1
9	BCC should encourage car park operators to invest in their facilities to the extent that they will achieve the Park Mark standard and improves spaces available for disabled and family parking	4
10	Inner Ring Shuttle Bus to connect all of the Inner Ring MSCPs and the main shopping and employment areas	1 2 4
11	Parking Forum	1 2
12	Development of city parking app	1 4
13	Private sector parking providers should be encouraged to consider investing in parking technology	1 4
14	Extension of free parking for Blue Badge holders to off-street sites should be considered	1 4

No.	Off-Street Public and Private Parking Action	Meets Objective(s)
15	Government and local authority bodies reduce or remove PNR space or charge for use	2
16	Enforcement action against car parks operating outside their planning conditions to be improved	2
17	Parking Standards to be re-examined by development type	2

6.1.4 Off-Street – BCC sites

6.1.4.1 City Centre

Whilst all of BCC's 17 city centre car parks are surface car parks, recent surveys have shown that they are well used on the whole; indeed only three sites show peak time occupancy of less than 80%. The parking costs at these sites are generally lower than adjacent private sites and there is therefore the opportunity to re-examine the tariffs at each site. BCC has recently invested in re-surfacing and provided disabled parking and family friendly provision in some of these sites, therefore localised demand may increase in the short term.

Similarly some of the car parks have a high proportion of all day parkers despite their close proximity to central areas. This means that there is a lack of parking space for those who need to make shorter visits. **The tariffs and permitted parking durations at these sites should be re-examined to relocate long stay parkers to areas further out.** This will ensure that the most desirable car parks return the highest revenues and will encourage the 'walking city' approach whereby all day parkers can park on the edge and either walk or cycle into central areas.

Season tickets can currently be purchased at seven of the BCC operated city centre car parks, although the majority of these sites are on the edge of the city core. **However BCC could potentially remove the season ticket provision at the Cromac St site in order to further discourage long stay parking in this area.**

Some of the BCC car parks may be removed as part of upcoming schemes. These include the likes of Corporation St, Frederick St, Dunbar St, Station St and Bankmore St. Provision in BCC's city centre car parks totals under 1,500 spaces and given historical observations it is considered that demand for these sites can be accommodated by adjacent car parks (particularly MSCPs) and through the delivery of additional MSCPs where the case is strong.

In the meantime it is proposed that all other BCC city centre car parks remain operational, although with a view to being incorporated and replaced by MSCP provision. In most towns and cities, local authorities provide a degree of parking themselves (either directly or via sub-contracts) and this helps to maintain influence within the market. Parking strategy guidance recommends that local authorities should seek to have increasing (rather than decreasing) influence over parking within their jurisdictions, as this assists wider aims for the overall transportation system such as promoting public transport use.

This action will maintain BCC's stake in parking and permit a level of influence that would diminish if all sites were disposed of. This will help to ensure that the objectives for the city's multi-modal transportation system are not compromised.

This will be on the proviso that each of the individual BCC car parks at least cover their costs and perform a strategic parking function. Demand and revenues will be monitored at individual sites and if it becomes apparent that some sites are unviable and there are nearby opportunities for MSCP provision then disposal should be considered in order to realise development and regeneration opportunities.

In the north-west of the city centre, the Little Donegall St, Kent St and Smithfield sites could be subsumed within nearby existing MSCP (Castle Court, City Car Park) creating new provision if required. Similarly in the south-west, the Hope St and Little Victoria St sites could be considered in the same way given current MSCP provision at Dublin Rd and Great Northern Car Park.

In the north/north-east, the Lancaster St, Corporation Square and Exchange St sites and other privately operated sites could be considered collectively. The general level of activity in this northern area will increase which may require additional MSCP provision over what is currently provided (St Anne's and Tomb St), particularly around the North St and Donegall St area, however this will be agreed according to planning department requirements. It should also be noted that the assessment of development proposals in this area to date have not assumed the closure of BCC's car park sites.

The area to the south-east, on the approach from Ormeau Rd is considered to be a MSCP 'gap' which could subsume the Charlotte St and Cromac St sites and other privately operated surface sites.

It is acknowledged that BCC cannot decide on how privately operated surface sites are taken forward however through engagement with stakeholders there is potential to achieve buy in on more strategic objectives that will further promote the economic vitality of the city centre.

6.1.4.2 Outside of the City Centre

BCC parking sites outside of the city centre are predominantly free. There is high occupancy of these sites with a significant number of all-day parkers. If capacity is to be managed, this level of all day parking needs to be reduced.

This would free up spaces for people making short trips to the area for shopping, leisure, or business/ personal reasons. **As such it is proposed that parking remains free in all sites for up to two hours. After this a modest charge per hour would apply in all 14 car parks except for Shaw's Bridge which does not show any degree of all day parkers as it is primarily for leisure use.**

This will ensure that the running costs of the car parks can be recouped and will ensure the ongoing vitality of these local areas. It is acknowledged however that such action could cause the relocation of all day parking to adjacent residential streets; **therefore a comprehensive plan for these areas should be developed in collaboration with DfI before implementation of this regime.**

Table 3 lists the Off-Street actions for the BCC sites.

