



## Belfast City Council

**Report to:** Development Committee

**Subject:** Rapid Transit – Draft Response

**Date:** 13 January 2010

**Reporting Officer:** Shirley McCay Acting Director of Development ext 3459

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### Relevant Background Information

Bus Rapid Transit is proposed by the Department for Regional Development (DRD) as the preferred option for the rapid transit system in Belfast. In 2007, DRD commissioned transport consultants to undertake a feasibility study looking at possible routes and technologies for rapid transit in Belfast. The study concluded that a bus-based rapid transit system was the viable option for Belfast rather than light rail technology. In addition, the study identified a pilot network of three routes connecting East Belfast, West Belfast and Titanic Quarter with and through the city centre.

The Department for Regional Development launched a consultation on 23 November on policy proposals for the bus-based rapid transit system. The consultation document sets out how the Department aims to implement the rapid transit system in Belfast at the strategic level. It does not deal with operational details of the system such as route alignment, location and design of halts, vehicle design or branding this will be the subject of a further consultation exercise. The consultation period will end on 19 February 2010.

### Key Issues

The Department proposes a number of powers in order to allow them to deliver the rapid transit system in Belfast and have asked for views to be submitted to the Department by the 19<sup>th</sup> February. They are as follows:

- An enabling power to establish the necessary legal authority for the provision of the rapid transit system
- The power to acquire land in connection with the rapid transit system
- The power to purchase, lease and dispose of goods and services in connection with the rapid transit system
- The power to award a performance based contract for the operation of the rapid transit system

- The dis-application of current route licensing legislation to rapid transit
- The power to make bye laws in relation to passenger conduct on vehicles and in/on premises connected with the rapid transit system
- The power to install, operate and maintain off board ticketing machines in connection with the rapid transit system

The Council welcomes progress towards implementing the Belfast rapid transit system and considers that it could be a major element of the delivery of a step change in the quality of public transport in Belfast. The Council agrees that the proposed system could be a driver for regeneration throughout Belfast, providing high quality access to and linkages between jobs, hospitals, schools and colleges in different parts of the City. However, in previous responses the Council has raised a number of concerns mainly in relation to route alignment, network coverage and proposed technology. It is understood that these issues are not being covered in the current consultation but the Council would like to reiterate its concerns on these matters and previous responses in relation to rapid transit are attached in Appendix 2.

In relation to the current consultation issues the Council's response is attached in Appendix 1 and a summary of the issues are as follows:

- The Council would support the Department as the authority to implement the rapid transit proposals in Belfast but would request clarification on the role of local councils. The Council would recommend that the relevant local councils are closely engaged in the planning and implementation of the pilot rapid transit network. In doing so, this will allow for better integration between transport and local land use planning which is proposed to transfer to councils under the review of public administration.
- The Council would request clarification on the role for local councils in development of performance-based contracts to ensure transparency and locally accountability.
- A key issue for the Council is the integration of the proposed rapid bus transit system with the existing public transport service. A sustainable transport corridor approach should be developed along with an integrated ticketing system along the route alignment.
- Current rapid transit proposals do not include plans for the north and south of the City and the Council would request details of measures to ensure an equitable high quality public transport system throughout the City.

### **Recommendations**

Members are requested to consider the content of the proposed draft response to the proposals for rapid transit as set out in Appendix 1, and, if appropriate, endorse this as the formal response for submission to the Department for Regional Development.

### **Decision Tracking**

Further to approval of the draft consultation response to rapid transit proposals, the response will be submitted by the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

Time frame: February 2010

Reporting Officer: Keith Sutherland

### **Key Abbreviations**

DRD - Department for Regional Development

DOE – Department of the Environment

## Appendix 1

### Draft Response

#### Question 1

**Do you agree that the Department should have the necessary authority to implement the Rapid Transit proposals?**

The Council welcomes the initiation of work to progress the development of a rapid public transport system for the city and would support the proposals as the first step towards introducing rapid transit in Belfast but would emphasise the need for a city-wide integrated network. It should be noted that current rapid transit proposals do not include plans for the north and south of the city and the Council would request details of measures to ensure an equitable high quality public transport system throughout the city.

The Council would support the Department as the authority to implement the rapid transit proposals but would request clarification on the role of local councils and their relationship with the new agency proposed under public transport reform.

