

Belfast Rapid Transit Consultation
Comhairliúchán maidir le córas
Luathiompair i mBéal Feirste

Question and Answer Booklet
Leabhrán Ceisteanna Agus Freagraí

November 2009



Department for
**Regional
Development**

www.drdni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

Forbartha Réigiúnaí

MÄNNYSTRIE FÜR

Kintra Pairts Fordèrin

Participation in this Consultation Exercise

If you wish to participate in this consultation exercise, the Consultation Pack contains a Summary Document, Detailed Policy Proposals, an Integrated Impact Assessment document, and this Question and Answer Booklet to assist you when submitting your response. Alternatively, you may wish to access the Consultation Pack from our website, at www.drdni.gov.uk.

This publication can also be made available, on request, in large print, Braille and audio alternative formats. Please contact us to discuss your requirements.

The consultation period will run from 23 November 2009 to 19 February 2010. You must respond by **5pm on 19 February 2010**, otherwise we may not be able to take account of your comments. Submissions may be submitted in other languages, including Irish and Ulster-Scots, or in a different format, such as audio tape. We will acknowledge your submission in your chosen language and will publish the Department's response to the issues raised in due course.

Department for Regional Development

Rapid Transit Division

Clarence Court

10-18 Adelaide Street

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About this Consultation

Why is the Department conducting this consultation?

- 1.1. We are asking for your views on the policy proposals and integrated impact assessments outlined in this Consultation Pack for the delivery of a Rapid Transit system in Belfast.
- 1.2. Your response will help us to determine the final policy decisions, which will be published after we have considered all the responses. We will use these final policy decisions to develop proposals for new legislation, which will be subject to approval by the Assembly.

How should you respond to this consultation?

- 1.3. This Question and Answer booklet contains all the specific consultation questions that are included throughout the Consultation Pack. You can respond by completing this Question and Answer booklet and returning it by post, e-mail or fax to:

Department for Regional Development

Rapid Transit Division

Clarence Court

BELFAST

BT2 8GB

Telephone: (028) 9054 0273

Textphone: (028) 9054 0642

E-mail: Brtdrdni.gov.uk

Fax: (028) 9054 1129

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You may also access the Question and Answer booklet online from our website, at www.drdni.gov.uk.

- 1.4. If you prefer, your submission can be in a different format from that suggested in this Question and Answer booklet, such as audio tape. It would be helpful if your submission could relate to the specific consultation questions or paragraph references.
- 1.5. Before you submit your response, please read the statement on “Confidentiality of Consultations – Freedom of Information Act 2000” at Appendix 1 of this booklet.

When should you respond to this consultation?

- 1.6. The consultation period will run from 23 November 2009 to 19 February 2010. You must respond by **5pm on 19 February 2010**, otherwise we may not be able to take account of your comments. We will acknowledge your submission and will publish our response to the issues raised in due course.

Respondent's Details

Name: Jonna Monaghan	Please Return by 19 February 2010
Organisation (if applicable): Belfast Healthy Cities	
Address: 22-24 Lombard Street Belfast, BT1 1RD	
Telephone: 028 9032 8811	
Fax: 028 9032 8333	
	To: Department for Regional Development, Rapid Transit Division, Clarence Court, Belfast, BT2 8GB.
	E-mail: Brtd@drdni.gov.uk
	Fax: (028) 9054 1129
E-mail: jonna@belfasthealthycities.com	
I am responding: as an individual <input type="checkbox"/> on behalf of an organisation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Is your response confidential? If so, please explain why (see Appendix 1 "Confidentiality of Consultations – Freedom of Information Act 2000").	
Provision is made throughout this questionnaire for you to provide additional comments. If, however, you wish to provide more detailed comments on any aspect of the consultation, please feel free to append additional materials and supplementary documents, clearly marked and cross-referenced to the relevant questions, as necessary.	

Questions on Detailed Policy Proposals

Question 1 (page 15)

Do you agree that the Department should have the necessary authority to implement the Rapid Transit proposals?

Yes No

Comments:

Question 2 (page 16)

Do you agree that the Department should take land acquisition powers for the implementation of the Rapid Transit system?

Yes No

Comments:

It is important to ensure that acquisition through agreement is prioritised. It is also vital that potential conflicts between land uses are resolved in a way that maximises benefits to the local community and their health and wellbeing. For example, existing greenways should be retained, as they offer important opportunities for recreation and physical activity, while also providing green lungs and natural drainage systems for the city. Removal of these is likely to be associated with an increase in obesity, healthcare use and road maintenance, which have significant cost implications that outweigh the direct economic benefits.

