



Belfast District Council

Report to:	Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Notice of Motion: Use of Bus Lanes at times of emergency – Response from the Minister
Date:	Friday, 16th January, 2015
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Officer, 6314

1.0	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>The Committee will recall that the Shadow Council, at its meeting on 8th December, passed the following motion, which had been moved by Councillor O'Boyle and seconded by seconded by Councillor Mullan:</p> <p><i>“Belfast District Council urges the Department for Regional Development to implement measures permitting the use of bus lanes by all vehicles at times of chronic congestion as a result of an emergency situation; thereby saving thousands of lost working hours to the economy of our City.”</i></p>

2.0	Key Issues
2.1	A letter to the Department (DRD) outlining the Council's decision was forwarded on 9th December and a response from the Minister's secretary (as appended) was received on 8th January.
2.2	The letter points out that whilst the current legislation does not empower the DSD to suspend bus lanes, a constable in uniform can exercise his or her discretion to permit all vehicles to use bus lanes in times of emergency.
2.3	Such a decision, it is pointed out, should be taken only with a view to ensuring that the travelling public would be informed in a timely manner in order to avoid confusion.

3.	Resource Implications
	None

4.	Equality and good relations implications
	None

5.0	Call-in
	This decision is subject to call-in.

6.0	Recommendations
3.1	The Committee is requested to note the information provided.