



<b>Subject:</b>	Connectivity, Active & Sustainable Travel update
<b>Date:</b>	12 October 2023
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Eastern Transport Plan (formerly Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan), A Bolder Vision for Belfast and ongoing work across Council and with stakeholders and Members in relation to Connectivity, Active & Sustainable Travel.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Note the contents of this report and the emerging work across council and within the Community Planning Connectivity, Active and Sustainable Travel subgroup.</li><li>- Note the timeframe for the consultation response for the Eastern Transport Plan which closed on 30 October 2023</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<b>Eastern Transport Plan</b> The Dfl are developing the Eastern Transport Plan (ETP) for the city and the surrounding metropolitan area, with the consultants Atkins assisting in the detailed work on what will be the statutory transport plan for the city. The consultation on the draft Vision, Objectives and

	<p>Guiding Principles for the ETP opened on 4 September and will close on 30 October 2023. <a href="#">Eastern Transport Plan Engagement Survey - NI Direct - Citizen Space</a></p>
3.2	<p>The ETP covers the wider Belfast Metropolitan Area encompassing the Belfast, Antrim and Newtownabbey, Ards and North Down, Lisburn and Castlereagh, and Mid and East Antrim Council areas. The ETP will provide the transport vision for the area for the next 13 years and will support the Council's through their LDP Local Policies Plan stage process. The ETP will support decision making with respect to major capital investment within the metropolitan area and is viewed by the DfI as the mechanism through which they will deliver on the obligations contained within the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.</p>
3.3	<p>The City Growth &amp; Regeneration (CG&amp;R) Committee received a number of presentations relating to strategic transport delivery within the Council area, including a presentation on the Eastern Transport Plan from DfI and Atkins on 23 August 2023 (Appendix 1). The DfI offered to meet with the adjoining councils within the metropolitan area and have also offered to meet individual Parties during the consultation period. Officers are preparing a response to the Consultation documents, taking on board comments from Members, and subject to Committee agreement and Council ratification.</p>
3.4	<p><b>A Bolder Vision</b></p> <p>Belfast City Council have been working in partnership with DfI and DfC to develop 'A Bolder Vision' for Belfast. This document recognised the changing demand from the users of the city centre and the need to provide better place-based infrastructure to support city centre living, the relocation of the Ulster University, growing tourism, the need to break down severances between the city centre and the local communities, and the need to address our Climate Emergency. The Bolder Vision outlined four Key Moves, underpinned by an action plan focusing on existing capital investment programmes and opportunities to attract alternative funding sources. An extensive public consultation period resulted in almost 900 responses from individuals and organisation with an overwhelming support (&gt;90%) for the direction outlined within the document. The Four Key Moves are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a Civic Spine with a focus on people</li> <li>• Reimagine the Inner Ring and End Car Dominance</li> <li>• Promote City Centre Living</li> <li>• Embrace the River Lagan and Waterfront</li> </ul>
3.5	<p>A final draft version of the Bolder Vision was provided to the August 2022 meeting of the CG&amp;R Committee and is subject to DfI &amp; DfC Ministerial sign-off which was not finalised prior to the suspension of the Executive. The ETP is important in terms of providing the evidence based strategic transport plan to enable the finalisation of A Bolder Vision and to realise the ambitions continued therein.</p>
3.6	<p><b>Connectivity, Active &amp; Sustainable Travel (CAST)</b></p> <p>Members will be aware that as part of the refresh of the Belfast Agenda there is a priority theme of Connectivity, Active and Sustainable Travel that sits under the City Development Board. A cross-sector stakeholder subgroup that is co-chaired by Sustrans and Translink</p>

	was formed to develop the CAST Action Plan, which was included Belfast Agenda consultation.
3.7	The focus of the CAST subgroup is not only to improve connectivity in the city but to also deliver on the many other benefits that are linked to active and sustainable travel such as improving quality of life, health and wellbeing, access to employment, access to education and tackling climate change. The strategic direction of the Belfast Agenda and A Bolder Vision also sits alongside Council's Physical Programme that oversees the delivery of a number of connectivity projects including Lagan Gateway, Greenways, Belfast Bikes expansion. Additionally, Council was successful in securing funding from DfI's Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund for the delivery of covered cycle stands, secured cycle parking and repair kits. These are currently in delivery across the city and will help support the Council's wider strategic objective, City Connectivity, as outlined in the Corporate Plan.
3.8	<p><b>All Party Round Table on Connectivity, Active and Sustainable travel</b></p> <p>Following recent discussions between Officers and Elected Members regarding various matters associated with active and sustainable travel and given how it cuts across various Committees and via the Community Planning process, it was agreed to convene an All Party Round Table meeting to ensure Members could engage with this work holistically, which is not always possible via the current structures. The Round Table took place on 30 August and provided an overview of the various streams of work underway and where they feed into Council's strategic priorities and governance structures.</p>
3.9	The session provided an opportunity to discuss ongoing activity, opportunities and challenges and the potential impact of the Eastern Transport Plan on a number of large strategic and physical regeneration projects including A Bolder Vision, Belfast Cycling Network and Belfast Streets Ahead 3 and 5 and a consideration of the Department's budgetary pressures. A copy of the presentation is provided in Appendix 2. It was agreed that the Round Table would convene again to provide a mechanism for Members and Officer to engage on these issues.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</b>
4.1	There are no finance or resource implications associated with this report.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</b>
5.1	There are no Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs implications associated with this report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents attached</b>
6.1	Appendix 1 – Eastern Transport Plan presentation from CG&R on 23 August 2023 Appendix 2 – All Party Round Table on CAST from 30 August 2023