As noted in relation to question 8, road widening to facilitate rapid transit should be avoided, as this minimises the incentive to leave the car and the associated benefits of reduced air pollution, reduced congestion and more sustainable communities.

Question 3 (page 16)

Do you agree that the Department should have the power to purchase, lease and dispose of goods, services and facilities for the Rapid Transit system?

Yes No

Comments:

Question 4 (page 17)

Do you agree that a performance-based contract should be introduced for the operation of the Rapid Transit system?

Yes No

Comments:

Question 5 (page 18)

Do you agree that the Department should be responsible for:

- specifying Rapid Transit service requirements, quality-of-service and the fare levels;
- awarding the Rapid Transit contract; and
- monitoring and reporting on Rapid Transit operator performance?

Yes No

Comments:

While Belfast Healthy Cities agrees with giving DRD responsibility for awarding and managing the contract, we believe greater public engagement is required regarding service requirements, quality-of-service and fare levels. Local people should be engaged directly, to establish what their needs are, and what arrangements and fare structures would support modal switch. This is essential to capitalise on the key opportunity of reducing reliance on the private car, and improving access to jobs, education and services for people in the inner city, many of whom live with considerable disadvantage. The rapid

transit proposal can significantly support health and wellbeing by improving cross city access to the key health determinants, jobs and education, but focus must be on people and enabling them to utilise the new potential fully.

Representatives from disability organisations should also be included among key consultees to find ways of accommodating the range of special needs and potential needs for additional support.

Question 6 (page 18)

What are your views on the proposal to offer financial incentives to the Rapid Transit operator to grow the Rapid Transit market, introduce innovation and improve services?

Comments:

Clarification on what is meant by 'grow the Rapid Transit market' would be welcome. Belfast Healthy Cities would support financial incentives that encourage use, for example fare subsidies enabling low fares or rewarding committed use (eg. making weekly/monthly passes attractive through being more affordable than singles and offering unlimited use, and offering day tickets as at present). It is important to support long term commitment and modal switch; as such, introductory offers may not be sufficient.

Question 7 (page 20)

Do you agree with the proposed powers to regulate passenger conduct on Rapid Transit Vehicles and in/on Rapid Transit premises?

Yes **No**

Comments:

Question 8 (page 21)

Do you agree that the dedicated public transport corridors on which Rapid Transit operates should be strictly enforced?

Yes X **No**

Comments:

Enforcement of public transport corridors is a key element, vital to ensure the system operates smoothly to reliable travel times, and therefore is an attractive and effective travel option. The punitive measures should, however, be complemented with broader incentives to use public transport and make it an attractive, viable alternative, as this in itself would support reduced car dependency, which in turn would reduce the need for parking.

A second key element is provision of consistent and meaningful dedicated corridors, and Belfast Healthy Cities would like to stress the need to prioritise this in operational development of the system. Ideally all key transport corridors in the city should have a dedicated public transport lane; short sections are often of limited use. However, corridors should be achieved primarily without resorting to road widening, as this minimises the incentive to reduce car use, while having a major negative impact on the built and natural environment of Belfast.

Question 9 (page 21)

Do you agree with the proposed powers for the Department to install, operate and maintain off-board ticketing machines?

Yes **No**

Comments:

Off board ticketing machines can complement other payment options. It is essential to consider the needs and abilities of more vulnerable groups, such as older people, people with visual impairments and people with learning difficulties, who might find it difficult or confusing to use the machines. The machines should also accept a range of payment types.

More importantly, there is a significant opportunity here to develop an integrated ticketing system, that enables travel across the system with one ticket – it is particularly important that the system links to Metro and park and ride schemes located at the outskirts of the city, to enable and encourage commuters to utilise the system effectively. A large number of cities worldwide offer for example time bound tickets, which are valid on any public transport in the relevant region during the specified time. This simplifies use of the system and also makes it more affordable, and is therefore an essential element of increasing the viability and attraction of public transport.

Please make any further comments on the Detailed Policy Proposals here, ensuring that you clearly refer to any relevant questions or responses submitted above.

Questions on Integrated Impact Assessment

In considering these questions you should bear in mind that it is proposed that a further Integrated Impact Assessment screening exercise will be undertaken prior to the implementation phase of the Rapid Transit project.

Question 1

Do you have any views on the Integrated Impact Assessment Screening conclusion reached by the Department?

Yes No

Comments:

Overall, Belfast Healthy Cities welcomes the move to a Rapid Bus Transit system which will assist in improving the attraction of public transport as an alternative to the private car and provide a vital, direct cross city public transport link. We believe, however, that the opportunities that the system offers can be most effectively capitalised on by building the system to the needs of users. A key element of this is improving integration across transport modes, and improving orbital services. A health perspective can offer important insights into how the system may affect wellbeing and long term social as well as economic prosperity in the city.

