



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Date:	10 August 2011
Subject:	Renewing the Routes Programme 2011/12
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	The Renewing the Routes Programme is a regeneration intervention that targets arterial routes 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; commercial alley gating schemes; installation of tourism signage; facade cleaning and improvements to site boundaries or enclosures.
1.2	In August 2010, Committee agreed to carry forward the proposed £300,000 budget as a specified reserve for arterial routes improvement projects into 2011/12 to supplement the £300,000 allocation proposed for that year. The deferring of the implementation works allowed for the detailed analysis and prioritisation of proposed activity across all 18 designated arterial routes.
1.3	Following Committee endorsement a methodology to prioritise the arterial routes was developed on the basis of securing a longer-term rolling programme of local regeneration across the city.
1.4	In April 2011, a three-year prioritisation plan identifying proposed target areas was presented to Committee, based upon the agreed methodology. The Committee agreed to support Option 1 for the year 2011/2012 financial year along with the inclusion of the deferred resources from the allocation in the special reserves with a combined budget of £600,000. Proposals for a programme to continue the works beyond the current year will be subject of an additional report to be considered by the Committee at a future date. The target areas for this financial year are the Antrim Road, Sandy Row, Castlereagh Street and the Grosvenor Road.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	<p>Since approval in May 2011, work has continued on the development of plans for the four target areas. Scoping and engagement work has expanded, in conjunction with relevant statutory and community contacts, including elected representatives for the areas. This activity has informed the development of the range of priority local regeneration projects which are included with this report for endorsement by committee (Appendix 1) as extracts from a combined report covering the four target areas (Appendix 2).</p>
2.2	<p>The key common themes emerging from the scoping work were identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Environmental improvements</i> - major issues facing the routes are dereliction or under used property and often poor general environments; requiring action to ensure improvements that can complement other developments; - <i>Built heritage</i> - the roads contain elements of historical or cultural significance that offer the opportunity to develop these local assets through architectural lighting, interpretive signage and heritage projects; - <i>Commercial improvements</i> - focus areas have been identified along the routes; the areas are hubs of activity with local shops, services and facilities serving the community. The commercial improvements will focus on supporting these; - <i>Environmental works</i> -Targeted and sustained clean-up and graffiti removal campaigns working with local groups; - <i>Collaborative work</i> - essential in maximising finite budgets, particularly with a joined-up approach to external funding opportunities with statutory agencies. The underlying objective is to maximise the impact of the Council's own contribution through internal joint working i.e. community safety, parks and leisure, economic development, building control, tourism and the arts and Strategic Neighbourhood Action Programme (SNAP).
2.3	<p><u>Contribution to commercial improvement works</u> In light of the streamlined approach to the legal processes, now employed by Renewing the Routes in dealing directly with owners of commercial properties, it has been previously agreed by Council to seek a nominal contribution from owners towards the cost of the project of 10%. It is proposed that the approach of requiring a contribution from owners/occupiers is continued.</p>
2.4	<p><u>Procurement of proposed works</u> The Renewing the Routes will work with Property and Projects in the procurement of architectural services and the proposed measured term contract for the contractors to carry out the works across all the areas. Work is also underway with landscape architects within Parks and Leisure to develop the public realm schemes. This overall approach will help ensure efficiencies in project development, delivery timescales and budgets, whilst providing flexibility given the complex nature of some of the schemes.</p>
2.5	<p>Members will note that the project summaries of the plans for each area are included for consideration in Appendix 1 and the combined detailed plans in Appendix 2. An additional longer list of projects is also provided as a contingency should further resources become available (through external sources currently being actively sought) or modifications are required to ensure deliverability of the proposed project plans.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
	£600,000 allocated through the £300,000 2010/2011 accrued special reserve and £300,000 from the 2011/12 financial year.

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 endorse the project proposals for the Renewing the Routes programmes at Sandy Row, Antrim Road, Grosvenor Road and Castlereagh Street as detailed in Appendix 1.

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

7.	Key to Abbreviations
SNAP – Strategic Neighbourhood Action Programme	

8.	Documents Attached
Appendix 1- Project plans for target areas 2011/12. Appendix 2 - Renewing the Routes programme 2011/12.	

**Renewing the Routes Programme: Short and long listed projects
2011/12
Short listed projects**

Area	Project	Indicative cost
Antrim Road	Commercial improvement programme to target two blocks of shops which would include cosmetic enhancement works to shop façades.	£90,000
	Environmental Improvement scheme to enhance the public realm at Atlantic Avenue which could include resurfacing, new crossings, trees and replacement bollards.	£35,000
	Heritage improvement to St Ignatius Orthodox Church, (was St James') at the centre point of the area, which may include lighting, railing or planting.	£24,000
	Targeted cleansing in a parallel with project works programme to include gum and graffiti removal with local community.	£1,000
	Total	£150,000
Area	Project	Indicative cost
Castlereagh Street	Commercial improvement scheme to target properties which could include new signage, lighting and painting.	£50,000
	Commercial scheme to a further commercial properties along Castlereagh Street.	£40,000
	Environmental improvements to residential frontage on Castlereagh Street.	£20,000
	Packaged lighting, railing and planting projects to Mountpottinger Presbyterian Churches.	£39,000
	Targeted cleansing in a parallel with project works programme to include gum and graffiti removal with local community.	£1,000
	Total	£150,000
Area	Project	Indicative Cost
Grosvenor Road	Public realm environmental improvement scheme at Distillery Street which may include planting, trees and hard landscaping to improve the appearance of this site upon which forms part of the gateway to the Grosvenor Road residential area.	£65,000
	Commercial Improvement Programme for approximately 12 units for cosmetic enhancements works to shop façade.	£30,000
	Streetlighting enhancements to approximately 26 existing columns to define identify the character of the area and to complement traditional style lighting of Falls Road and/or environmental improvement scheme to spaces at Grosvenor Road pitches which may include soft landscaping and reducing/removing existing railings to bring space into leisure use and/or environmental improvement scheme on corner of Cullingtree Road to include soft landscaping, formalisation of path and coordinated design.	£30,000

