

**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

15TH December, 2016

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Friday, 16th December, 2016 at 9.30 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. **Routine Matters**

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

2. **Restricted Items**

- (a) Revenue Estimates and District Rate (Pages 1 - 10)
- (b) City Centre Development (Pages 11 - 18)
- (c) IT Equipment (Pages 19 - 26)
- (d) Revisions to management of City Hall function booking processes (Pages 27 - 34)

3. **Matters referred back from Council/Notices of Motion**

- (a) Notice of Motion re Metropolitan City Growth Deal (Pages 35 - 38)

- (b) Notice of Motion re Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (Pages 39 - 42)
 - (c) Notice of Motion re Transfer of Regeneration Powers (Pages 43 - 46)
 - (d) 2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies – Provisional Proposals (Pages 47 - 50)
4. **Belfast Agenda**
- (a) Programme for Government - BCC Response (Pages 51 - 180)
5. **Physical Programme and Asset Management**
- (a) Capital Programme (Pages 181 - 212)
 - (b) Area Working Update (Pages 213 - 242)
 - (c) Asset Management (Pages 243 - 250)
 - (d) Acquisition of Springfield Dam from Department for Communities (Pages 251 - 256)
 - (e) Exhibition Area – changes to layout and pricing (Pages 257 - 262)
6. **Finance, Procurement and Performance**
- (a) Mid-Year Treasury Management Report 2016-17 (Pages 263 - 266)
 - (b) Contracts for Award (Pages 267 - 270)
7. **Equality and Good Relations**
- (a) Shared City Partnership Meeting – 5th December 2016 (Pages 271 - 278)
 - (b) Request for the Use of the City Hall (Pages 279 - 280)
8. **Operational Issues**
- (a) Information Governance Training for Elected Members (Pages 281 - 284)
 - (b) Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting (Pages 285 - 288)
 - (c) Audit and Risk Report Dec 2016 (Pages 289 - 316)
 - (d) Minutes - Active Belfast Board- 05. 12.16 (Pages 317 - 328)
 - (e) Minutes - Member Development Working Group (Pages 329 - 334)
 - (f) Requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality (Pages 335 - 340)
 - (g) Proposals for the updated NI Multiple Deprivation Measure (Pages 341 - 344)
 - (h) Apprenticeship Levy Consultation (Pages 345 - 354)

- (i) Consultation Response on Future Delivery of Electoral Services NI (Pages 355 - 358)
- (j) Consultation Response - Education Authority: Providing Pathways - Draft Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017/20 (Pages 359 - 364)

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Subject:	Notice of Motion re: Metropolitan City Growth Deal
Date:	16 th December, 2016
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider a notice of motion in relation to the Metropolitan City Growth Deal which, in accordance with standing orders, was referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 1 st December, 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the notice of motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>In accordance with notice on the Council agenda, Alderman Convery proposed:</p> <p><i>“This Council notes that the British Government has agreed major City Region Deals in England, Scotland and Wales, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>a £1.13 billion Glasgow and Clyde Valley Infrastructure Fund, in partnership with Scottish Government and local authorities;</i> • <i>a £1.2billion City Deal for the Cardiff Capital Region, in partnership with the</i>

Welsh Government and 10 local authorities; and

- *a £315m City Region Deal for Inverness and the wider Highlands area with Scottish and UK governments.*

The Council notes that these deals are based on the ability to increase productivity and also in many cases to ensure that many communities are not left behind. The ability of councils to contribute finance alongside the Treasury and the Northern Ireland Executive to fund major infrastructure, regeneration and skills development projects, in Belfast, will be essential to realising the executive's emerging economic and a social strategies.

The Council recognises that City Region Deals can have far-reaching impacts, not just on the economy, but on regional competitiveness, connectivity, infrastructure, housing, employment and lifestyle.

The Council welcomes the dialogue with neighbouring local Councils about promoting city region devolution deals and calls upon the Minister of Finance and the Northern Ireland Executive to prioritise City Region Deals and to actively facilitate negotiations between the Department of Finance, local authorities and the UK Treasury.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Attwood.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

3.2

The City Growth and Regeneration Committee considered a report on the steps taken to date advocating for a city growth deal. It was agreed to commission a feasibility study on the detail of the growth deal, alongside developing a programme of work with London and Dublin. The feasibility study will seek to

- Engage with partners, establishing governance and setting the geography for the deal;
- Determine objectives, prioritisation criteria and identifying schemes;
- Prioritise projects and funding/financing routes for delivery.
- Provide economic analysis, financial modelling and agreeing performance metric e.g.

	<p>additionality in tax-take or increase in sustained employment opportunities; and</p>
3.3	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations considerations associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None.

