



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Date:	16 March 2011
Subject:	Renewing the Routes: Project Programme and Future Local Regeneration Activity
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3463

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<u>Introduction to Renewing the Routes programme</u> The Renewing the Routes Programme is an innovative regeneration intervention that targets arterial routes and surrounding communities within Belfast. Since 2004 the Programme has facilitated the investment of approximately £6 million across the key routes. This investment has acted as a catalyst for the delivery of a range of projects which were implemented over the programme period including: over 400 commercial frontage improvements; lighting schemes; environmental improvements; public realm work; public art projects; community arts projects; landscaping; alleygating schemes; installation of tourism blades; facade cleaning and improvements to existing railings.
1.2	In July 2010, Council agreed to carry forward the proposed £300,000 budget for arterial routes improvement projects into 2011/12, to allow for the detailed analysis and prioritisation of proposed activity across all 18 designated arterial routes.
1.3	<u>Future Renewing the Routes Programme</u> The Committee endorsed a methodology (Appendix 1) to prioritise the arterial routes which was developed on the basis of securing a longer-term rolling programme of local regeneration activity across the city. The survey of approximately 9,000 buildings and sites covering 62km of arterial routes is now complete for all arterial routes and the draft findings have been presented to Members at a series of party briefings, as agreed at Committee. The feedback from Members supported the strategic consideration of these areas and is incorporated into the report.
1.4	<u>Potential broader local regeneration activity</u> The Committee also approved the consideration of the potential for a framework

	<p>which would allow Council to consider the scope for additional activity beyond that proposed for prioritised arterial route areas.</p> <p>This also formed part of the discussions with Members at the party briefings and the feedback is shown in this report.</p>
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2	Key Issues																							
2.1	<p><u>Review of Activity</u></p> <p>During the party briefings Members expressed support for the works carried out under the programme which had already achieved transformations along parts of the key arterial routes and the potential for the continuation of this activity alongside the introduction of additional targeted local regeneration activity.</p>																							
2.2	<p><u>Arterial Routes Core Programme</u></p> <p>The detailed arterial routes analysis was presented to Members at party group briefings. The sessions generated detailed area-specific comments and queries in addition to the general feedback, which is summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the process of assessment was supported in terms of how it contributed to the local context of each arterial route; – a number of the groups suggested that the physical improvement focus of the work should be reflected in the data by emphasising the potential for the activity to transform an area’s visual appearance; – it was also suggested that the programme should be steered by important local factors such as complementarity with other activity; local neighbourhood focus or role; and the potential viability of what Renewing the Routes can achieve in targeted areas. 																							
2.3	<p>The detailed feedback has been built into the proposed programme shown below in Table 1, and mapped in Appendix 2. This proposed programme is dependent on Committee’s support to approve commencement of preparation work for on-site activities to resume in 2011/12 and suggested years.</p> <p><u>Table 1:</u></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Year</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Area</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Location</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="2">2011/12</td> <td>Antrim Road 2</td> <td>New Lodge Road to Oceanic Ave</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ormeau Road 1</td> <td>Donegall Pass to Stranmillis Embankment</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">2012/13</td> <td>Castlereagh Road 1</td> <td>Albertbridge Rd to Beersbridge Rd</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grosvenor Road 1</td> <td>Westlink to Falls Road</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Donegall Road 1</td> <td>Bradbury Place to Donegall Road Railway Bridge</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">2013/14</td> <td>Newtownards Road 2</td> <td>Witham Street to Beersbridge Rd</td> </tr> <tr> <td>York Road/Shore Road 4</td> <td>Lowwood Park to Shore Crescent</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Falls Road/Glen Road 6</td> <td>Kennedy Way to Ramoan Gardens</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Location</u>	2011/12	Antrim Road 2	New Lodge Road to Oceanic Ave	Ormeau Road 1	Donegall Pass to Stranmillis Embankment	2012/13	Castlereagh Road 1	Albertbridge Rd to Beersbridge Rd	Grosvenor Road 1	Westlink to Falls Road	Donegall Road 1	Bradbury Place to Donegall Road Railway Bridge	2013/14	Newtownards Road 2	Witham Street to Beersbridge Rd	York Road/Shore Road 4	Lowwood Park to Shore Crescent		Falls Road/Glen Road 6	Kennedy Way to Ramoan Gardens
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2.4	<p><u>Streetscape Proposals</u></p> <p>For Members’ information: an initial approach has been made to Council from the East, West and Shankill Partnership Boards seeking technical assistance in delivering a number of public realm and local regeneration projects. A bid has been submitted by the Partnership Boards for support from the Executive and</p>																							

