



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Regional Development Strategy 10 Year Review Consultation
Date:	15 February 2011
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen Director of Development ext: 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Shaping Our Future Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2025 10 Year Review consultation document was launched by the Minister for Regional Development on the 6 January 2011.
1.2	The RDS is an overarching spatial framework to influence the future distribution of activities throughout the Region to 2025. The revised document will replace the RDS published in 2001 and amended after a 5 year review in 2008.
1.3	The Department for Regional Development hosted two information events in Belfast at the Waterfront Hall on Thursday 26 January 2011. The presentations on the main issues relating to the review were followed by question and answer sessions. Comments on the draft RDS review document must be submitted to the Department of Regional Development on or before 31 March 2011.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The Regional Development Strategy should play a critical role in setting the context for the continued development of Belfast as the driver of growth for the region. The recognition in the consultation document of the importance of the city to the region is positive and linked to the issue of continued population loss in Belfast.
2.2	It is essential that the Council makes a strong case for the RDS to maintain the balance of future growth reflecting the role of Belfast, as the driver of regional growth, and provide formal linkages to any linked Investment Strategy proposals such as the transportation plan, infrastructure development and the emphasis on public transport provision and connectivity. The current consultation document states that the RDS will inform and influence these strategies.

2.3	At a Special Development Committee meeting on 25 January 2011, it was agreed that a more detailed draft response would be brought back before the Committee for consideration. Officers will coordinate the draft response taking account of the issues and comments raised by Members along with responses from internal consultation with Council. It is proposed that a Special Committee meeting would be appropriate to consider the draft response.
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no resource implications

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are requested to agree to a Special Committee meeting on the 24 March to consider the draft response to the Regional Development Strategy Consultation document and to authorise an invitation for all Members of the Council to attend.

6	Decision Tracking
Draft response to the RDS 10 year Review to be brought back to the Committee for consideration.	
Timeline: March 2011	
Reporting Officer: John McGrillen	

7	Key to Abbreviations
DRD – Department for Regional Development	
RDS – Regional Development Strategy	