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Subject:	Notice of Motion re: Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan
Date:	16 th December, 2016
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider a notice of motion in relation to the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan which, in accordance with standing orders, was referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 1 st December, 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the notice of motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>At the meeting of the Council on 1st December, it was proposed by Councillor Attwood and seconded by Councillor Heading, that:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“This Council notes with concern the decision of the High Court which decided that bulky goods only could be removed from the Belfast Metropolitan Area in relation to Sprucefield.</i></p>

The Council notes that the Minister for Infrastructure, Mr. Chris Hazzard, agreed on a proposal to have BMAP adopted without the bulky goods restriction.

The Council notes that the Javelin report stated, in August 2016, that Belfast needs to improve the quality of its shops and that a John Lewis store would be seen as one of the major catalysts to rejuvenate Belfast City Centre.

Belfast needs to be a strong city in many ways to support the rest of Northern Ireland. This means that it has to have the right critical mass of offices, retail, residential, culture and arts to allow it to grow, not at the expense of other parts of Northern Ireland but in support of putting more money in everyone's pockets and creating more jobs both in the city and in the many businesses in the external supply chain. Belfast needs to compete with other cities if Northern Ireland is to be more financially successful. This means that it needs more people living, working and visiting here. It should be (according to its size) one of the top 10 cities in the UK but is currently only 16th in the retail rankings. This is not good enough for Northern Ireland.

The Council believes that the decision of the High Court will have an adverse impact on Belfast and other town centres and supports the decision to appeal the decision of the High Court and will work with retailers and others to challenge this decision."

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

- 3.2 The Council became a notice party to the remedies hearing and asked the court not to endorse the proposed removal of the bulky goods restriction as it believed it was inappropriate and unlawful for the court to do so. Essentially the Council's case relates to the court being an inappropriate forum for the making of planning policy and that the powers of the NI Executive to retrospectively endorse policies made without reference to it does not extend to allow it to amend such policies. An Appeal has been lodged to the Court of Appeal and a date is awaited for hearing.

- 3.3 Financial & Resource Implications
Legal costs of pursuing an appeal to the Court of Appeal.

3.4	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> There are not any equality or good relations considerations associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None.

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Subject:	Notice of Motion re: Transfer of Regeneration Powers
Date:	16 th December, 2016
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider Parts (i) and (ii) of a notice of motion in relation to the Transfer of Regeneration Powers which, in accordance with standing orders, was referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 1 st December, 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the notice of motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>In accordance with notice on the Council agenda, Councillor McDonough-Brown proposed:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>“This Council expresses its profound disappointment in the decision of the Minister for Communities not to proceed with the Regeneration Bill and devolution of regeneration powers to local government.</i></p> <p><i>The Council:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>(i) recognises that these powers would strengthen and enhance our</i></p>

ability to drive strategic regeneration activity, when used alongside community and land use planning;

(ii) believes this decision to be in conflict with the entire direction and ethos of local government reform and to be a significant missed opportunity; and

(iii) reiterates our support for the devolution of regeneration powers to local government; and calls for the Minister for Communities to meet with the Council with a view to reversing his decision and proceeding with the Bill.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Howard.

Suspension of Standing Orders

3.2 At the request of Councillor McDonough-Brown, the Council agreed, with all forty-eight Members present and voting supporting the proposal, to suspend Standing Order 13(f) to enable the Council to debate point (iii) of the motion.

3.3 After discussion, the Council agreed to adopt point (iii) of the motion and, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), referred points (i) and (ii), without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

3.4 In considering the notice of motion, Members should be aware that in responding to the draft Programme for Government (PfG) - a separate item on the Committees Agenda - the Council has formally requested that the NI Executive commit within the PfG that regeneration powers in-fact transfer and complement existing planning and economic development functions of councils. The benefits of transferring important place-shaping regeneration functions, including comprehensive development schemes and compulsory purchase powers, was a key aspect of the recent Westminster and Stormont engagement and lobbying events.

3.5 Direct engagement is also ongoing with the Department of Communities and NI Executive to explore how the Council may utilise specific regeneration powers on behalf of the Department through an agency-type arrangement. Such an approach would help unlock and progress prioritised regeneration and development schemes within the city and secure the necessary funding to deliver such schemes through innovative funding models including potential public and private co-financing. Members will be aware a Memorandum of

	Understanding was established between the Council and Department for Communities to enable a joined up approach to be taken to development.
3.6	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> None.
3.7	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> There are no equality or good relations considerations associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None.

