



**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Belfast City Access Strategy – engagement request
<b>Date:</b>	22 October 2013
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Keith Sutherland, Urban Development Manager ext. 3578

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	To support the commercial, retail and leisure offerings in the city; Members approved the commissioning of a study and subsequent action plan with regard to city access. Depending on the results of this study, Committee reserved the option of a secondary stage to develop a longer-term City Access Strategy.
1.2	The study will be conducted in partnership with key stakeholders and will enable the Council to fully understand the current and future needs of the city. It will also develop indicators that will enable us to monitor the situation and identify future actions to address the city's needs, in respect of accessibility, city centre transport, parking and broader mobility.
1.3	The specific objectives are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Ensure the accessibility offered by the transport system is available to all.</li><li>– Improve safety and security.</li><li>– Reduce air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.</li><li>– Improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the transportation of persons and goods.</li><li>– Contribute to enhancing the attractiveness and quality of the urban environment and urban design.</li></ul>
1.4	During the first stage of the study, we aim to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Determine the perceptions of key stakeholders with regard to transport and access issues.</li><li>– Review actual performance levels and benchmark Belfast against other relevant cities.</li><li>– Review suitable case studies.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Identify any recommendations that could be implemented to improve access.</li> </ul>
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<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The consultants, Atkins, have completed most of the preliminary research and have started to engage with key stakeholders.
2.2	As part of the process, the consultants would like to discuss city access issues, priorities and possible solutions with Members. Due to the interest previously shown in this subject, it has been proposed that this should be done in person rather than via questionnaires, and should provide an opportunity for input from all Members.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	None – covered under previously agreed budget for the work.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	Access issues for the disabled are included within the review.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are asked to allow the consultants, Atkins, to attend the start of the next Committee meeting in November to present their initial findings and discuss Councillors' views on the issue.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
Timeline: February 2014	Reporting Officer: John McGrillen