The IIA has identified that while no immediate health impacts have been identified at this stage it will be necessary to screen the proposal again prior to the implementation phase. Belfast Healthy Cities welcome and support this recommendation as we consider that, as transport is a key determinant of health, the introduction of a Rapid Transit System in Belfast has the potential for both positive and negative impacts on health, for the population as a whole as well as for some groups within the population. Some key health considerations related to the proposal are outlined below:

- A Rapid Transit System has the potential to increase levels of physical activity as it will provide an alternative to private car use. Using public transport is a more active form of travel than using a private care as most journeys begin and end with walking or cycling to the place of access (stop/halt location). Measures to increase physical activity are critical as Northern Ireland is currently facing an obesity epidemic with 59% of adults identified as either overweight or obese and 10% of children obese in 2005/06. Physical activity can contribute to addressing obesity which is identified as an important risk factor for a wide range of serious conditions including heart disease, cancer, hypertension and diabetes.
- Alongside providing opportunities to encourage physical activity it is also important to provide an efficient alternative to private vehicles to reduce emissions of air pollutants, including greenhouse gases. Climate change is one of the biggest public health issues of the 21st Century and our current travel patterns and behaviours are unsustainable. It is recognised that current emission levels from

public transport modes are relatively low in comparison to private transport. There is a need to change behaviour to enhance the usage of public transport and this can only be done by providing an efficient and effective service that offers *users* (as distinct from providers) value for money. The health impacts of climate change include floods, infectious and foodborne diseases and an increase in temperature change impacting on mortality levels. The introduction of a new option for travel by public transport has a major role to play in addressing climate change in Northern Ireland.

- Reducing emissions can also impact on air quality. Encouraging a modal shift to more sustainable travel patterns such as public transport can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve overall air quality. Urban areas are particularly affected by vehicle-related air pollution which can contribute to respiratory disease especially amongst vulnerable groups such as the elderly. The proposed system is specially aimed at urban areas and therefore it is essential that the Bus Rapid Transit system uses fuel which is environmentally friendly which has minimal impact on air quality levels.
- Neighbourhood designs likely to promote social networks are those which enable residents to perform daily activities without the use of a car. The way in which people move about their environments impacts on their health through opportunities provided for physical activity alongside social connections and crime which can impact on mental health. Neighbourhood designs which enable people to undertake daily activities can reduce the need for using private transport. Therefore there is a need to ensure that the routes selected are most beneficial for linking residential and working/leisure areas for the population as a whole to allow access for all. Access to services can enhance opportunities for health e.g. providing access to education and employment opportunities.
- Transport plays a vital role in connecting communities to services but acknowledging the different needs of different users is essential. It is essential that the Rapid Transit System adopts a lifecourse approach which will consider the needs of different groups. For example, deprived communities are less likely to own private transport and have a higher rate of public transport usage. Given that low income groups are more likely to use public transport it is essential that this option is efficient in terms of financial costs, reliability and choice which will not further exclude this group from employment and education opportunities and access to healthcare services.
- In a recent Consumer Council survey value for money was identified as the top concern for public transport passengers. It is essential that the Rapid Transit System provides best value for money whilst providing an acceptable level of service. Journeys not made due to unavailability of transport services can contribute to poorer health e.g. lack of access to education, employment opportunities or health care services. PriceWaterhouseCoopers recently reviewed public transport in Northern Ireland in the 'Bridging the Gap' report and identified public transport in Northern Ireland received less investment than other regions in the UK and Republic of Ireland. To ensure that the Rapid Transit System is introduced as a viable option for public transport users and to get people to make the move out of their cars, investment is required to ensure it is implemented effectively and an efficient service delivered.

Question 2

Are there any particular equality issues that need to be considered in relation to the policy proposals contained in the Detailed Policy Proposals booklet?

Yes No

Comments:

As noted above in relation to question 5 and IIA question 1, it is essential to ensure that people with disabilities are engaged in further strategic and operational development; it is particularly important to realise that disability takes many forms and involve people with a range of disabilities or functional limitations, to ensure the system is fully accessible.

Similarly it is important to take a life course approach and ensure Rapid Transit meets the needs of all age groups, in terms of levels of service and accessibility. For example, older people often express a need for improved evening and weekend provision to enable them to visit relatives and participate in society.