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Subject:	2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies – Provisional Proposals
Date:	Friday 16 December 2016
Reporting Officer	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update Members on the consultation underway on the provisional proposals emerging from the '2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies' and to outline for consideration a proposed response from Belfast City Council.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the contents of the report and • that November Committee agreed a Council response should not be submitted to the public consultation.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The 2018 Review of Parliamentary constituencies started on 24 February 2016. In accordance with schedule 2 of the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, the number of Parliamentary constituencies across the UK will reduce from 650 to 600. In Northern Ireland, the decrease will be from 18 seats to 17 at the next Westminster elections, expected in 2020. This will mean redrawing the existing constituency boundaries. The Act requires that Northern Ireland's electorate (1,243,369 people at 1 December 2015) be divided into 17 constituencies utilising complete local government wards as building blocks. The electorate of each constituency must also be within a 5 per cent variance of the UK electoral quota of 74,769 (ie. no less than 71,031 and no more than 78,507 people).
3.2	A Boundary Commissioner for Northern Ireland published on 6 September 2016 provisional

recommendations for the new Parliamentary Constituencies within NI. Responses are sought by **28 November 2016**. The Commission is required to submit its report on final recommendations to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland no later than 1 October 2018.

3.3 Based on the proposals put forward, the current four Parliamentary Constituency covering Belfast will be reduced to three comprising of the following:

- **East Belfast** - the only Belfast constituency proposed to retain its name. Would cover those wards which lie between the River Lagan and the eastern boundary of the City. This would mean transferring out the wards of Dundonald, Carrowreagh, Grahamsbridge, Ballyanwood and Enler; and transferring in those wards from Belfast South which lie between the River and the City boundary (Hillfoot, Cregagh, Ravenhill, Woodstock, Ormeau, Rosetta and Belvoir). Would have an electorate of 72,001.
- **Belfast North West** - proposed new constituency which would retain Valley and Colinbridge from current Belfast North, transfer from Belfast West the wards of Fourth River, Ballygomartin, Clonard, Beechmount, Falls and Shankill; and transfer out those wards lying outside the City boundary (Whitehouse, Rathcoole, O'Neill, Carmoney Hill, Glebe, Glengormley). Would have an electorate of 71,266.
- **Belfast South West** – proposed new constituency which would extend from the Lagan to the western boundary encompassing the whole of Dunmurry ward, Colin Glen, Turf Lodge, Ballymurphy, Falls Park, Blackstaff and Central. Would have an electorate of 73,643.

3.4 Elsewhere, eight constituencies would continue with minimal boundary changes; six new constituencies would be created, provisionally called Dalriada, Glenshane, North Tyrone, Upper Bann and Blackwater, West Antrim and West Down; and five names would disappear: Lagan Valley, East Londonderry, North Antrim, West Tyrone and Mid-Ulster.

3.5 **Proposed Belfast City Council Response**

Whilst recognising that individual Political Parties will clearly have their own views on the recommendations put forward not only for Belfast but for the wider region, Members may wish to consider submitting a short response from the Council outlining the following points:

- Given the significance of Belfast as the economic driver and capital city for the region, and its desire to become more competitive on a national, European and International level, the

	<p>Council would be concerned about any proposal to reduce the number of MPs for the City. This is particularly pertinent given the work underway by Council to develop a City Growth Deal for the city-region and the need to continue to lobby and influence regional and national government on city development related issues and seeking to ensure the continued social, economic and physical regeneration of the City and City-Region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the proposed changes will not come into effect until 2020, the Council would highlight that they do not take account of the ambitious population growth targets set for the city over this period and the associated potential impact on the future electorate of the city. The Belfast Agenda (Community Plan for the City) includes a population growth target of an additional 70,000 new residents by 2035. Securing population growth will also be a key feature of the Council's emerging Local Development Plan for Belfast.
3.6	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no financial or Human Resource implications contained within this report.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None

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Subject:	Programme for Government Consultation Response
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, Programme Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of report
1.1	This report seeks to update Committee on the recent consultation on a further draft Programme for Government (summary attached at Appendix 1) and a suite of associated draft delivery plans; and to enable Members to consider and agree a Council response to be submitted. The consultation ends on 23 December 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the contents of this report; and • consider and agree the proposed Council response to the draft PfG Framework (Appendix 2)
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The draft PfG is 170+ pages long and sets out 14 strategic outcomes , 48 indicators and is underpinned by 32 draft Delivery Plans , which the Executive states that when taken together,