Table 3 – Off-Street Actions – BCC sites

No.	Off-Street BCC Site Action	Meets Objective(s)
18	Re-examine tariffs and permitted parking durations at all sites	1 2
19	Remove season ticket provision at certain sites (i.e. Cromac St)	1 2
20	Retain all BCC sites but with a view to incorporation within MSCP provision	1
21	Introduce a modest charge after two hours at all non city centre BCC sites apart from Shaw's Bridge. Parking to remain free for up to two hours.	1 3
22	Consider impact of above on adjacent areas and develop plan prior to implementation.	1 3

6.2 Parking in Residential Areas

The Council recognises that numerous inner city residential communities are affected by commuter parking. Commuters' consideration of pricing and car park location are key factors in their decision to avail of free parking areas in residential communities. Providing residents parking schemes in city centre areas and adjacent to arterial routes would alleviate significant commuter parking issues which currently deny local residents parking opportunities at their properties. It would also assist with wider integration with the aims of the city's multi-modal transportation system.

Although residents parking schemes have been considered for various city residential communities consensus was not reached on various aspects of the proposals including appropriate permit considerations and availability. BCC in principle supports the implementation of residents parking schemes and acknowledges that further work is required to achieve consensus.

It is important to note that in both consultations the majority of residents felt commuter parking was an issue that should be addressed through residents parking schemes. Previous consultations regarding the schemes were initially unsuccessful due largely to the cost of a Residents Permit and also the limitations of Visitors Permits. Enforcement of permits and schemes were also considered to be key to success. It was also found that different issues were pertinent in different areas.

Therefore the Council will work with local communities and stakeholders to help facilitate delivery of residents parking schemes in the near future that are specific to the areas of concern.

Table 4 lists the Parking in Residential Areas actions.

Table 4 – Parking in Residential Areas Actions

No.	Parking in Residential Areas Action	Meets Objective(s)
23	Deliver Residents Parking Schemes in specific areas of city	3

6.3 Parking Information

The clear disparity between the perceived and actual level of parking supply needs to be overcome. This strategy has given clear evidence for this; however the public's perception that space is at a premium needs to be changed.

This can be achieved by raising the awareness of wider parking opportunities within the city. This should also include notification of other transport modes available. Far more can be achieved nowadays with the likes of electronic media and **it is recommended that in addition to the parking app, a dedicated parking website for the city is provided and linked to social media.**

The website will raise wider awareness of parking and tackle the perception that parking spaces are hard to find. Car Park Operators could contribute to the provision of this system as part of their involvement in the Parking Forum.

The city centre still lacks an integrated signage system, and **it is recommended that the feasibility of implementing such an integrated signage system should be investigated.** This should include consideration of the specification required, the technology currently available as well as procurement and running costs.

However there is the opportunity to provide a similar level of information in the digital sphere, and as vehicle technology progresses there may be the opportunity to provide in-car information and guidance systems. As such this would negate the traditional large costs associated with signage infrastructure and the associated management systems. **Therefore the feasibility of integrating parking payment and management technologies with information systems within a single comprehensive city wide system should be examined.**

It is also recommended that a wayfinding signage scheme is developed for individual areas of the city centre. This could comprise colour-coded fixed plate signage which directs users to parking areas within the likes of the Cathedral or Linenhall Quarters. This would lead users straight to these areas, thereby boosting these local economies. It would also provide better information for users seeking to park in the early evening or attending one off events in these areas, and include signage along cycle routes.

Table 5 lists the Parking Information actions

Table 5 – Parking Information Actions

No.	Parking Information Action	Meets Objective(s)
24	Dedicated Parking Website for city	4
25	Investigate an Integrated Signage System	1 4
26	Investigate integrating parking payment, management technologies and information systems in a city wide system	4
27	Wayfinding signage scheme for individual areas of city centre, including cycling routes	4

6.4 Complementary Actions

This section details the range of actions which have a complementary role within the parking strategy. These are considered complementary because they are either (1) indirectly associated with parking per se, or (2) are not distinct priorities for BCC themselves yet they may assist in the overall delivery of the parking strategy. As such they would be dependent on agencies and organisations other than BCC such as DfI, Translink and car park operators.

It is acknowledged that in some instances there is significant overlap between the agencies responsible for delivering these actions. Also, the organisation responsible for developing or financing a particular action may not be ultimately responsible for the day to day delivery or operation of it.

6.4.1 Promoting sustainable commuter travel

The provision of a new rail halt at Gamble Street in the north of the city centre would reduce parking pressures in that area via modal shift. This would be particularly important given the ongoing university relocation and adjacent new development. As well as providing a convenient access point for education and work trips, the new halt would also provide convenient access to the likes of the Cathedral Quarter.

The provision of new Park & Ride sites would reduce the amount of traffic entering the city centre and parking. A high level analysis has identified a number of locations where there are gaps in the Park & Ride offer, and these could include:

- Park & Ride sites earmarked within BMTP but not yet implemented
- Additional Park & Ride on Belfast radials e.g. Castlereagh Road
- Additional Park & Ride on M2 & M5 Corridor

Improve parking at train stations (including for cycles) makes the train more attractive to use thereby reducing parking pressure in city centre. A lot of investment in train station parking has been made in the past few years and this has proved popular, however further provision will be required as the city's attractiveness grows.

Minimising traffic in the BMTP core Reclaims core for sustainable modes, congestion and pollution benefits. Parking relocated to outer areas, closing of streets, removal of parking spaces, triggers regeneration.

6.4.2 Coach and Cycle Parking

A number of potential city centre coach parking sites that have been considered by various parties to date. Such a site should be located sufficiently close to the city centre, yet away from areas of high crime. **It is recommended that further work is carried out to confirm the preferred location of site and that it is provided as a matter of urgency.** This should include consideration of associated provision for tour operators such as coach parking maps.

