



## Belfast City Council

Report to:	Town Planning Committee
Subject:	City Centre Traffic Management Proposals
Date:	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2009
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### Relevant Background Information

A report was considered by Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009 outlining the Department for Regional Development (DRD) Road Service proposals for enabling measures to facilitate the DSD Streets Ahead proposals in Donegal Place and for removal of northbound traffic from Donegal Place. The proposals will have implications on general traffic movements in the city centre and will involve re-routing of some bus services and alterations to existing traffic movements in surrounding streets. Roads Service consider that a number of Traffic Regulations Orders (TRO's) will be required for Castle Street, Queen Street and Upper Queen Street to facilitate the alterations to traffic movements. This will involve changes to the movement of scheduled bus routes with services that utilised northbound travel along Donegal Place being directed to Queen Street/Castle Street before rejoining Royal Avenue.

The Committee deferred consideration of the proposals and requested a presentation by Department for Regional Development and the Department of Social Development on the full proposals traffic management proposals for the city centre including Rapid Transit and the impacts of Streets Ahead on city centre traffic.

### Key Issues

A ministerial review of the emerging strategies for DSD Streets Ahead proposals, DRD City Centre Traffic Management proposals, City Centre Ring South Section proposal and Rapid Transit proposals was carried out earlier this year and was recently approved by the DRD Minister.

Roads Service Eastern division are currently developing traffic management proposals for Belfast City Centre on the basis of the principles in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) while accommodating the DSD Streets Ahead and Rapid Transit proposals.

The proposals have been divided into 3 areas:

(i) **Streets Ahead Enabling Measures** - To facilitate the ongoing DSD Streets Ahead proposals to make Donegall Place one way to traffic requires transfer of public transport facilities to Upper Queens Street, Queens Street and Castle Street by 2010. A number of Traffic Regulation Orders are currently being prepared and include:

#### Castle Street

- Access only street
- One way traffic from Queen Street to King Street (westbound)
- A section of bus only street between Fountain Street and Donegall Place
- Removal of on street parking
- Introduction of formal loading bays and loading restrictions
- On-road contraflow cycle lane from King Street to Queen Street

#### Queen Street

- Introduction of one-way traffic northbound
- Access only street
- Provision of new bus shelters on the west side of the street (to accommodate diverted bus services)
- Changes to on street parking provision
- Introduction of designated disabled parking bays
- Introduction of formal loading bays and loading restrictions

#### Upper Queen Street

- Bus lane, new bus stops and shelters on the west side of the street
- Changes to on street parking, including the introduction of dedicated disabled bays and loading facilities

(ii) **Rapid Transit Enabling Measures** - To facilitate the provision of a rapid transit service in Belfast by 2011/12 will require dedicated public transport lanes on all the main streets around the city centre. This will require a reduction in general traffic in the core city centre streets; and

(iii) **BMTP Traffic Management Enabling Works including DSD Phase 2 Streets Ahead Proposals** - Delivery of the full BMTP proposals, to reduce traffic volumes in the city centre and create a better environment for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport services will require an alternative provision for existing users. The DSD Phase 2 Streets Ahead proposals (post 2012) will fully pedestrianise Donegall Place and Donegall Square North effectively closing the front of the City Hall to through traffic except for Rapid Transit vehicles and cyclists. The consequence of this is the re-routing of public transport services to the rear of the City Hall which will require the restriction of general traffic from Donegall Square South.

Road Service state that the development of the proposals, which require Traffic Regulation Orders, will require extensive consultation with affected groups and this will be carried out in accordance with the legislative process.

<b>Resource Implications</b>
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There is no resource implication for the Council.
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<b>Recommendations</b>
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The Committee is requested to consider the proposals for City Centre Traffic Management proposals as outlined by DRD and DSD
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<b>Decision Tracking</b>
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No decision tracking
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<b>Documents Attached</b>
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<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
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DRD – Department for Regional Development DSD – Department of Social Development TRO – Traffic Regulation Order BMTP – Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan
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