There should be a role of the Council to engage with the department in the planning and implementation of the pilot rapid transit network and other transport proposals. In doing so this will allow in the future, for better integration between transport and local land use planning which is proposed to transfer to councils under the review of public administration.

The Council would also request clarification on the use of developer's contributions to fund the rapid transit system and if the opportunities for private sector contributions are being considered. Rapid Transit may offer opportunity for a structured approach for the use of developers contribution in recognition of the potential for such transport infrastructure investment to increase the value of development.

A key issue for the Council is the integration of the proposed rapid bus transit system with the existing public transport service. A sustainable transport corridor approach should be developed along with an integrated ticketing system along the route alignment

#### Question 2

**Do you agree that the Department should take land acquisition powers for the implementation of the Rapid Transit system?**

The Council would support land acquisition powers for the implementation of the rapid transit system but would call for close engagement and endorsement from the local council on the route alignment and proposed halts of the rapid transit network.

#### Question 3

**Do you agree that the Department should have the power to purchase, lease and dispose of goods, services and facilities for the Rapid Transit system?**

The Council would support power for the Department to purchase, lease and dispose of goods, services and facilities for the rapid transit system but would recommend that Council's have a clear role in relation to route alignment and halts.

#### Question 4

**Do you agree that a performance-based contract should be introduced for the operation of the rapid transit system?**

The Council would support the introduction of performance based contracts to ensure that the proposed operator is meeting or exceeding certain clearly defined minimum performance indicators. The Council would advocate that there are social benefits in the performance based indicators which will balance against any commercial benefits. The Council would request a role for local councils in developing performance based contracts to ensure they are transparent and locally accountable.

#### **Question 5**

**Do you agree that the Department should be responsible for:**

- **Specifying Rapid Transit service requirements, quality of service and fare levels;**
- **Awarding the Rapid Transit contract; and**
- **Monitoring and reporting on Rapid Transit operator performance?**

The Council would support power for the Department to carry out these activities in relation to the implementation of the Rapid Transit system but request a clear role for local councils in the process.

The Council are concerned that enforcement of the regulations on the operator of rapid transit will remain the responsibility of the Department of Environment. The Council would recommend that the responsibility for monitoring and enforcement are carried out by one department with a clear separation of roles and responsibilities to ensure efficient procurement, monitoring and enforcement.

The Council would also request assurance that the rapid transit vehicles and halts are fully accessible for disabled groups.

#### **Question 6**

**What are your views on the proposal to offer financial incentives to the Rapid Transit operator to grow the Rapid Transit market, introduce innovation and improve services?**

The Council would support setting targets and incentives in order to maintain and improve standards on the rapid transit system. However, it should be recognised that a broader policy approach will have an impact on the attractiveness of rapid transit and the use of demand management to deter commuters travel by private car may have the potential to increase the rapid transit market.

The Council would support initiatives to improve standards and services however a realistic standard must be set for an improvement to service.

#### **Question 8**

**Do you agree that the dedicated public transport corridors on which Rapid Transit operates should be strictly enforced?**

The Council would support robust enforcement on the rapid transit transport corridors to ensure a high quality, reliable and frequent service. The Council would recommend as part of route development there is close engagement with the local businesses along the proposed route to ensure that servicing issues and parking requirements are addressed. Consideration should also be given to how the pilot network will integrate with other public transport services operating on the route.

The proposed routes suggest that the rapid transit scheme will not be segregated from other traffic in major sections of the route particularly close to the city centre. It is not clear how the system will perform or deliver a modal shift in these circumstances. The Council would request evidence from the Department on their commitment that preference in the use of road space to public transport will be made.

## **Question 9**

### **Do you agree with the proposed powers for the Department to install, operate and maintain off-board ticketing machines?**

The Council would support powers to install, operate and maintain off-board ticketing machines. It is essential that the ticketing is integrated between the different public transport operators.

