



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Date:	10th January 2012
Subject:	Future Renewing the Routes Programme 2012-2016
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	In November 2011 a "Future Renewing the Routes Programme 2011-2016" paper was presented to Committee. Members asked at the time for the paper to be deferred to allow for further engagement at Party level. There were two main strands inherit within the report; (1) the future renewing the routes programme and (2) the potential for a parallel neighbourhood programme.
1.2	<u>Future renewing the routes programme</u> Given the availability of a finite resource the paper presented an initial analysis of the arterial routes to members through a red, amber, green status report and following on from this the potential short to medium and long-term target areas.
1.3	This was based on a previous Committee agreed methodology that surveyed each individual arterial route looking specifically at land status; occupancy rates; building condition; shop front conditions; social and economic deprivation.
1.4	Further considerations (detailed later in this report) and discussion with elected members at party level were required before any final decisions on target areas were presented to Committee for consideration.
1.5	<u>Potential neighbourhood programme</u> The previous report provided members with an initial map that identified some potential neighbourhood areas. The map was not exhaustive but provided for members initial information and comment.
1.6	It would be the intention that members consider a future neighbourhood programme which would run parallel to that of the renewing the routes programme discussed above. It is important that this potential programme is in line with the Council's overall place shaping agenda; development of a city resourcing plan and discussion on local or neighbourhood funds. With this in mind it would be the intention to include this work as part of this wider agenda and report back to Committee once these issues have been programmed corporately.

1.7	This purpose of this report is two fold; firstly, to seek member's agreement on the broad parameters of a potential renewing the routes programme and secondly, to update members on a specific request from the Department of Social Development (DSD) to work with them on a joint initiative in Woodstock Link (Appendix 1).
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2.	Key Issues
2.1	<p><u>Renewing the Routes broad parameters programme.</u> Following initial discussions with members there were a number of key considerations that were identified as important influences for ongoing work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members were broadly supportive of a four year programme to allow for a more planned approach across the city on a north, south, east and west geographical split each target area receiving an allocation of £150,000 per annum; 2. A programme based on target two areas per annum. 3. That consideration be given (where possible) to prioritising areas that have not received assistance in the past; 4. Flexibility in the programme to be responsive to the potential for small scale environment improvements arising from individual or trader/community associations within their respective area, with a separate allocation subject to Committee approval; 5. To guide the identification of areas for member consideration officers should consider a number of strategic issues including a) whether a renewing the routes type project would have a significant impact; b) whether there are complementary regeneration activities planned for the area and c) whether the area has a natural community focus.
2.2	<p>Taking account of these influences members are asked to consider and approve the following parameters for the development of a Renewing the Routes programme :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A four year plan based on an allocation of £300,000 per annum (two routes with £150,000 allocated to each); 2. A city wide approach (north, south, east and west geographical split) with two areas to be targeted per annum; 3. An additional £40,000 to be allocated to provide the flexibility to respond to individual requests from trader groups/community associations for smaller scale targeted environmental works. Potential projects to be brought before Committee for approval and any unallocated resources to be utilised to supplement the main programme in that year; 4. Moving forward from the initial survey of arterial route areas four strategic considerations, are applied survey results to aid prioritisation:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. whether a renewing the routes type project would have any impact in the area; b. the potential impact of any complementary regeneration activities planned for the area; c. the extent to which areas have benefitted from previous support or local regeneration funding; and d. whether the area forms a natural community/commercial focus. 5. Final recommendations for a four year programme, following assessment alongside the above parameters, are brought before a subsequent Committee for consideration.

2.3	Request from DSD to work with the Department at Woodstock link. Following public realm improvements carried out by the Department of Social Development at Woodstock Link, the Department has formally requested the Council to assist with the implementation of a commercial improvement programme to the adjacent properties. (Appendix 1).
2.4	The Department has confirmed that all costs associated with the commercial improvement programme will be covered by their DSD budgets and permission is being sought from Committee for staff assistance in the development and delivery of the potential complementary commercial regeneration project.

3.	Resource Implications
3.1	The budgets for the Renewing the Rotes programme have been included as part of the estimates process.
3.2	There are no additional resource implications arising from the proposed assistance to DSD in the development of a commercial improvement project for Woodstock link.

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

5.	Recommendations
	<p>Committee are asked :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the broad parameters for the further prioritisation and development of the Renewing the Routes programme as detailed in paragraph 2.2 of this report; 2. To approve the support for the development of a commercial improvement programme at Woodstock Link to be funded exclusively by the Department of Social Development; and 3. To agree that a subsequent report be brought back to Committee for consideration detailing the basis for a four year Renewing the Routes programme with specific target areas across the city identified on a north, south, east and west basis.

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

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: Request from the Department of Social Development (DSD)