Belfast Healthy Cities is aware that socioeconomic status is not a legislative equality ground. However, low socioeconomic status is closely associated with inequalities in health, and therefore we believe this should be considered. For example, people on low incomes are more likely to find transport unaffordable, which contributes to economic inactivity and therefore affects both the health of the affected individuals and communities, and national economy. Children from low socioeconomic status areas are also less likely to do well at school and gain qualifications, and therefore at greater risk of unemployment or intermittent employment, which is how disadvantage is perpetuated across generations. Affordable and accessible transport is a key factor in breaking this cycle, as it improves access to education and jobs. The rapid transit scheme has significant potential to do this as it runs through many highly disadvantaged communities, but it is crucial that the needs of people in these communities are considered at an early stage.

Comments on Equality Screening

We welcome your comments on any aspect of the draft equality screening document. Please bear in mind that it is proposed that a further screening exercise will be undertaken prior to the implementation phase of the Rapid Transit project.

Comments:

Appendix 1: Confidentiality of Consultations – Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act provides the public with the right to request access to information held by the Department. This includes information provided in response to consultations.

The Department will publish a summary of responses following the completion of this public consultation. If you would prefer your response to be treated as confidential, please let us know, **stating your reasons clearly**. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, in itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

If we are asked to disclose responses under Freedom of Information legislation, we will take any requests for confidentiality into account. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

We will handle appropriately any personal data you provide in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

For further information about the confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office (or see web site at: www.ico.gov.uk)

Appendix 2: List of Consultees

All Government Departments (11 + 2 Junior Ministers)
All Local Government Councils (26)
All MLAs (108)
All NI Members of Parliament
All NI Members of European Parliament
All NI Party Leaders
All Road Service Licence Holders
All Rural Community Transport Partnerships
All 10B Permit Designated Bodies
All Education & Library Boards
All Health & Social Care Trusts and Board
Abacus Professional Recruitment
Age Concern Northern Ireland
Age Sector Platform (ASP)
Agent for the Copyright Libraries
Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU)
AMICUS
An Munia Tober
Antrim Borough Partnership
Ards Local Strategy Partnership
Armagh City and District Partnership
Bahai's Office for NI
Ballymoney District Partnership
Barnardos NI
Barnardos, Tuar Ceatha Project
Belfast Butterfly Club
Belfast Chamber of Trade & Commerce

Belfast City Centre Management
Belfast Harbour
Belfast Healthy Cities Project
Belfast Hebrew Congregation
Belfast International Airport
Belfast Solicitors' Association
Bodleian Library, Oxford
British Association for Shooting and Conservation
British Deaf Association (NI)
British Library
Bryson House
BT Headquarters
Business Development Group
Cara-friend
CARE in Northern Ireland
Carers Northern Ireland
Carlingford Lough Commission
Castlereagh Patnership for Peace & Reconciliation
Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland
Cedar Foundation
Child Poverty Action Group
Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI)
Children's Law Centre
Chinese Welfare Association
Chrysalis Women's Centre
Church of Ireland House
Citizen's Advice Bureau
City of Derry Airport
Civil Law Reform Division
Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSo)

Coiste-na n-iarchimi
Coleraine Borough Strategic Partnership
Coleraine Harbour
Commissioner for Children & Young People
Committee on the Administration of Justice
Community Development and Health Network
Community Foundation
Community Places
Community Relations Council
Community Transport Association (CTA)
Concordia Partnership for Progress
Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland
Consumer Council for NI
Cookstown District Partnership
Co-ownership Housing Association
Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside
Craigavon District Partnership
Cruse Bereavement Care (NI)
Derry Well Woman
Disability Action
District Judge (Magistrates Court)
District Partnership for Derry City
Down District Strategy Partnership
Down's Syndrome Association
East Belfast Partnership Board
Economic Research Institute of Northern Ireland
Employers' Forum on Disability
Equality Commission for NI
Equality Forum NI

Executive Council of the Inn of Court of NI
Falls Community Council
Falls Women Centre
Federation of Passenger Transport
Federation of Small Businesses
First Division Civil Servants' Association
Food Standards Agency
Foyle Women's Aid
Foyle Women's Information Network
FPA NI
Friends of the Earth
Gay & Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland
George Best Belfast City Airport
Gingerbread NI
Greenway to Stay Campaign
Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland
Help the Aged (NI)
HM Council of County Court Judges (NI)
HM Revenue and Customs
Human Rights Commission
Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee
Indian Community Centre
Inland Waterways Northern Ireland
Institute of Directors
Institution of Highways and Transportation – Northern Ireland
Invest Northern Ireland
Irish & Local Studies Department, Central Library
Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NI Committee)
Irish Transport Trust

Larne District Partnership

Larne Harbour

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Law Centre (NI)