	<p>set a clear direction of travel and enable continuous improvement on the essential components of societal wellbeing and improve quality of life. They touch upon every aspect of government including, for example: securing economic success; supporting job creation and employability; attainment of good health and education; investment; and creating confident and peaceful communities.</p>
3.2	<p>Whilst welcomed, the new OBA format has introduced a new level of complexity into the PfG consultation process compared to previous years with the introduction of detailed delivery plans. For each of the PfG indicators, a named senior official has been identified who is responsible and accountable for leading the work to deliver the improvements identified and who will oversee the development of specific delivery plans. Each delivery plan sets out the key delivery partners involved, and their role.</p>
3.3	<p>The PfG will be supported by an updated Investment Strategy, an Economic Strategy and a new Social Strategy – these key strategies will also be subject to consultation and engagement which we understand will commence later in the month.</p>
3.4	<p>Council officers have reviewed both the draft PFG and associated Delivery Plans in the context of the previous response submitted to the first the PfG Framework (June 2016), and the ambitious set out for the city in the Belfast Agenda.</p>
3.5	<p>Attached at Appendix 2 for Members consideration is a proposed draft Council response to the PfG which is set out in two sections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The first relates to the overarching document and specifically the 14 listed outcomes and their associated issues, indicators and actions. (ii) The second part sets out specific and detailed feedback on the emergent ‘Delivery Plans’ linked to the PFG outcomes and indicators. These comments will be submitted directly to the senior responsible officers for the relevant delivery plans.
3.6	<p>(i) <u>Overarching Document</u></p> <p>The response to the overarching document includes the high level issues which the Council would like to see reflected in the PfG and naturally contains many of the ‘key asks’ which the Council has developed over recent months and opportunities to co-design and deliver in partnership with the Executive and other partners.</p> <p>Where possible the response strives to reaffirm the importance of Belfast to the wider region</p>

3.7	<p>and to demonstrate that a successful Belfast will result in a positive impact across many of the outcomes identified within the PfG and provide benefits to Northern Ireland as a whole. The response also outlines the complementarity between the ambitions set out within the PfG and the Belfast Agenda and emphasizes the importance of working in partnership with the Executive to co-design placed-based programmes and initiatives which will deliver common outcomes. It also outlines the need to consider innovative and new forms of finance and delivery models to unlock development, regeneration and infrastructure priorities within the city and across the region.</p>
3.8	<p>Members will note that summary of the key issues outlined in the Council response is set out in Page 3-4 of Appendix 2.</p>
	<p><u>(ii) Delivery Plans</u></p>
3.9	<p>In terms of responding to the delivery plans, the Executive have requested that comments are submitted in writing directly to the named senior owner for each plan. These delivery plans have been assigned in turn to senior officers throughout the Council whose views have been sought on the suitability and effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements.</p>
3.10	<p>There is an expectation that the delivery plans will be somewhat fluid and the senior officers within central government responsible for each plan will lead on engagement with delivery partners on an ongoing basis in order to review their effectiveness. Senior officers within the Council are engaging directly with the identified SROs for each plan in order to ensure that they can influence the respective delivery plans as they evolve over the lifetime of the Programme for Government.</p>
3.11	<p>Members will also be aware that there has been intensive political engagement by the Council seeking to inform and shape the emerging PFG and associated strategies including the recent series of Ministerial meetings, the representation at Westminster and Stormont and the briefings given to specific Executive Committees including the Committee for Infrastructure on 7 November.</p>
3.12	<p><u>NILGA Response</u></p> <p>A copy of NILGA's response to the PfG document is attached at Appendix 3 for information only.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>

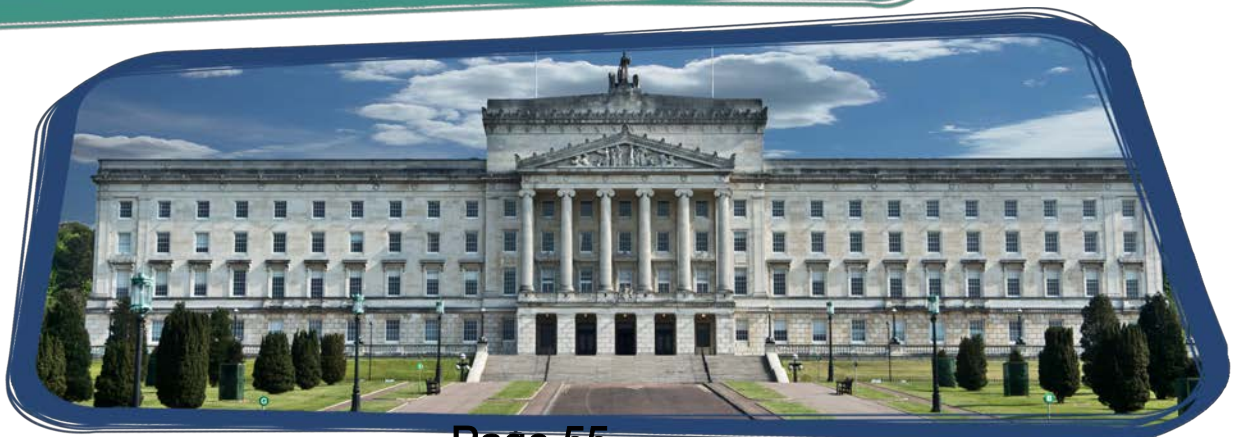
<p>3.13</p> <p>3.14</p>	<p>None.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 Summary Programme for Government Document</p> <p>Appendix 2 Draft Council response to PfG and associated delivery plans</p> <p>Appendix 3 Draft NILGA response to the PfG</p>



Northern Ireland
Executive

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Programme for Government Consultation Document



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The Programme for Government

This **Programme for Government** has been written by the Northern Ireland Executive.