#### **Other comments**

The Council would also like to make the following additional points:

- Re-connecting the city of Belfast is critical to its success as a cohesive and competitive city. It is essential that we maximise mobility across the city, so that residents and visitors can easily, safely and affordably access jobs, services and leisure opportunities wherever they are located. The rapid transit system presents an ideal 'blank-sheet' opportunity to re-frame citizen expectations regarding cross-city connections, radically altering people's mind-maps in the city which have been historically shaped by segregation and conflict. The expansion of the shared spaces has the potential to be the catalyst for unravelling some of the long lasting issues confronting Belfast, and the new rapid transit system has to play a central part in this process. One of the concepts that will assist in addressing these issues and encourage increased travel horizons is to actively develop the notion of the Belfast rapid transit system as a mobile shared space in itself for the whole community ("everybody's RTS"), providing safe passage from one part of the city to another. This notion would extend in branding to the stops and waiting areas themselves.
- There is a clear desire to build a vision of a shared and better future between local communities in the city as we enter the next phase, moving from conflict management to city transformation. Shared spaces provide attractive destinations of common purpose and use and, as drivers for community cohesion, are therefore key to overcoming the problems of segregation in Belfast. Critical to the delivery and sustainability of shared spaces is well-connected, affordable and safe transport links.
- In 2008, the Council commissioned a think-piece of research entitled 'Improving Connectivity and Mobility in Belfast' exploring specifically the contribution that improved connectivity could make to the conflict transformation agenda in Belfast. It highlighted that physical and psychological barriers at the interfaces between the segregated communities, makes travel around parts of the city difficult and resulting in people avoiding certain areas perceived to be unsafe, freezing current land use patterns and making the creation of shared spaces more difficult. Safe, affordable and shared public transport is critical to the continued transformation of the city.

The report highlighted a number of disadvantages, particularly from a social policy perspective including: bus routes perceived to be following the sectarian segmentation of the city and exacerbating segregation; routes easily identifiable with specific communities; a lack of orbital routes, discouraging cross community contacts; and, the need to pay twice when interchanging in the city centre. It is essential that the RTS avoids these pitfalls in its choice of routes but also maximises its transformational impact in those neighbourhoods which are located at the multiple interfaces across the city.

The think-piece highlighted that mental mapping studies, looking at how some communities cognitively perceive their environment, found them to have very limited spatial maps, greatly limiting their access to employment and educational

opportunities. It was widely believed by most stakeholders consulted as part of the think-piece research that large parts of the public transport network – by responding to commercial pressures to meet current patterns of demand – exacerbate segregation. Rather than cutting across the communities and linking different parts of the city, the network tends to reproduce and reinforce patterns of segregation, in line with current perceptions of territoriality.

The report proposed that, through modifications to the existing services, public transport can play a major role in helping to change perceptions, enlarge travel horizons, and shape new travel and social patterns in Belfast. The report also proposed a concept to promote Belfast as the “city on the move”, with buses as its mobile shared units and information exchange hubs.

In the discussion paper, authored by Prof. Peter Jones (UCL) and Natalya Boujenko (Colin Buchanan Partners), they suggested that there may be ways in which the public transport could enhance good relations and social inclusion outcomes. The principal concept underlying the recommendations put forward in the document was to start expanding the number and range of the city’s shared spaces. It was suggested that this will provide more areas which people can safely travel to and through, thereby expanding their travel horizons and encouraging inter-community and inter-racial tolerance; it will also help to bring wealth into deprived communities. The paper outlined how the expansion of shared spaces has the potential to be the catalyst for unravelling some of the long standing issues confronting Belfast.

- Labour mobility is critical in reinforcing peace in Northern Ireland, promoting it as an attractive global city where its resident talent pool is able to move freely and safely, as well as attract the best to international employers in the Girdwood site. The links to building an attractive, competitive city are clearly outlined in Richard Florida’s work on the three central ‘prongs’ of technology, talent and tolerance; a city ill at ease with difference will neither attract nor retain talent in a globalised, mobile labour and investment market. Labour mobility in the city is dependent on ease of access and reduction in the perception of risk to personal safety and transport is key to delivering a competitive and cohesive city.

## Appendix 2

### **Belfast Rapid Transit Study: Draft Belfast City Council Response – May 2008**

The Council welcomes the announcement from the Minister for Regional Development and the publication of the Belfast Rapid Transit Study. The Council has supported the initiation of work to progress the development of a rapid public transport system for the city and would welcome the proposals as the first step towards a city-wide integrated network.

Notwithstanding the general support for the development of public transport this Council response is based on the consideration of the published documents by the Department for Regional Development and the presentation to the Development Committee in April 2008. The response covers both general and specific issues in relation to the study and the wider context of public transport for Belfast.

