



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Belfast City Council Transport Policy Review
Date:	11 February 2009
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Relevant Background Information

Atkins Consultants were appointed in August 2008 to review and update the current Belfast City Council Transport Policy. The requirement for the Council to have an up to date and valid Transport Policy arises from a number of operational and strategic considerations. There is an increasing need to be fully informed of current best practice in transport policy in order to both consistently participate in proposed consultations such as the Regional Transportation Strategy review and to influence strategic transport initiatives planned for the City. There is also increasing recognition that the Council must continue to address and manage the transportation implications of existing operational activity across the organisation.

The first phase of the review was completed in December 2008 and a report of the findings submitted to Committee in December. The Consultants concluded from their initial work that the current vision and objectives of the Transport Policy remained broadly valid but would benefit from being updated and more effectively aligned with the Council's emerging approach and objectives within the Corporate Plan.

Key Issues

Following the first phase of the review of the strategic transportation aspects of the Policy, the following vision has been proposed for the revised Policy.

Vision:

"To support and promote the development of a modern, safe, accessible and integrated transportation system to enhance the connectivity for Belfast and its wider regions, which benefits the environment; supports sustainable development; and enhances the quality of life of all those who live, work, visit and do business in the City"

This vision provides the basis for the new more refined strategic objectives which have been drafted which take into consideration the changed context for the Policy; the existing corporate objectives and the aspirations for the future development of transportation within the City. The proposed new strategic objectives are outlined below alongside their associated corporate themes. It should be noted that for the purposes of the transportation policy the additional theme in relation to the City centre has been added in recognition of the pivotal role the centre has for transportation infrastructure, services and interchange.

Key Themes: City Leadership

Proposed Strategic Objective 1 includes:

“To provide a strong civic leadership role for the promotion of a modern, safe, accessible and integrated transportation system for the City of Belfast and its wider regions”

Key Theme: Regeneration Growth and Prosperity

Proposed Strategic Objective 2 includes

“To support the sustainable economic development of Belfast to ensure the future prosperity of Belfast City and its wider regions and to facilitate the continued development of its economic and physical regeneration through achievement of economic, tourism, leisure, good relations, environmental, educational and health objectives for the City”

Key theme: Environmental Responsibility

Proposed Strategic Objective 3 includes:

“To secure the long term viability of Belfast City and its environment by seeking to ensure that all transportation arising from the wider proposals take into account, and mitigate against, their adverse impact on the environmental and the quality of life of local neighbourhoods”

Key Theme: People and Place

Proposed Strategic Objective 4 includes:

“To support local people and communities by ensuring a community plan approach that integrates transportation to enhance connectivity for local neighbourhoods by making them safer, healthier and more inclusive”.

Key Theme: Value for money customer focused services

Proposed Strategic Objective 5 includes:

“To seek to ensure that Belfast City Council services and facilities are accessible by sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, cycling and public transport”

Key Theme: An organisation fit to lead and serve

Proposed Strategic Objective 6 includes:

“To promote the positive effects of sustainable travel and to lead by example by implementing sustainable travel initiatives within its own organisation”.

Key Theme: Belfast City Centre

Proposed Strategic Objective 7 includes:

“To support the sustainable economic development of Belfast City Centre, as a key Regional asset – to seek to provide an urban environment that supports a more dynamic and competitive centre and to improve its presentation and environmental quality as befits a first class European city.”

The diagram in Appendix 1 summarises the relationships between the previous transportation vision and strategic objectives by mapping the changes and updates to the corporate themes with additional narrative outlining the basis of the themes.

It is suggested that the Committee consider and if appropriate agree the revised vision and strategic objectives outlined above as the basis for the continuing work on the detailed transportation policy development.

Atkins are currently developing the suite of more detailed potential actions or specific transportation policies or proposals in consultation with the Cross Departmental Steering Group. These more detailed elements will be developed in accordance with the strategic objectives for the inclusion within the revised Transport Policy. This ongoing work will also seek to clarify the potential resource implications arising from the potential revisions to the policy. A final draft of the revised Transport Policy with any associated resource implications should be completed by the end of February 2009 for further Committee consideration.

Resource Implications

There are no direct resource implications arising from this report although the review will consider the issue of potential future resource implications in respect of the Transport Policy implementation, review and monitoring.

Recommendations

Members are requested to:

1. Endorse the revised transportation vision and proposed strategic objectives; and
2. Agree to receive a presentation by the consultants on the final draft revised Transport Policy.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Linkages between revised Policy and existing strategic objectives

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