Many of the Belfast Bike docking stations are within walking distance of city centre car parks. **The location of further docking stations will facilitate the gradual shift of off-street parking out towards the Inner Ring.** Coverage from the current 33 city centre docking stations is good however more opportunities may arise to provide additional stations at new MSCPs.

To further promote cycling BCC should investigate the feasibility of providing a Cycle Parking Hub, located within the core of the city centre. This should be located in a high visibility location and provide security for cyclists and biking equipment. Similar sites provided elsewhere offer ample parking provision; CCTV and on-site attendants and some even include free pushchair loans for parents.

BCC should also undertake a review of the level of cycle parking provided for new developments in order to maximise the potential for cycle use for a variety of land use types. BCC now have a planning role, and this should ensure that there is sufficient high quality cycle parking provided in order to encourage modal shift to and from workplaces, shops and leisure complexes.

6.4.3 Taxi parking provision

Parking for taxis needs to be examined citywide. Ranks should be located in appropriate locations, where there is sufficient space and near to where customers are. The Council will support efforts to provide suitable locations for taxi parking, acknowledging the competing demands for kerb space, in order to maintain the vitality of the city centre.

Table 6 lists the Coach and Cycle Parking actions.

Table 6 – Complementary Actions

No.	Complementary Actions	Meets Objective(s)
28	Gamble Street Halt	C1
29	New Park & Ride sites	C1
30	Improve parking at train stations (including for cycles)	C1
31	Minimising traffic in the BMTP core	C1
32	Review Park & Ride costs versus city centre parking charges	C1
33	Confirm location of off-street coach park and provide facility	C2
34	Provide additional Belfast Bikes docking stations associated with parking facilities	C2
35	Examine feasibility of a Cycle Parking Hub	C2
36	Review the level of cycle parking provided for new developments	C2
37	Examine taxi parking provision citywide	C3

Appendix 1a – Action Plan

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Subject:	Financial Reporting – Quarter 4 2015-2016
Date:	8th June 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	David Orr, Business Manager, Development Department

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	This report presents the Quarter 4 financial position for the City Growth Regeneration Committee. It includes a reporting pack which contains a summary of the financial indicators and an executive summary (Appendix 1). It also provides a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the report and the associated financial reporting pack.
3.0	Main report
	Current and Forecast Financial Position 2015-2016
3.1	The Quarter 4 position for the Committee is an under spend of £3k (0%).
3.2	The Committee current position is due to over spends into three specific service areas: The Zoo (£228k); Development Directorate (£17k) and City Events and Venues (£45k); which are offset by under spends in Economic Initiatives and International Development (£175k); Off Street Car Parking (£87k) and Parks Estates (£30k).

3.3	<p>The City Venues (Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls) within the City Events and Venues Service reported a Quarter 1 over spend of £93k and a forecast year end over spend of £260k. The key drivers to this position were the loss of income above that which was planned for as a result of construction and the failure to reduce expenditure impacted by the loss of income. An action plan was submitted and approved by the Committee in September 2015. The plan has exceeded expectation, especially in terms of income generated and at the end of Quarter 3 it was forecast to be overspent by £45k at year end. Additional income, over and above what was detailed in the action plan, generated by the Sales and Marketing Team, has resulted in an over spend of £7k at year end, which together with the City Events overspend of £38k gave an overall service City Events and Venues overspend of £45k.</p>
3.4	<p>The Zoo had a net overspend of £206k at the end of Quarter 1, with a forecast year end overspend of £200k. The forecast position was due to the anticipated loss of income of £100k and additional expenditure, including employee costs. At the end of Quarter 4 the Zoo is over spent by £228k. An improvement plan was submitted to the Committee in September 2015, and again in January 2016 and is working towards addressing these over spends. A separate report to this Committee today details the progress being made in many areas including reducing overtime and generating income through new customer focused activities.</p>
3.5	<p>Parks Estates (Belfast Castle, Malone House and The Stables) had a net overspend of £73k(38.2%) at the end of Quarter 3, with a forecast year end overspend of £100k (28.3%). The actual position at year end was an under spend of £30k as a result of curtailing expenditure to offset the income position.</p>
<p>Overall Council Financial Position</p>	
3.6	<p>The overall Council outturn for the year is an under spend of £778k which is (0.6%) of the budgeted net Departmental expenditure and this will be considered at the meeting of the SP&R Committee on 24th June 2016.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 - Quarter 4 Performance Report</p>



City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Quarterly Finance Report