Law Society of Northern Ireland

Library of Trinity College, Dublin

Limavady District Partnership

Living Streets

Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland

Londonderry Harbour Office

Lower North Belfast Community Council

Magherafelt Area Partnership Ltd

Magherafelt Women's Group

MENCAP

Methodist Church in Ireland

Mid-Ulster Women's Network

Ministry of Defence

Mobilise NI

Moyle District Partnership

Mr A Arlow

Ms O'Kane

Multi-Cultural Resource Centre

National Energy Action

National Library of Ireland

National Library, Scotland

National Library, Wales

Newry & Mourne Peace & Reconciliation Partnership

Newry & Mourne Senior Citizens' Consortium

Newry & Mourne Women Ltd

Newtownabbey Local Strategic Partnership

NI 2000

NI Anti-Poverty Network

NI Bird Watchers' Association

NI Cycling Initiative

NI Environment Link

NI Islamic Centre

NI Women's Aid Federation

NI Women's European Platform (NIWEP)

NIACRO

NIE

North Belfast Partnership

North Down District Partnership

North West Forum of People with Disabilities (Derry)

North / South Ministerial Council

Northern Ireland Assembly

Northern Ireland Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux

Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Northern Ireland Chamber of Trade

Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke Association

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Equality

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities

Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action

Northern Ireland Court Service

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission

Northern Ireland Law Commission

Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)

Northern Ireland Office

Northern Ireland Ombudsman

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Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA)
Northern Ireland Publications Resource
Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)
Northern Ireland Tourist Board
Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company
Northern Ireland Walking Forum
NSPCC
NTL Cable Tel
NUS-USI Northern Ireland
Office of Fair Trading
Office of the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland
Omagh Women's Area Network
Omnibus Partnership
Parents' Advice Centre
Parents and Professionals and Autism
Participation and the Practice of Rights Project
Participation Network
Peace and Reconciliation Partnership Ballymena
Phoenix Gas
Planning Service
POBAL
Police Service for Northern Ireland
Polish Association NI
Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Press for Change
Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist Network
Quarry Products Association
Queen's University Belfast Library
Queer Space

Rainbow Project
Relate NI
Road Safety Council for Northern Ireland
Roads Service
Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB) NI
Royal National Institute for the Deaf (NI)
Rural Community Network
Rural Development Council
Rural Support
S.T.E.P. (South Tyrone Empowerment Programme)
Save the Children
School of Law, Queen's University Belfast
School of Law, University of Ulster
Sense NI
Sikh Cultural Centre
Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE)
South Belfast Partnership Board
Sperrin Lakeland Senior Citizens' Consortium
St Angelo Airport
Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards
Strabane District Partnership
Strategic Investment Board
Sustainable Northern Ireland
Sustainable Organic Living Environment
SUSTRANS
The Odyssey Trust
Titanic Quarter Ltd
Training for Women Network Ltd
Translink
Travellers' Movement NI

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TSO Bibliographic Department
Ulster Archaeological Society
Ulster Scots Heritage Council
Ulster Society for the Protection of the Countryside
Ulster Wildlife Trust
ULTACH
Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technology
UNISON
UNITE
University Library, Cambridge
Warrenpoint Harbour
West Belfast and Greater Shankill Enterprise Council
West Belfast Partnership Board
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
Women's Centre
Women's Forum
Women's Forum Northern Ireland
Women's Information Group
Women's Resource & Development Agency
Women's Support Network
World Wide Fund for Nature
Youth Council for NI
Youthnet

Appendix 3: Code of Practice for Consultation

The Government has adopted a code of practice on consultations. The code of practice applies to all UK public consultations by government departments and agencies, including consultations on EU directives.

Though the code does not have legal force, and cannot prevail over statutory or other mandatory external requirements (e.g. under European Community Law), it should otherwise generally be regarded as binding unless Ministers conclude that exceptional circumstances require a departure.

The code contains seven criteria. They should be reproduced in all consultation documents. There should be an explanation of any departure from the criteria and confirmation that they have otherwise been followed.

Consultation Criteria

Criterion 1: When to consult

Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2: Duration of consultation exercises

Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3: Clarity of scope and impact

Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4: Accessibility of consultation exercises

Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5: The burden of consultation

Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6: Responsiveness of consultation exercises

Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7: Capacity to consult

Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

A full version of the code of practice is available on the Better Regulation Executive web-site at <http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file47158.pdf>.

If you consider that this consultation does not comply with the criteria or have comments about the consultation process please contact:

**Consultation Co-ordinator,
Department for Regional Development,
Rapid Transit Division,
Clarence Court,
10-18 Adelaide Street,
BELFAST,
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E-mail: Brtdrdni.gov.uk

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Contact Us:

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