#### **General**

- The final form of technology (guided bus or light rail), capacity and the longer term potential in relation to the continued development of the city. The significant difference in Capital Cost Estimates, between Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Light Rail Transit (LRT), set out in the Study is an important element of the Consultant's recommendation of a bus based system. However, the basis for these cost comparisons are not clear in terms of whether the comparison is like for like and whether or not the system, as suggested can be upgraded at a later stage to tram or light rail. An important difference in the comparative costs for the systems relate to the degree of segregation from other traffic along the route with other variations for infrastructure or vehicle costs. The Council would request clarification on the basis on the costs and whether or not the bus based system will receive the equivalent degree of priority and separation to that anticipated for a LRT form of provision. Clarification is also requested in relation to the viability for the proposed BRT to be upgraded at a later stage, in terms of the potential additional costs and required space to achieve the required physical separation.
- The quality offered by bus based rapid transit can vary considerably depending on both the specification of the vehicles and the associated travel time, infrastructure (stops, interchanges, ticketing and real time information systems). The specification in terms of level of quality for the service is not clear from the study. The Council would request for a benchmark to be set to ensure the system selected for Belfast provides a viable attractive alternative to the car both in terms of service quality and journey time. The quality of provision including targets must be clearly articulated and ensure that the provision includes high quality infrastructure incorporating real time information and full integration with re-aligned public transport provision in the form of an integrated system. The Council would request further details of the specification on the level of service which is sought, including integration with other modes of public transport, and reassurance that a high quality of service is applied to any Rapid Transit System for Belfast.
- The proposals do not consider provision for the north and south of the city or address the potential relationships to existing provision within the corridors associated with the study options. The Council have reservations in relation to the absence of proposals for the wider city or detailed consideration of the potential for an expanded system that builds on the initial proposals.
- It is the Council's view that the provision should be set within the longer term context of city wide transport and the objectives of securing a modal shift towards public transport. The Council as part of the BMAP inquiry processes advocated the development of clear

transport corridor plans that provided the context for longer term planning on the basis of an integrated approach (See Attachment 1). The Study should clearly consider the integration of proposed development, in particular housing and employment, with the proposed transport network and provide an indication of the relationship between the implementation of improvements to public transport infrastructure and other transport services or proposals such as the provision of new highway infrastructure such as the proposed A2 widening or Connsbank Link.

- The BMTP and RTS outlined timetables for the progression of the different transport options and their implementation. The BMTP stated that commencement of a bus rapid transit network with the implementation of the Eway scheme in the Newtownards Corridor within the 2015 plan. Detailed planning of rapid transit schemes in three other corridors not served by rail infrastructure and/or to support major development was also outlined. As the progression of the EWAY, CITI Route and part of WWAY is now proposed the Council would request clarification of the implications of the proposed implementation on the development of the other transport initiatives identified for consideration, including the proposed timescales.
- The proposed routes suggest that the Rapid Transit scheme will not be segregated from other traffic in major sections of the route particularly close to the city centre. It is not clear how the system will perform or deliver a modal shift if in these circumstances. The Council is concerned that in the absence of route segregation and priority over other city centre traffic it is not clear what frequency or speed can be achieved and how this will relate to the existing bus based public transport provision.
- Significant development proposals such as those for Titanic Quarter offer the opportunity for both private sector contributions and the integration of provision into the design. Previous rapid transit schemes have indicated the potential for attracting private sector investment is stronger in relation to light rail schemes rather than bus based. Whilst the contextual documentation makes reference to the issue the Council would require clarification of the anticipated value or contribution from the private sector contributions or investment in relation to existing and proposed developments.
- The Council request clarification in relation to the anticipated or projected affordability and integration of the schemes with existing transport.

## **Specific**

There are a number of route options presented in the Executive Summary for the study and the Council has a number of issues in relation to the detail of the proposed or potential alignments.

- The WWAY Rapid Transit scheme beyond the Royal Victoria Hospital has a number of options identified with the alignment of along Falls Rd, Glen Rd and Springfield Rd with a range of terminus options including the routes recommended by the consultants with an endpoint of Glenmona. The further assessment of this connection and routing should in addition to the economic be evaluated in relation to the potential regenerative benefits the proposal could bring to the neighbourhood renewal areas through which it would pass.
- The recommended proposal for EWAY is via a diversion into Titanic Quarter (Odyssey) and a shared link for both EWAY and the Titanic Quarter connection into the city centre. The alignment would follow the Ballymacarrett Walkway, Dee Street and Sydenham Road before joining the Titanic Quarter proposed link at the Odyssey. This represents a significant departure from the proposals in BMAP and does not serve or provide a significant proportion of the inner east population with a new connection to the centre, Titanic Quarter or the wider city. This proposal appears to utilise the existing Dee Street Bridge and would therefore be dependant on the construction of the Sydenham