It will help the wellbeing of all the people in Northern Ireland over a long period of time.

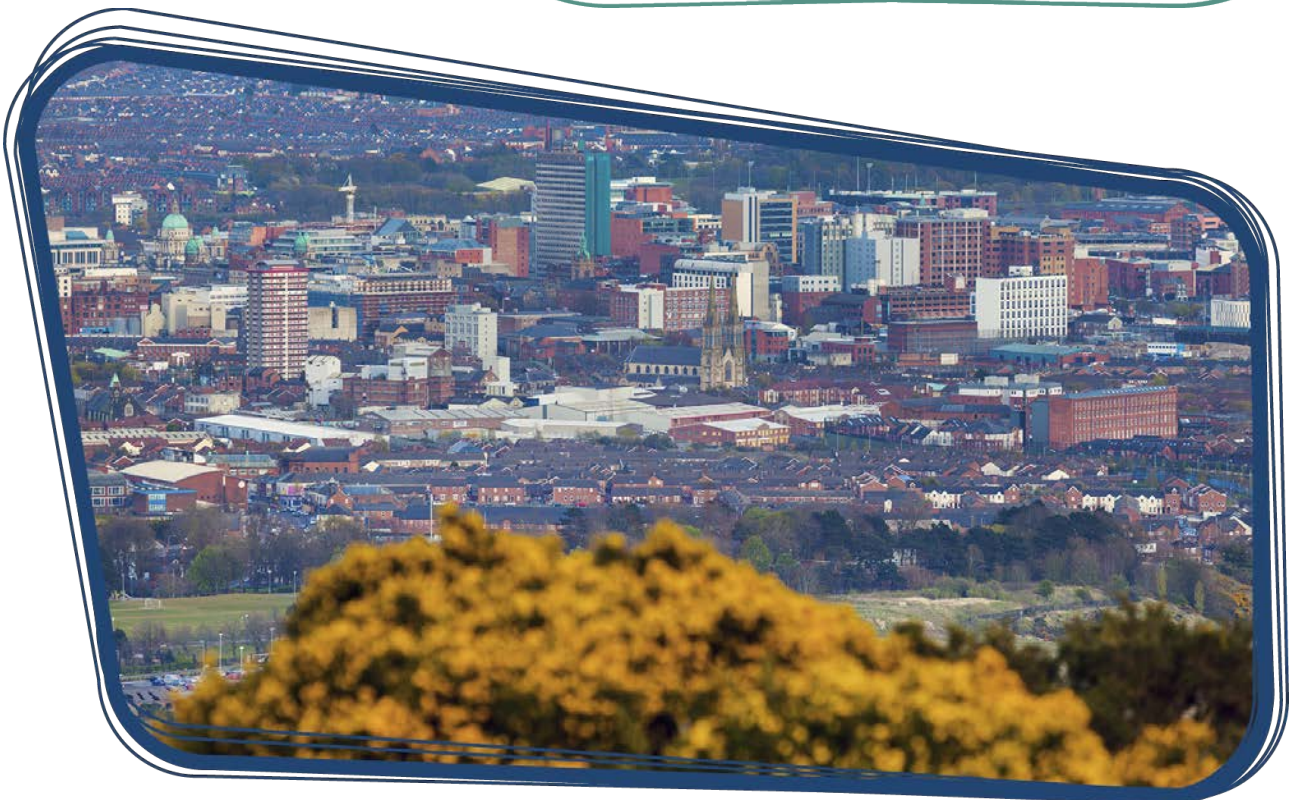
It involves all parts of the Government.

It explains how all the different parts of Government will work together.

There are 14 parts to the plan.



The **Northern Ireland Executive** is appointed by the Northern Ireland Assembly. It is responsible for running the Government of Northern Ireland.



What do you think?

We want to know what you think of these plans.

Please tell us by:

- Completing our online survey at:
tinyurl.com/pfgnisurvey
- Emailing us at:
PfG@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
- Telephone us at: **(028) 9052 0584**
- Writing to us at:
Programme for Government Team
Room 5.06
Castle Buildings
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3SR

We have already
been listening to
what people think
of these plans.

But we still want
to know if you
think we should
change anything.



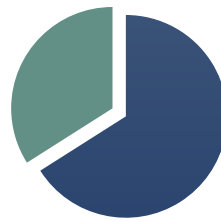
1.

