



Subject:	Response received from Minister for Infrastructure re Hill Street, Belfast - Pedestrianisation
Date:	21st February, 2025
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information relating to any individual2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
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	To note the correspondence received from the Minister for Infrastructure.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the correspondence as set out in the report and agree to the closure of the motion.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Committee will recall that, at the Council meeting held on 1st October, 2024, it was agreed to write to the Minister for Infrastructure to ask that he revisits the decision to put work on the pedestrianisation of Hill Street on hold.
3.2	The Committee is advised that a response has been received from Ms Liz Kimmins, Minister for Infrastructure.
3.3	In her response she apologises for the delay in responding to the Council, unfortunately significant staffing constraints within Eastern Division is having an impact on response times.
3.4	An informal consultation on the proposal to pedestrianise Hill Street has been carried out for which the Department got nine replies. While most were in favour of the pedestrianisation scheme, the majority wanted to retain full vehicle access. However, this would not be in keeping with the objective of a pedestrianised area which is to remove traffic during certain periods for the general benefit of pedestrians.
3.5	Therefore, this requires further engagement with individual businesses to explain this position and to attempt to negotiate a scheme which works for everyone.
3.6	Unfortunately, due to the extensive time that this type of engagement requires, and the current significant pressures on staff as well as their involvement with high priority work such as the Belfast Grand Central Station, the Sydenham Bypass resurfacing scheme and the McKinstry Road/ Derriaghy Road/ The Cutts improvement scheme, it was necessary to put work on the Hill Street proposal on hold at present.

<p>3.7</p> <p>3.8</p> <p>3.9</p> <p>3.10</p>	<p>Officials are keeping the position under review and would hope to follow up the informal consultation feedback in the coming months as staffing resource permits.</p> <p>Committee is asked to note the response and agree to close the Notice of Motion.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Response from Minister for Infrastructure</p>