	<p>following further developmental work around specific roles and responsibilities a report will be brought back to Committee for consideration.</p>
2.5	<p><u>Future Local Regeneration Activity</u> The June 2010 Committee endorsed the investigation of the potential for local regeneration activity outside the current prioritised arterial routes programme.</p>
2.6	<p>As part of the briefings the potential scope and type of arterial work in other commercial areas or local neighbourhoods was discussed to refine where there could be the opportunity for additional activity.</p>
2.7	<p>The current programme focuses on arterial routes in recognition of their important local role and their collective value as important drivers for the physical, economic and social sustainability of the city as a whole. Developing a local regeneration framework that could support the expansion of activity beyond the existing target areas would require a different approach to prioritisation. A focus on activity in local or neighbourhood hubs was however recognised as offering the potential for integrated working across the Council and beyond, especially in the context of the ongoing RPA and the new power of well-being for Council.</p>
2.8	<p>In terms of taking this agenda forward, it is important that it proceeds in the context of the development of the Council's overall place-shaping agenda and the development of a city resourcing plan. These issues were discussed by the SP&R Committee at its meeting on 4 March. The Committee discussed the need to "work in partnership and form strategic alliances to ensure continued investment in the City during this period of austerity and to secure necessary resources to make things happen, with a greater focus on delivery." The Committee recognised that this conversation needs to include a focus on projects that are significant both at a city and a neighbourhood level. The Committee agreed a number of workstreams, including looking at the issue of neighbourhood investment. Issues raised by the Renewing the Routes project including the further development of the framework to identify its broader applications will be fed into this workstream and a report will be brought back to the Committee for further consideration.</p>
2.9	<p>The broader approach could be developed with a local regeneration focus through the alignment of activity to address the local issues and priorities with the objective of providing a visible and responsive service. This targeted approach could support integrated local delivery through a joined-up approach linking resources or intervention more effectively. The approach to prioritisation and identification would, however, need to focus potential activities from across the organisation to support community and economic development linking to other programmes such as safety, tourism, arts, economic development and initiatives for Council owned property or assets.</p>
2.10	<p><u>Draft Framework</u> To guide the continued work, a draft framework has been developed to provide a mechanism to explore the links between the scope for the local regeneration activity based on existing hubs and the interaction with the work of the Council and other organisations. The framework has two distinct strands.</p>
2.11	<p>1. <u>'Local Neighbourhoods' Activity</u> The first strand seeks to define areas in the city where there may be the potential to carry out physical regeneration. Local focus areas outside of the defined arterial routes are now being identified to explore the potential for similar regeneration activity to support broader targeted interventions.</p>