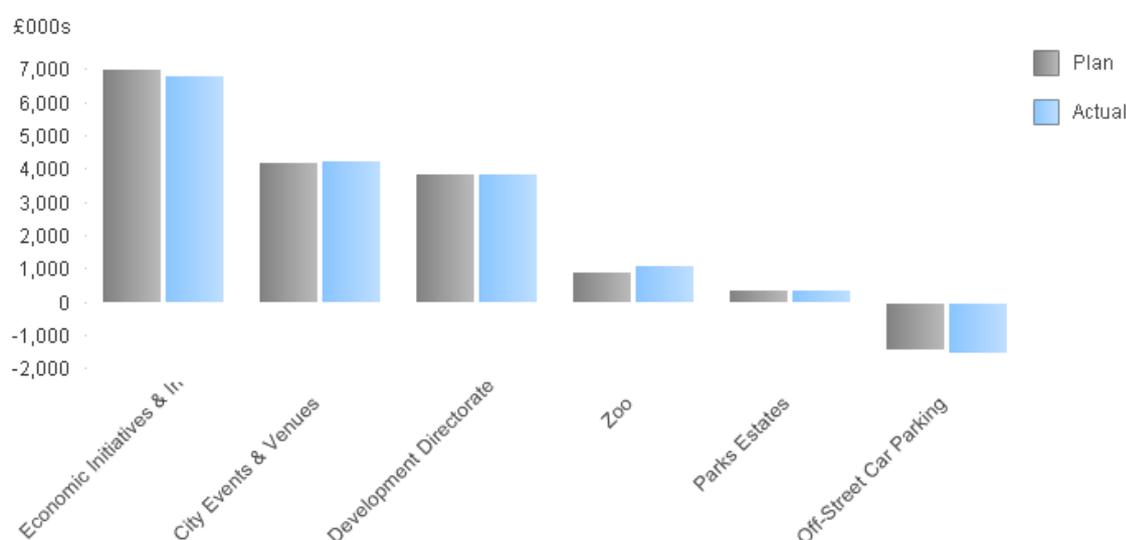
Report Period: Quarter 4, 2015-2016

Dashboard

Quarter 4, 2015-2016

Revenue Section				Page
	Year end var £000s	Var %	Year end	
Economic Initiatives & Internat Devpt	(175)	(2.5)%		3 - 4
City Events & Venues	45	1.1%		
Development Directorate	17	0.5%		
Zoo	228	26.5%		
Parks Estates	(30)	(8.5)%		
Off-Street Car Parking	(87)	6.3%		
Total	(3)	(0.0)%		

Committee Net Revenue Expenditure: Year end position



The **City Growth and Regeneration Committee** budget is under spent by £3k, or 0% of its net budgeted expenditure of £14.7 million, at the end of quarter 4.

The Committee's budget is made up of the following profit centres:

- ✚ **Economic Initiatives** (DEV):- Tourism; Economic Development; Markets; European Unit and International Relations
- ✚ **City Events and Venues** (DEV): City Events; Belfast Waterfront; Ulster Hall
- ✚ **Development Directorate** (DEV): Urban Development; Business Research and Development; Directorate
- ✚ **Estates Management** (PKS): Malone House; Belfast Castle; Stables Restaurant; Adventure Playground
- ✚ **Zoo** (PKS)
- ✚ **North Foreshore** (PPD)
- ✚ **Off Street Car Parking** (H&ES)

Economic Initiatives & International Development (EIID) is under spent by £175,426 (2.5%), Development Directorate is over spent by £17,443 (0.5%); Off Street Car Parking is under budget by £87,075 (6.3%) whilst City Events & Venues are over budget by £44,529 (1.1%), Parks Estates Management are under spent by £29,876 (8.5%) and the Zoo is over budget by £227,855 (26.5%) at the end **of Quarter 4**.

There are four main areas that give rise to the current overall £3k under spend within the City Growth and Regeneration Committee budget at the end of Quarter 4. These are as follows:

1. Gross Income was 226k more than budgeted income to the end of March 2016. This variance relates to less income being received than planned in the Zoo (£35k), City Events (£10k) and Parks Estates (£69k). These shortfalls are offset by additional income in EIID (£61k), Belfast Waterfront (132k) and Off Street Car Parking (£147k).
2. Employee costs are £190k more than budget with over spends in EIID (£65k); the Zoo (£130k) ; Off Street Car parking (£8k) and Development Directorate (£5k) offset by under spends in Parks Estates (£14k) and Belfast Waterfront (£4k).
3. Premises expenditure was £135k below budget with under spends in the Parks Estates

(£22k); EIID (£18k); Off Street Car Parking (£31k) and Belfast Waterfront (£137k) offset by an over spend in the Zoo (£73k).

4. Supplies and Services expenditure was £68k above budget. This was due to over spends in Belfast Waterfront and City Events (315k) and Off street car parking (£83k) and Development Directorate (£12k) being offset by under spends in EIID (£168k) and Parks Estates (£63k).

Service Analysis

EIID are under spent by £175,426 at the end of Quarter 4.

(Budgeted Net Expenditure: £6,960,939; Actual Net Expenditure: £6,785,513).

EIID is under spent by £175k at year end. Within EIID, there is increased income received of £61k; this relates to increased stallage fees within City Markets. There is also reduced expenditure incurred within supplies and services of £168k which is in regards to lower than planned programme costs in European Unit, Tourism Unit and Economic Transfer of Functions.

Transport costs are below budget by £8k in relation to the City Markets Bus Shuttle service. There is also reduced spend within premises costs of £18k in regards to City Markets.

These are then offset by increased costs incurred for employee costs of £65k in relation to increased weekend supervisory agency costs within Markets and higher than planned salary costs in European Unit. There were also unbudgeted compensation claims of £10k incurred with regards to Smithfield Market and St Georges Market.

City Events and Venues are over spent by £44,529 at the end of Quarter 4.

(Budgeted Net Expenditure: £4,149,281; Actual Net Expenditure: £4,193,810).

City Events is over spent by £38k and City Venues is over budget by £7k at the year end.

City Venues supplies and services are over spent by £256k. This overspend is then offset by increased income of £132k, along with under spends in employee costs of £13k and premises costs of £101k which relates to a rates rebate.

It is worth noting that City Venues introduced a cost reduction plan which was presented to, and agreed by, the City Growth & Regeneration committee on 9th September 2015. The forecast year end deficit, at that stage, was £260k with the implementation of the action plan forecasting to reduce that figure to an over spend of £43k. The plan was very successfully delivered and surpassed expectation and particular credit must go to the Sales and Marketing Team who far exceeded their income target.

The City Events unit is overspent by £38k and relates to the Pipe Band Event. Although the event was delivered under budget the planned draw down from reserves was not made.