Interchange, Connsbank Link and potentially the Hollywood Arches by-pass. As a counterpoint or balance to this significant departure from the previous alignment there does not appear to have been any consideration of the potential for other alignments that could have reduced the impact on the Hollywood Rd / Newtownards Rd /Albertbrigde Rd junction, such as an alignment directly linking Connswater as a link to Albertbridge Road. Clarification is required in relation to the relationship of the proposal to the development of new road infrastructure in the vicinity as the potentially causal relationship reflected in the study. The clarification should also include any funding interrelationships proposed between these potential projects.

- The Council have received representations in relation to the potential conflict between the EWAY proposal and the Comber Greenway. Whilst the walkway and cycleway were introduced as temporary resources along the protected alignment they have become well utilised. The Council would request the development of the route seeks to ensure the minimisation of impacts on the existing environment to integrate the provision or retention of the existing facilities.
- The continued retention of the Bankmore link as part of the city centre transport solutions by DRD could affect the existing proposals and their future enhancement. The Council has highlighted serious concerns over the impact of the proposed road link from Cromac St to Sandy Row in relation to community severance, air quality and the adverse implications on the potential for the rapid transit connectivity to the South of the City and the university area.
- The Council is concerned that the report fails to identify detailed options in relation to the potential routes through the city centre and the level of priority that can be afforded to public transport initiatives. The connection through the city and the ability of the system to provide integrated through routes are critical both in relation to the existing proposal and any potential for a future upgrading of the system. The relationship with the city bus re-routing study and the potential to remove lay-over facilities from the City Hall/ Donegal Square area is a critical element of the study that is not clarified.

BMAP responses

| STAGE 1 BMAP PUBLIC INQUIRY |  |                 |     |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|-----|
| <b>PAC CODE:</b>            | 2965/16  | <b>BCC REF:</b> | 11P |
| <b>ISSUE RAISED:</b>        | BHA12:OBJECTION TO PROPOSAL – RAPID TRANSIT SCHEME – BELFAST HARBOUR |                 |     |

|                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| <b>PARTICIPATION AT INQUIRY:</b> | Informal |
|----------------------------------|----------|

**COMMENTS (1500 WORDS)**

1. The CITI-Route rapid transit scheme is intended to serve the city centre, the Odyssey, the Titanic Quarter, Belfast City Airport and the proposed new Tillysburn rail station. The present plan for a single BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) or LRT line fails to serve: the Harland Technology Park, the Airport Road West corridor and the proposed Tillysburn park and ride site. CITI-Route is also likely to fail to compete effectively with taxis, from the Airport, or the existing airport-city centre bus service, despite the latter’s relatively poor (20 minute) frequency. Unless its frequency is high, CITI-Route will also fail to provide a satisfactory link between the Airport terminal and the proposed Tillysburn rail station (passengers are unlikely to be prepared to wait 10 or 20 minutes for a bus to take them 600m.) These failings in CITI-Route arise despite, or partly because of a proposed swing bridge across the Musgrave Channel. Swing bridges are notoriously expensive and this one allows CITI-Route to access the Airport via the East Twin Island but in so doing obliges it to miss the Harland Technology Park altogether. Moreover, when in use, the bridge will close the Musgrave Channel.

2. As with most BMTP public transport proposals, the route to be adopted through the city centre is unspecified, as are potential cross centre connections with other services/corridors. In other words, like EWAY, CITI-Route remains another proposal for a new route rather than a part of the integrated public transport network which Belfast needs. In particular CITI-Route is trying to serve with a single route an area that can only be properly served by a network.

3. The CITI-Route proposal therefore needs a comprehensive reassessment, beginning with a statement of its proposed purposes and its relation to existing airport services (the airport bus and particularly the taxis), The reassessment should consider any bus services planned for the Titanic Quarter and any proposals for putting these and other services together to provide the cross city centre links and the city centre distribution network which Belfast currently lacks.