Renewing the Routes Programme: Short and long listed projects 2011/12

	Interpretative tourism signage to highlight points of interest and buildings of local importance to complement existing signage on Falls Road.	£15,000
	Environmental Improvement Scheme to St Joseph's Centre for Deaf which may include clean down or replacement of existing window grills, lighting, redecorate windows, repair and paint up of façade and potential of community art piece (subject to timeframe).	£9,000
	Targeted cleansing in a parallel with project works programme to include gum and graffiti removal with local community.	£1,000
	Total	£150,000
Area	Project	Indicative Cost
Sandy Row	Commercial Improvement Programme targeting 2 – 3 commercial blocks of shops which to include cosmetic enhancement works to shop façades.	£121,500
	Environmental Improvement Scheme at Sandy Row Orange Hall to introduce feature lighting..	£10,000
	Partnership with local groups to carry out environmental improvements to encourage youth engagement and ownership.	£2,500
	Interpretative tourism signage at Hope Street Junction to highlight local heritage assets and link with existing signage.	£15,000
	Targeted cleansing in a parallel with project works programme to include gum and graffiti removal with local community.	£1,000
	Total	£150,000

**Renewing the Routes Programme: Short and long listed projects
2011/12
Long listed projects**

Area	Project
Antrim Road	Further commercial improvements which may include cosmetic enhancement works to commercial façades.
	Street lighting embellishments or painting to approximately 25 columns, subject to DRD, to define and identify the character of the area and to complement existing traditional style embellishments previously installed at lower Antrim Road on up to the Waterworks.
	Improvement to heritage elements at Antrim Road Baptist Church which falls within a designated Area of Townscape Character, which may include lighting, railing or planting.
	Wider junction improvements at the strategic Atlantic Ave junction encompassing the pavements at either side of the traffic island, resurfacing, street lights, railings, planting, subject to DRD.
	Public realm at the strategic Cliftonville Road junction including resurfacing, emphasised crossings and replacement railings subject to DRD approval.
	Interpretive tourism signage to highlight points of interest and buildings of local importance, to complement existing signage at Cliftonville Road.
Area	Project
Castlereagh Street	Lighting, railing or planting project to St Clements Parochial Hall.
	Targeted improvements at the prominent Oasis Café and Centre to promote passing trade and vibrancy as a gateway feature.
	Column and lamp embellishments or painting to street lights, approximately 16 columns, subject to DRD, to define and identify the character of the area and to complement existing traditional style embellishments previously installed at Templemore Avenue.
	Temporary 'virtual shops' project – adding a high-quality graphic design to give the illusion of a real shops, including a group of vacant shop units in DSD ownership.
	Temporary environmental scheme to improve the appearance of two vacant gap sites in partnership with DSD.
Area	Project
Grosvenor Road	Environmental enhancement scheme for boundaries to residential properties on Grosvenor Road to include cosmetic enhancement works to façade of houses.
	Public realm improvement scheme to the corner of Servia Street to redefine the area, prune back existing vegetation, tree planting and removal/reduction of railing to tie in with improvement work outside Grosvenor Road shops.
	Environmental improvement to railings at Grosvenor Road Surgery to include clean down and repaint of railings.
	Limited cosmetic improvements to the former Oak Tree Bar to improve its strategic appearance and location on the road.
	Work with the surgery to prune back and tidy up vegetation at Dunville Health Centre.

Renewing the Routes Programme: Short and long listed projects 2011/12

Area	Project
Sandy Row	Addition of directional finger post to Sandy Row on existing Lisburn Road Tourism Sign.
	Local information signage at the top and bottom of Sandy Row to highlight main businesses and places of interest.
	Potential directional finger posting for the 'Fairy Thorn Garden' as a product to the Sandy Row tourism portfolio.
	Replacement/reinstatement of bin provision along Sandy Row
	'Virtual Shop Fronts' on vacant/derelict properties which may include a cosmetic upgrade and temporary vinyl wrap images of shops on the existing windows and doors.
	Boundary enhancement at Hope Street junction (Days Hotel) to include opening the entrance on Sandy Row to encourage more footfall on the road.
	Interpretative tourism signage at Sandy Row Orange Hall to highlight points of interest and buildings of local importance to complement existing signage.
	Public realm improvements along Sandy Row to include street furniture, hanging baskets decorative railings and improvements at strategic junctions in particularly Donegall Road junction (subject to DRD approval).
	Cosmetic improvements to Sandy Row Methodist Church to include feature lighting and boundary treatment.