Making money by working hard

We want to make it easier for businesses and companies to do well in Northern Ireland.

We plan to help businesses by:

- Making it easier for companies to sell what they make to other countries
- Bringing business people and the universities together to make new things to sell
- Reducing the amount that companies have to pay in tax
- Helping them find the money they need to grow



Northern Ireland companies sell a third of everything they make to other countries. This brings in money.



- Supporting new companies that are likely to grow fast
- Getting schools to train young people so they become good at business and making money

We will also:

- Look for ways to help businesses all over Northern Ireland when the Government buys things
- Make it easier for people to travel around Northern Ireland
- Make it easier for people to travel to the South and to the rest of the UK



2.

Looking after the planet

The planet is getting warmer because we have been putting too much pollution into the air.



We must control this or the seas will rise and there will be more big storms.

The pollution in the air is also bad for people's health.



We can cut pollution and create jobs at the same time.

Turning rubbish into useful things is good business. This is called recycling.

More people are using buses and trains which makes the roads less busy.

More people are walking and cycling which is good for their health as well as the planet.



In 2015 a quarter of all journeys in Northern Ireland were made by walking, cycling or public transport.

We plan to get more people recycling by:

- Looking at different ways to collect rubbish for recycling
- Finding new ways to recycle our rubbish so it can be used again



We plan to help the planet and people's health by:

- Improving the air we breathe
- Cutting down the amount of energy that is wasted
- Improving the quality of our water
- Working with farmers and businesses to protect our wild life

The pollution that causes our climate to change has fallen by 17.3% between 1990 and 2014 in Northern Ireland.

But we have a long way to go.

It needs to fall by 80% by 2050.



3.

Being fair to everyone

We want people from all communities and backgrounds to have a fair chance in Northern Ireland.

But it is not easy. There are lots of problems.

Some parts of Northern Ireland are very poor. People have less money, worse housing, bad health, poor education, and not enough work.



One in five people in Northern Ireland live in poverty.



✦ We need to improve education so that more young people from poorer backgrounds get to at least level 2.

✦ We also need to improve the health of people in the poorest areas. People should have the same access to medical help.

✦ We want to help people to live more healthily.

Level 2 is five GCSEs with grade C or above including English and Maths.

We plan to:

- Help people from the poorest families with the cost of going to work
- Give young people training at college when they get a job
- Give young people some support to get started with a new job
- Help more disabled people and people with health problems to find work



Children from poor backgrounds generally do worse at school.

Only 41% of poorer children get Level 2, but 74% of other children achieve it. We want to improve this.



4.

Enjoying long, healthy, active lives

We plan to:

- Set up a **Healthier Lives Programme** which will focus on:
 1. Pregnant women
 2. Making the places where we live healthier
 3. People with long term health problems
 4. Making the places we work healthier
- Involve all health workers in deciding how we improve the health services
- Train more people to become doctors



On average women in Northern Ireland will have good health for 62 years and Men for 59 years.

On average Women will live to age 82 and men to age 78.



5.

More people are creative and inventing new things

We want more people to take part in the arts and culture.

We want more people to have access to a good broadband internet connection.

We want more children to do well at school.

We want our universities and businesses to work together more on new inventions.



Three quarters of places in Northern Ireland have a superfast broadband service.

6.

More people work in better jobs

On average fewer people in Northern Ireland are working than in the UK as a whole.

We plan to:

- Support more people to get into work
- Provide more child care so parents are able to work
- Help people get more skills and confidence
- Help people from poor families with the costs of going to work
- Help people who have health problems that are stopping them from working
- Make it easier for businesses and companies to create more jobs



7.

A safer community

We want people to feel safe and have nothing stopping them from taking part in things.

We have problems in Northern Ireland with:

- Anti-social behaviour - where people are a nuisance or bullies
- Organised Crime. This is where gangs of people are involved in robbery and other crime



We want to:

- ✦ Work harder with young people to stop them getting involved in crime
- ✦ Protect vulnerable people more
- ✦ Improve the way the police and courts work
- ✦ Reduce the amount of serious crime



8.

Caring for people in need

We need to work harder to support and care for vulnerable people.

Many disabled people suffer from poverty and poor housing.

We plan to:

- Support people with disabilities to live more independent lives
- Make it easier for people with disabilities to do things like everyone else
- Help people get somewhere to live that is right for them and good quality
- Help people who are living in difficult conditions



9.

Respecting everyone

In Northern Ireland we have people from many different religions, races and backgrounds.

It is important that people from different communities respect each other and live well together.

People should feel that services and spaces are open to everyone - whatever their background.

We will:

- ✦ Help communities to respect each other
- ✦ Have more space that can be used by anyone from any community
- ✦ Tackle the barriers that stop people taking part



10.