4. In the absence of clear and tested concepts it is also unwise to specify CITI-Route as needing to be a “rapid transit route”, when what is really required is a network. On the one hand it might operate better as a set of conventional bus services of the sort which were suggested in the Titanic Quarter Master Plan. These could combine to provide an integrated public transport network. Different services might be branded and marketed differently, eg the Airport bus. However, such bus services would be unlikely to compete effectively with the car and the taxi.

5. On the other hand buses hardly have the image for a modern hi-tech development adjacent to a capital city centre. Belfast City Airport might also wish to follow the example of London’s Heathrow Airport and employ new Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) technology to provide a new C21 public transport network capable of linking all the different origins and destinations in the area, including the Airport Road West, the whole of the TQ, the Airport, its car parks, the new superstores around the IKEA site and the existing and proposed rail stations with an automated system, able to provide non-stop travel between any pair of “stations” on the network. Such systems would not require expensive bridges across the

Musgrave Channel and could undoubtedly serve the entire area far better and more cost-effectively than BRT or LRT. Passengers wishing to get from the Airport to the city centre could be taken there non-stop, directly and without diversions via East Twin Island.

6. A PRT network would also be likely to attract developer contributions for the track and for stations, many of which would be located within particular developments or buildings. This would allow for the incremental development of a system linked to the overall site development.

7. The Plan should therefore be amended to be much less prescriptive about the solution to a problem which it has not clearly articulated. A completely new approach should be formulated with the first step being an analysis of the travel markets to be served and the potential revenues to be earned, first by competing effectively with services to the Airport, secondly from developer contributions and thirdly from the growth likely to arise as the limitations of the car within the area are increasingly recognised. The TQ Master Plan should also be reviewed with a view to include an innovative public transport system to attract people from their private cars such as the PRT system which is to be implemented at London Heathrow airport. With less reliance on the car usage and a reduced requirement for parking, higher density developments could be facilitated.

| <b>APPENDIX / REFERENCES / MAPS</b> |
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| STAGE 2 BMAP PUBLIC INQUIRY |  |                 |     |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|-----|
| <b>PAC CODE:</b>            | BMAP/2965/102  | <b>BCC REF:</b> | 14P |
| <b>ISSUE RAISED:</b>        | RAPID TRANSIT ROUTE: OBJECTION TO NON DESIGNATION OF A RAPID TRANSIT ROUTE FOR BELFAST NORTH |                 |     |

**PARTICIPATION AT INQUIRY:**

Written

**COMMENTS (1500 WORDS)**

- 1 **The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) for Northern Ireland 2025** sets out the following in relation to Rapid Transit provision for Belfast:  
**“BMA 4.2 Rapid transit, both guided bus and light rail based systems, has a potential longer term role in delivering integrated transport solutions for the BMA: keep rapid transit options under review for addressing future transportation requirements of the BMA. Examine the development of a BMA Rapid Transit Network in order to offer high quality, high capacity, accessible services using a mix of bus priority, guided bus and light rail, operating on-street and utilising existing and new rights of way”.** (RDS P.77)
  - 2 The BMTP 2025 Strategy outlines proposals to introduce rapid transit services as a major element of the delivery of a step change in the quality of public transport in the BMA.
  - 3 The BMTP 2015 Plan proposes the EWAY as the pilot rapid transit route for the city. The 2015 Plan also identifies opportunities to extend the rapid transit network and outlines three other possible routes:
    - WWAY as a rapid transit route from Belfast city centre into West Belfast;
    - CITI-Route a route linking Belfast city centre and Belfast City Airport through Titanic quarter
    - Superroute linking the Downpatrick corridor Annadale to the south of the city.
  - 4 The Council objects to the exclusion of a Rapid Transit proposal for North Belfast. Consideration should be given to a suite of transport policies for the northern corridor that would encourage transport orientated development and support the regeneration objectives for the north of the city. The Belfast Zoo is also located in the north of the city and should be taken into consideration in any transport proposals for this area. It is one of the main tourism attractions in the City and a modern, fast and convenient public transport option to the Zoo would support its continued development.
- Recommendations**
- 5 The Council recommends that a full assessment of the northern corridor is carried out to identify an alignment for a rapid transit proposal, possible interchanges and connections and opportunities to link to development opportunities or high density residential development.
  - 6 The Council recommends that targets should be set for planning and implementation of the proposed scheme prior to the review of the BMAP for inclusion as an amendment.

- 7 The Council recommends the establishment of the QBC's elements to support alignment and future development.

**APPENDIX / REFERENCES / MAPS**

**References**

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