Directorate are over spent by £17,443 at the end of Quarter 4.

(Budgeted Net Expenditure: £3,803,665; Actual Net Expenditure: £3,821,108)

The over spend within Directorate is attributable to an over spend in employee costs of £5k and an overspend of £12k in supplies and services as a result of unbudgeted compensation claims.

The Zoo is over spent by £227,855 at the end of Quarter 4.

(Budgeted Net Expenditure: £858,413; Actual Net Expenditure: £1,086,268)

Net Expenditure at Quarter 4 is £227k (26%) over budget. Income from Zoo admissions is approximately £50k (3%) below the profiled target though the shop continues to perform well and income currently exceeded budget by £29k at year end. The performance of the Zoo at Easter which was in late March was disappointing and did not pull back the income performance gaps.

Employee expenditure is over budget by £129k (8%) due to the use of overtime and agency. Utility costs are £72k (22%) above estimate due to issues with the borehole with the Zoo having to go onto mains supplies. This has now been resolved but the Zoo still has had to absorb the uncontrollable cost of this supply.

In January committee was presented with an improvement plan for the Zoo which is working towards addressing these overspends. A separate committee report details the progress made in many areas including reducing overtime and generating income through new customer focused activities.

Parks Estates are under spent by £30K at the end of Quarter 4.

(Budgeted Net Expenditure: £352,978; Actual Net Expenditure: £323,102)

Income from fees and charges is £70k below the profiled budget and the franchise concessions, which are currently being re-tendered, are £19k (11%) below budget. Other spending on supplies and services of £63k has been curtailed to offset the income position.

Off Street Parking is under budget by £87,075 at the end of Quarter 4

(Budgeted Net Expenditure: -£1,392,994; Actual Net Expenditure: -£1,480,069)

Car parking £87k (6.3%) under budget mainly due to increased income (PCN, pay and display, season tickets and advertising hoarding).

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Section Expenditure Budgetary Analysis

	Plan £000s	Actuals £000s	Variance £000s	% Variance
Economic Initiatives & Internat Devpt	6,961	6,786	(175)	(2.5)%
City Events & Venues	4,149	4,194	45	1.1%
Development Directorate	3,804	3,821	17	0.5%
Zoo	858	1,086	228	26.5%
Parks Estates	353	323	(30)	(8.5)%
Off-Street Car Parking	(1,393)	(1,480)	(87)	6.3%
Total	14,732	14,730	(3)	(0.0)%



Subject:	International Relations update
Date:	08 June 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, European & International Relations Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on recent international work in relation to Sister Cities linkages as well as international business activity, and to set out some emerging priorities for action.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the international activity update for the year to date and agree to a future report, to be presented to the Committee in September, setting out how this activity should be progressed, in the context of a wider International Relations Framework.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware that the Lord Mayor, Chief Executive and a number of Councillors and Chief Officers have been involved in a range of recent international business visits and have hosted international delegations in the City. These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Business visit to Boston, in February 2016

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing a range of potential education and business linkages with Nashville, in March 2016 - Progressing Sister City linkages, including the identification of opportunities for future collaboration between Belfast and Shenyang, in May 2016 - Promoting the city as a creative business location through a visit to the South X South West international creative business and music event in Austin, Texas, in March 2016 - An enhanced presence at MIPIM in March 2016 (which was the subject of a report to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in May 2016) - Enhancing our business partnership with Invest NI which has included the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and Chief Executive hosting business delegations and inward visits in City Hall as well as Chief Officers becoming involved in a range of investment meetings alongside Invest NI colleagues.
3.2	<p>In addition to the above, the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and Chief Executive continue to host a significant number of international visitors to the city, and there is a significant volume of work under way with partners to facilitate their international connections and promote opportunities for education, business and cultural links. Likewise, the Council has committed to a programme of investment in the city centre and this is reliant on promoting the opportunities for private sector investment and growth, including commitments from international partners. Finally, we are working to promote Belfast as an international business and tourism destination and this requires building partnerships with organisations such as Invest NI to understand how we can provide the “city proposition” and “gateway services” alongside the wider range of incentives that they promote to encourage additional inward investment.</p>
3.3	<p>All of this work requires a coordinated and cohesive approach to maximise the return on investment. It also requires an understanding of where the Council can add value to the work of other partners and what the resourcing implications of this work might be. To that end, Committee has agreed to a new International Relations Framework that will take account of these commitments as well as considering future development opportunities and identifying the specific role and priorities for the Council moving forward.</p>

3.4	<p>In the interim, the recent visits and connections have presented a number of emerging opportunities which will be considered as part of the new International Relations Framework. These include:</p>
3.5	<p><u>Boston</u></p> <p>The Boston visits – and subsequent follow-up actions – have identified a number of key areas of work which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Secured and delivered the first Friendship Four Festival of Ice Hockey Tournament in November 2015 and secured agreement for the follow-up event in November 2016 (as approved by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee) – Confirmed plans for an inward trade mission to Belfast in Autumn/Winter 2016, in partnership with the Boston Irish Business Association – Secured increased co-operation for the J1 visa programme for students from Queen’s and Ulster Universities – Secured over \$20,000 for two Belfast schools for equipment and literacy programmes, under the Irish American Partnership. – Explored and partially developed a Youth Transformation Project addressing barriers to employment for youth in both cities. Further exploratory work on this project required, to finalise details of feasibility – Connected the Education Authority of Northern Ireland with its Boston counterparts to support exchange and learning – Promoted investment opportunities in Belfast in collaboration with Invest NI colleagues.
3.6	<p><u>Nashville</u></p> <p>With respect to Nashville, this was the first visit made by Belfast City Council in a number of years. The visit (from 10-16 March 2016) was an exploratory one. The objective was to scope the scale of potential for additional exchanges and partnerships between organisations in both cities, and to establish the added value that Belfast City Council could play in developing these linkages. The visit was productive, and the following opportunities were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learning around the development of new venues and visitor attractions, focusing on key themes such as music and culture – Opportunities to link the Innovation Factory with the Nashville Entrepreneur Centre and to develop initiatives such as residencies for entrepreneurs and