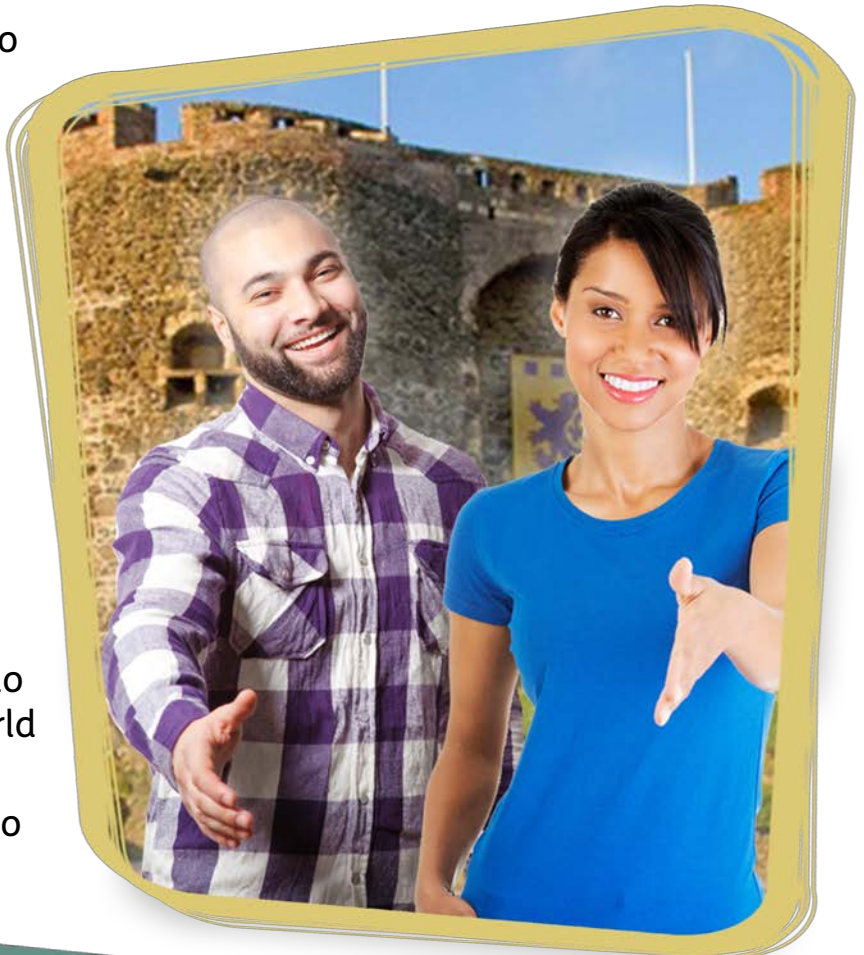
Confident and welcoming

We want Northern Ireland to be a place that welcomes people from around the world.

We want the people of Northern Ireland to feel good about themselves.

We plan to:

- Carry on working for peace
- Help our companies to do business around the world
- Make laws that help us to respect each other



11.

High quality public services

We need to make our public services better by:

- Using computers and new technology so that services work better and are good value for money
- Getting services to work better together
- Sharing things to save money

We want to focus on improving:

- Our health care services
- Our schools



12.

People want to live and work here

This is a great place but it has had a difficult past.

We want people around the world to understand the good things about Northern Ireland.

This means we have to finish with the problems of the past.

We need to make sure that Northern Ireland is a safe place.

We are working to bring more money here to help more people to have good jobs.



13.

People connect with each other

We want people to communicate and travel easily.

We are planning to improve the internet connections - especially to the country areas.



We are also planning to improve:

- Many roads in the province
- The Belfast Rapid Transport (BRT)
- Belfast Transport Hub
- The Derry/Londonderry Transport Hub



We will encourage people to use bicycles and walk more



14.

Giving our children the best start in life

The first few years are very important for the way a child will develop and grow.

We want to improve the services we provide to young children and parents.

We are also planning to improve the work we do with **Looked After Children**.

We are planning to improve our schools so that children can do better.



Looked After Children are children who cannot live with their own parents and need the government to find them a home.



For more information

If you need more information please contact us by



- Emailing us at: **PfG@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk**



- Telephoning us at: **(028) 9052 0584**

- Writing to us at:



Programme for Government Team
Room 5.06
Castle Buildings
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3SR





BELFAST CITY COUNCIL RESPONSE DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

Belfast City Council (the Council) welcomes the opportunity to consider and input into the development of the new Programme for Government (PfG) 2016-2020 and associated draft Delivery Plans.

The draft PfG and delivery plans had been considered by the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 16 December with the enclosed corporate response agreed. This response remains subject to ratification by Full Council on 3 January 2017 and we will inform you at that stage if there are any changes made.

