



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Alleygate Scheme in Lower Ormeau
Date:	9 April 2008
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Relevant Background Information

This report provides an update on the alleygating project for Lower Ormeau and seeks approval for the modification to the proposed arrangements for the procurement of the works, the extent of the proposed works and the potential prioritisation of activity.

Members will be aware that as part of the Renewing the Routes Initiative within the Lower Ormeau Road permission was granted to implement an alleygating scheme within this area. The Renewing the Routes team have carried out a significant process to advance the proposed alleygating scheme including an in-depth consultation process with the local community (developed in conjunction with the Lower Ormeau Residents Group) involving; obtaining legal consent from the homeowners /landlords; engagement with emergency services /statutory bodies/ utilities and other interested parties in accordance with the requirements of the Department for Regional Development (DRD) guidance for Road Traffic Orders that allow the abandonment of alleyways. Members should note that this focused local consultation work has secured levels of support from the both the local community and private sector that have exceeded expectations in terms of the positive survey returns.

The detailed case to support the Road Traffic Order was submitted to DRD Roads Service, the statutory body responsible for the legislation, on 7 January 2008. The indication from the Department for Regional Development is that the statutory process relating to the Traffic Order could take between 6 to 8 months to reach a decision in relation to the various alleyways within the target area boundary.

Key Issues

The success of the consultation (85% of respondents to the survey have indicated support for the installation of alleygates) combined with existing developments in the area and the timescale for the statutory decision have implications for the potential final implementation.

The Committee on 24 April 2006 approved an allocation of £28,000 towards the implementation of the alleygating works in the area as part of the Arterial Routes initiative for the Lower Ormeau. This allocation was based on an assessment of the anticipated potential for the activity in combination with a projection of the costs associated with the citywide alleygate tender. This Council allocation was to be combined with additional resources from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), Housing Associations and a private business for a comprehensive project which has been estimated to cost up to £60,000 depending on the final results of the statutory Road Traffic Order process.

Prior to final decision made by DRD Roads Service to endorse the abandonment of alleyways, the initial budget of £28,000 may need to be supplemented or the provision prioritised to accommodate the increased number of gates arising from the unexpected level of support from the local community. Whilst the Renewing the Routes Team will continue to liaise with the other partners to ensure that full contributions to the scheme will be secured, the full implementation across the area could require an additional allocation of £10,000. Committee approval is requested for the flexibility to increase the budget should the statutory process allow the full implementation of the project across the area.

It had been anticipated that the physical implementation of the scheme would have been carried utilising the existing citywide Council contract for the installation of alleygates. However, due to the success of the pilot areas across the city this existing contract is now fully committed and cannot therefore accommodate the addition of the potential works for the Lower Ormeau area. This changed circumstance necessitates a separate tender for the works and approval to proceed with this process. Tenders will be evaluated on the basis of quality and cost in order to ascertain which is the most economically advantageous.

Resource Implications

Additional Committee approval is sought for the flexibility to increase the agreed allocation of £28,000 by up to £10,000. This increased allocation can be met from resources within existing estimates.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

- Agree to invite tenders for the installation of alleygates in the Lower Ormeau as described above and,
- Approves the allocation of up to £10,000 additional expenditure towards the proposed Lower Ormeau alleygate project.

Key to Abbreviations

DRD	Department of Regional Development
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
RTO	Road Traffic Order