	<p>potential to promote Belfast as a European base for Nashville companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities to work with Invest NI to undertake additional FDI promotion work in the Nashville and Tennessee areas, with opportunities for new investments currently being pursued - Opportunities to consolidate and build on Queen’s University Belfast’s long-standing links with Vanderbilt University and potential for new engagements between Ulster University and Belmont University (based on introductions made through Council contacts) - Opportunities for student exchanges with two new exchanges already in place and Nashville students due to come to Belfast in January 2017 - Identification of key contacts within the television and music industry who are open to further engagement around TV production opportunities and joint bidding for conferences and music events.
	<p><u>International Sister Cities Summit in Dublin</u></p>
3.7	<p>Members will also be aware that Belfast hosted delegations from Boston and Nashville on 19-21 April, in advance of their participation in the International Sister Cities Summit in Dublin from 21-23 April 2016.</p>
3.8	<p>During the two day Belfast programme, delegates from Boston (led by Boston Belfast Chair John Donovan) and Nashville (led by Councillor Jim Schulman), engaged in an intensive round of visits and meetings. The programme included sessions in community development, peace and reconciliation, cyber security innovation, spatial planning, education, legal systems, culture and tourism. It allowed delegates the opportunity to understand the new Belfast Agenda, the Council and City’s ambitions for inclusive economic growth, and the partnership approach with stakeholders to achieve these ambitions.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Shenyang</u></p> <p>The Lord Mayor led a delegation of Councillors and officers – including the Chief Executive – to the city of Shenyang in China in May 2016. The visit – which was planned to coincide with business and education delegations from Queen’s University and Invest NI – marked the first visit to Shenyang since the signing of a friendly cooperation agreement between the cities in 2013. A number of introductory meetings took place on issues such as tourism development, inward investment and cooperation on education and training. A further report will be</p>

	<p>brought back to a future meeting of the Committee to set out an agreed way forward in order to maximise the connections established.</p>
3.11	<p><u>SXSW</u></p> <p>SXSW is the world's largest event focusing on the music, film and interactive sectors. It involves a range of presentations, workshops, promotional events and showcasing opportunities for international businesses involved in this area of work. The event has been running for thirty years and Belfast City Council has attended over the last eight years, in partnership with organisations such as Invest NI and Generator NI, as well as individual music and digital businesses who have been taking part in the event.</p>
3.12	<p>In March 2016, the Deputy Lord Mayor along with a Council Officer took part in the event. The Council hosted two key networking events over two days, with more than 450 international businesses in attendance. Key attendees included representatives from Virginia Tech, Sony Entertainment, Kobalt Music, Music Cities network, City of Toronto, City of Austin, Tech City, Stubhub, United Airlines (digital), Capitol Factory and Spotify.</p>
3.13	<p>The Northern Ireland delegation comprised 15 digital and music companies (supported by Invest NI) as well as 5 bands/musicians who had applied directly and been accepted to participate in the music element of the programme.</p>
3.14	<p>While it is still early to be specific about outcomes, participants have noted the following achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase in revenue of £100,000 among participants – £185,000 of potential sales identified and to be followed up – 1 company established relationship with new investor in relation to future seed round funding – 1 company used SXSW to identify a number of US collaborators who want to run clinical trials with their products - an essential precursor to being able to sell medical technology games in USA – 1 company generated significant feedback on new product offering and secured meetings with several high potential clients including Disney, Microsoft and Khan Academy. New leads have been developed and have secured follow up meetings and pitch opportunities with several potential

	clients.
3.15	All of these opportunities and leads will now be considered and as part of the work on the new International Relations Framework which will be presented to the Committee in September 2016. This Framework will consider how the City can benefit from its international connections, as well as looking at how Belfast presents itself internationally and will seek to establish a number of priority areas of work to be progressed by the Council and its partners.
3.16	It is proposed that the International Relations Framework will be outcomes-based and will take account of resources – both staff resources and financial resources – required to support implementation. It is likely that it will lead to focusing resources on a small number of priority actions that are aligned to ambitions set out within the Belfast Agenda. The International Relations Framework will also be an important mechanism for implementation of the Place Positioning Strategy.
3.17	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> No specific financial or resource allocations required at this point.
3.18	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> The new International Relations Framework will be equality screened.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None



Subject:	Support for Business Start-up and Enterprise Awareness
Date:	8 June 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Colin McCabrey, Economic Development Manager, ext 3805