	<p>Although not on the key arterial routes, these areas can be categorised by the existence of commercial or service cores which support a wider community or neighbourhood. These areas will be surveyed to support any prioritisation on a similar basis to that used for the arterial routes.</p>
2.12	<p>Although these areas are not formally designated under any land use or operational policies, they are generally located outside or on the fringes of the main business areas of the city where they may act as natural hubs. These areas could comprise of 'Neighbourhood Areas' containing elements of community interaction with active functions such as the commercial areas on Sandy Row or Shaws Road and 'Local Areas' that are smaller with less commercial presence but perform an important role as a community focus such as Short Strand and Ballysillan.</p>
2.13	<p><u>2. Additional Activity</u> The second strand of work is intended to identify the potential alignment with other activity of programmes to support a prioritisation based on the integration of activity. As a basis for any expansion activities the Committee may wish to consider opportunities to support current activities where additional funding or scope for collaboration exists. This work will embrace the current work being carried out in and around "local area working".</p>
2.14	<p>Any proposals for additional activity will be brought back to Committee for consideration and should maintain the characteristics of the targeted physical regeneration, delivered directly by Belfast City Council with the potential for improvement and impact.</p>
2.15	<p><u>Next Steps – Local Neighbourhoods activity</u> Members may wish to consider the development of the prioritised new areas (local/ neighbourhoods) as a parallel programme which would run alongside the Renewing the Routes work. The continued work will seek to refine the potential resource implications based on the type of activity in the different areas to inform the future consideration by Committee. Following the initial scoping and engagement with other parts of the Council it is proposed that the findings would be brought back to Committee, following further party briefings, for consideration.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
3.1	New areas identified would require additional resource allocation.
3.2	Any additional activity over and above the core programme may have resource implications for staffing and for match funding. A decision on individual opportunities for additional activity will be sought from Committee.

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

5.	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are requested to endorse the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed Renewing the Routes programme as illustrated in Table 1 above and the plan in Appendix 2; and 2. Continuation of work on the framework to identify and prioritise the opportunities for broader application of local neighbourhood Renewing the Routes type of activity alongside other local regeneration work, with the findings to be brought back to committee for further consideration following additional party briefings.

6.	Decision Tracking
Further to approval of the attached programme and recommendations:	
Timeline: March 2012	Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

7.	Key to Abbreviations
RPA – Review of Public Administration	

8.	Documents Attached
<p>Appendix 1 – Prioritisation methodology</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Map of 3-year Renewing the Routes Project Programme</p>	

Prioritisation Methodology

The methodology employed for the prioritisation process included the analysis of social and economic statistics along with the physical survey carried out in each area. The results of this methodology determined the rank position of an area against the total number of areas analysed.

Social Indicators are influenced by 5 elements including:

- income deprivation measured by the number of adults and children living in households in receipt of income support
- percentage change of population turnover
- housing benefit claimants
- crime/disorder statistics provided by PSNI
- ACORN system which looks at 'hard pressed' changes based on census data and lifestyle surveys. This data took into account changes within the sectors such as,
 - wealthy achievers
 - prosperous professionals
 - comfortably off – secure families and prudent professionals
 - moderate means, and
 - hard pressed – struggling families/burdened singles.

Economic Indicators were based on 3 data components:

- average income domain
- average employment domain
- percentage change in number of businesses based on annual characteristics and usage.

A Physical Survey was executed on each of the 18 arterial routes designated under Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP). The physical survey assessed the condition of every building on each route and also identified types of land use including emphasising gap sites. The survey covered a linear distance of 62km across all 18 arterial routes. Each arterial route was broken down into distinguishable nodes of 0.5-1km to enable a greater insight into the physical needs of each node and to identify the pockets of degradation where environmental intervention could be targeted and managed at a local level.

Strategic Influences were applied to the matrix of the prioritisation process to recognise the strategic influences within each node through qualitative research which may not be captured in the qualitative raw data. Strategic influences recognise the important issues and developments in the local context of the area. Information was gathered from Area Partnership Boards and the main statutory provider and examined how this may influence potential activity under Renewing the Routes.

The strategic influences take into account the following factors:

- Viability – type of activity viable under the Renewing the Routes
- Complementarity – impact of partners' plans on potential Renewing the Routes activity i.e. does it complement or preclude activity?
- Neighbourhood Focus – identification of commercial or community focus areas.

The factors are scored positive, negative or neutral and could include issues such as the impact of wider plans on Renewing the Routes activity, the potential for

partnership working or potential overlaps in activity. This process ensures that a balance is struck between the condition of a node and the limited potential of Renewing the Routes activity.

Proposed 3 Year Programme