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of the report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Update Members on the progress of transferring functions including Business Start and Enterprise Support from DETI/Invest NI – Update Members on the ongoing work to develop a Regional Business Start programme – Update Members on proposed initiatives aimed at increasing Enterprise Awareness and supporting Student Entrepreneurship. – Note that in addition to these programmes the Council will undertake a full review of how it can further improve the support for small business start up and growth over the coming months
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the achievements of Business Start support activity from April 2015 to date • Note the work undertaken to date to develop a Regional Business Start programme and secure ERDF funding for this programme, including the indicative timeframe for a new programme • Approve the principle of working with other lead Councils to support the management and implementation of a new Regional Start programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the proposals presented for future Pre-Enterprise and Student Entrepreneurship support, including a total budget allocation of £55,000 for this work in the current financial year (£20,000 for Pre-Enterprise support and £35,000 for Student Enterprise support).
3.0	Main report
3.1	As Members will be aware, a number of economic development functions transferred from DETI/Invest NI to local authorities in April 2015. These include Enterprise Awareness (with a particular focus on under-represented groups, such as women’s entrepreneurship, and targeting areas of disadvantage), Start a Business activity, Social Enterprise and Youth Enterprise.
3.2	It is important to recognise that the functions transferred rather than the specific programmes through which DETI/Invest NI chose to deliver services to entrepreneurs, principally the Go For It Programme (for generic Business Start support) and Social Entrepreneurship Programme (focused on new and early stage Social Enterprises). As a result of this transfer, local authorities are responsible for the associated job promotion targets identified by the Northern Ireland Executive, through the Programme for Government, and these must be reported annually. However the programme design and the level of support available is the responsibility of the individual Councils to decide, based on their respective budgets (and taking account of the budgets transferred from Invest NI for this activity).
3.3	These new functions are additional to the range of Enterprise and Business Growth services which Belfast City Council’s Economic Initiatives Section has been delivering for many years. The LGR transferring functions complement a wider range of Council provision towards supporting new, micro and existing businesses as well as potential and current investors. Members will be aware that one of the key strands of the Belfast Agenda is “Business and Economy” and this includes a number of commitments to grow the private sector and make Belfast an attractive and cost-effective location for their business. The Employability and Skills Framework – which will be presented to the June meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee – also identifies Business Start as a central pillar of collaborative efforts to increase employability in the city. In this context, the prepared programmes of work can contribute to improvements in employment levels as well as business productivity and competitiveness and city attractiveness.

3.4	<p><u>Interim and New Business Start Provision from October 2016 onwards</u></p> <p>Whilst the NI Executive job promotion targets for Councils for the current financial year have not yet been set by central government, the assumption is that the targets and associated transferring budget will be the same as those for the 2015/2016 year. If this is the case, the job target for the Belfast City Council area will be 325 new jobs supported through the Business Start-up programmes. The budget available from central government for this work is £411,984.</p>
3.5	<p>In April 2015, Belfast City Council entered into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Invest NI to continue delivery of the Go for It Business Start programme until the end of the contract period, i.e. October 2016. In the period since April 2015, the Go for It Business Start programme has supported 440 new jobs in the Belfast City Council area. This is significantly ahead of the Programme for Government target.</p>
3.6	<p>The 11 Council areas have been working together for some time to develop a successor programme to the current Go for It initiative. They have undertaken an appraisal and business case to inform the new provision. This has recommended a Regional programme (i.e. available in all Council areas). It has also recommended that there should be more direct support offered to the Start-Up Business than is the case through the current programme. This will mainly involve additional workshops on topics such as marketing and financial management as well as dedicated 1-2-1 mentoring support, tailored to the business needs. The appraisal also recommended centralised management structures to govern the delivery of the Regional programme on behalf of the 11 Councils.</p>
3.7	<p>In November 2015, the 11 Councils submitted a funding application to Invest NI to secure European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding for the new programme. If successful, this will lever up to 80% of match funding towards eligible costs. The application is currently at Economic Appraisal stage with a decision expected by July 2016. Early indications suggest that, whilst delivery costs and third party marketing are expected to be eligible costs, other overheads such as staffing and the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database system are expected to be ineligible. This will mean that the full costs for these activities will have to be met by the Councils themselves.</p>
3.8	<p>If the funding application is successful, a procurement exercise will need to be undertaken to appoint a delivery organisation for the new programme. The timescale for this means that a new Council-led Business Start programme is unlikely to be operational until April</p>

	<p>2017 at the earliest.</p>
<p>3.9</p>	<p>In order to achieve the NI Executive targets and to avoid a gap in delivery, Councils are individually developing contingency arrangements for their areas. In Belfast, officers are developing an interim solution providing business planning support services to new business starts. This will mirror provision currently provided through Go for It and costs will be met from the transferred budget. Derry City and Strabane District Council will lead on a Regional promotional campaign on behalf of all Council areas to promote the programme and ensure that targets are met, and the Councils will make contributions towards this activity.</p>
<p>3.10</p>	<p>Members should note that the programme will represent the “first tier” of Business Start-Up support. It will not be sector-specific; instead it will be available to anyone with a business idea that wishes to secure support to move forward from concept into an existing business. Taking account of the fact that Business Start-Up rates in the city are very low at present, it will be only one of a range initiatives that will be developed by the Council, in conjunction with its partners, to encourage an increase in Business Start-Up rates and to support existing businesses to grow and increase both their employment and productivity levels. These will include additional support for businesses that have high growth potential as well as new opportunities to package business accommodation and support services through initiatives such as the Innovation Factory and sector-specific activities in key growth areas, including the creative and digital sector. A report will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee to outline the range of existing and proposed activity and to seek Committee approval for any new areas of work.</p>
<p>3.11</p>	<p><u>Pre-Enterprise, Student Enterprise and Social Enterprise support</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council continues to provide a range of high quality Enterprise Awareness and Enterprise Support initiatives that have gained national and international recognition from bodies such as the European Training Foundation and now through the 2016 MJ Local Government Awards (Belfast Enterprise Academy is a finalist in the Awards to take place in June this year).</p> <p>The support available covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Pre-Enterprise</u>: including outreach engagement, ideas generation activity, targeted work with specific groups. Since 2011, Belfast City Council has delivered an Enterprise initiative called <i>Start by Doing</i>. This initiative stimulates levels of entrepreneurial activity across the city with a focus on targeting underrepresented

groups including youth, young people not in employment, education or training, migrants, people with a disability and females. When the programme ends in June 2016 it will have supported 200 entrepreneurs to take forward sustainable business ideas. Subject to evaluation, it is proposed that the pre-enterprise support activities are commissioned for a further three year period, engaging at least 200 individuals per annum. This work will be linked to wider Council activity to support regeneration and economic growth across the city and will also support the work on Employability and Skills. The indicative budget for this work is around £20,000 each year. The allocation for this year has been included within the Economic Development Unit budget, which was approved as part of the overall Departmental budget.

- Student Entrepreneurship: a recent Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report for Belfast identified the potential to work with universities and colleges to encourage more high-level business starts to address the city's productivity level challenges. Belfast Enterprise Academy is a successful partnership programme with Queen's University, Ulster University and Belfast Metropolitan College. Each of the institutions provides complementary support for students to help fast-track their business ideas. Over the last 7 years, the programme has supported 150 participants engaged and helped create more than 50 businesses. Subject to an evaluation of the programme in June 2016, it is proposed that the programme is expanded for another three years, to engage at least 70 individuals each year. The indicative budget for this work is around £35,000 each year. The allocation for this year has been included within the Economic Development Unit budget, which was approved as part of the overall Departmental budget.
- Social Enterprise and Co-operatives: encouraging new enterprise models such as social enterprise and co-operatives which can not only support economic growth but also address social cohesion issues in the city. The Council is currently supporting a programme to increase the number of social enterprises across the city. It has a target of engaging a minimum of 50 participants per year through skills workshops and 1-2-1 mentoring. A separate Committee paper regarding opportunities to support the development of the Co-operatives sector will be presented to the Committee in August 2016.

3.12

Financial Implications

The cost for the business start-up activity will continue to be delivered from within existing Economic Development budgets, inclusive of the budget associated with transferring DETI/Invest NI functions (£411,984). The cost of the new programme will not be known

	until the conclusion of the procurement exercise. A report will be brought back to the Committee when this is concluded.
3.13	The proposed cost of continuation of the pre-enterprise programme is around £20,000 annually. The proposed cost of continuation of the student entrepreneurship programme is approximately £35,000 annually. These amounts have been set aside within Economic Development Unit budgets for the current year.
3.14	<u>Equality and good relations implications</u> Programmes have been designed to help remove barriers to participation and promote equality of opportunity.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None



Subject:	Zoo Short to Medium Term Plan
Date:	8 June 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Jacqui Wilson, Business Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	Members will be aware that the Committee received a report earlier this year on the plan for the Zoo. The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress and to inform them of progress to date.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the progress made on the short to medium term Plan.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Due to the financial pressures being faced by the Zoo, a plan has been developed to address the key issues against the 5 strands of work identified in the previous Committee report i.e. Working Arrangements, income opportunities, Save to Invest Capital Programme, Commercial infrastructure and operational efficiencies.
3.2	Progress to date includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tendering for a new catering contract is underway; ▪ Implementing income generation activities such as Animal Experiences, Birthday Parties, Zoo School and Keeper for the day – draft performance dashboard (Appendix 1);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviewing Sponsorship and Adoptions; ▪ Implementation of mobile applications and update of the website; ▪ Business case developed for ICT system to allow for on line bookings; ▪ Review existing arrangements with Visit Belfast, Hotels and Stenaline; ▪ Review of Shop purchases – tender for supply of branded goods being developed; ▪ Review operation of Zoo Vet contract is in progress; ▪ Review operation of Stores including the supply of animal feeds; ▪ Review of overtime completed and recommendations being developed; ▪ Investigating sources of Grants available; ▪ Review of the animal collection plan underway; ▪ Agreement through SP&R 22nd April to include the Zoo in the City Centre Strategy and submit a capital bid for regional funding.
3.3	<p>Officers are also looking at the operation of the Zoo/Belfast Castle and Malone House in the context of the Organisational Development of the new City & Neighbourhood Services Department with the emphasis on how we can optimise the assets and maximise income generation.</p>
3.4	<p>The Zoo is the host for the EAZA (European Association of Zoos and Aquarium) conference which is being held at the Waterfront Hall in September. This is a prestigious event for the Zoo and includes a Zoo night for up to 500 delegates which gives Belfast the opportunity to develop networks further and creates opportunities for new sponsorship arrangements. A Civic reception is being applied for and the Chair and Deputy Chair will be invited to attend.</p>
	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.5	<p>The overall objective of the plan is to make a £300k reduction in the subsidy of the Zoo over the next three years which could potentially be used to reinvest and reinvigorate the Zoo and ensure its sustainability.</p>
3.6	<p>The Zoo Trade Union Forum nominated through JNCC has been set up. Staff and Trade Unions input will be vital for the communication and engagement around the improvements required and the forum will meet on a regular basis to facilitate this.</p>
3.7	<p>There are no asset implications at this stage although the final phases of the project will include a capital assets investment plan.</p>

3.8	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> There are currently no equality or good relation implications, however this will continue to be reviewed as the project is developed.
4.0	Appendices – documents attached
	Appendix 1 – Draft performance dashboard

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

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