The response enclosed addresses itself not only to the PfG and associated delivery plans, it also seeks to inform the development of the key strategies which will underpin the PFG including the NI Investment Strategy, NI Economic Strategy and NI Social Strategy, which are still to emerge.

It is clear that these documents are interrelated and will collectively shape the future direction of public investment within Northern Ireland. The Council believe that these documents present a huge opportunity to redesign how we work together across government and sectors to create a new collaborative partnership which supports co-design and shared delivery.

The response is set out in two parts; the first is an overview of the key strategic issues which the Council would recommend be considered when finalising the PfG and related strategies under development. The second part sets out feedback on the emergent 'Delivery Plans' linked to the PFG outcomes and indicators. These comments will be submitted directly to the senior responsible officers for the relevant delivery plans.

1. Introduction and overview

The Council believes that the draft Programme for Government is presented at a time of both exciting opportunity and huge challenge for Northern Ireland. Given the growing trend towards greater globalisation and the uncertainties presented by the EU Referendum, there is a need to develop new integrated approaches to ensuring the region remains competitive on a national and international scale, ensure we continue to attract investment and connect economic growth and social wellbeing.

The Council looks forward to working in partnership with the NI Executive and government departments to co-design and support the delivery of the ambitious and challenging programmes of work that are required to achieve the outcomes set out within the PfG. Given the synergies between the PFG outcomes and the ambitions emerging from the Community Plan for the city (Belfast Agenda), there is a real opportunity to co-design impactful programmes and initiatives which will help address many of the entrenched societal and economic issues impacting upon local communities across Northern Ireland.

(i) Supporting Regional Growth & Prosperity

The Council welcomes the recognition and commitment given within the PfG and commitment "strengthening Belfast as the regional economic driver". Over the past twenty-five years successful cities have become the main source of both national and global economic productivity. This is also true here in Northern Ireland where Belfast's role has become pivotal to the health and success of the wider regional economy. A successful Belfast is critical to the future wellbeing of everyone living in the region.

As recognised in the Regional Development Strategy, Belfast provides key networking and connectivity functions for the region as a whole. Combined with its offer of retail, cultural, entertainment, educational and visitor opportunities, Belfast is a key attractor and anchor for Foreign Direct Investment – the benefits of which extend across the NI Region. The ‘clustering’ of specific types of economic activity in and around Belfast provides beneficial agglomeration effects which are vital to increased productivity in the city-region and NI as a whole.

With an increasingly globalised economy, regional economic distinctiveness is a major source of comparative advantage. Belfast has its own functional metropolitan economic area extending to the adjacent councils of Lisburn & Castlereagh, Mid and East Antrim, Antrim and Newtownabbey, and Ards & North Down, accounting for over 51.6 per cent of the total population of Northern Ireland, 57 per cent of all jobs and 57 per cent of the region’s GVA. It is also important that the connections between cities (e.g Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Newry) and key economic drivers, such as the Eastern Corridor, are strengthened if the economic benefits and associated growth are to be delivered.

The argument is not being made here that the focus should only be on the cities, or that these trends, if not carefully managed, are all healthy. It is recognised that whilst people and certain parts of the FDI market will focus on cities as a place to locate there is a distinct role for regional and local government to work together to deliver a sustainable and inclusive model of growth for those key urban areas as well as ensuring that the wider region benefits and competes for specific sectors.

Creating a city-region focus at scale provides the critical mass to deliver many of the economic and social outcomes listed in the PfG. It is important to recognise that more than half of those employed in Belfast travel from outside the council boundary; the economic growth created within Belfast is distributed across the region.

Belfast is therefore a vital asset with the most potential to drive the regional economy. However, in terms of growth and productivity the statistics show that Belfast is not maximising its potential, and consequently lags behind other cities in the UK, Europe and other developed countries. If current levels of performance are maintained Belfast and, in turn, Northern Ireland will fall further behind its global competitors.

(ii) Co-Designing Place-Based Interventions

While there are clear signs of recovery in the Belfast economy, there are a number of challenges around economic growth which need to be addressed including, an over reliance on public sector jobs; an underdeveloped business start-up environment with low entrepreneurship levels; a workforce which is strongly divided between the highly educated and the unskilled; an aging city urban infrastructure that needs renewed if it is to meet the demands of a twenty-first century economy.

While certain parts of the city has benefited from growth, our most deprived neighbourhoods remain marginalised and disconnected from wider success. 9 out of the 10 most deprived SOA’s in Northern Ireland are in Belfast. Division and segregation continue to put a brake on the potential of many people and communities. In particular health, education and economic inequalities remain high with deprivation and need continuing to be a major stressor and contributor to marginalisation within the city.

Again, the Council would wish to work in partnership with central government in developing the specific delivery plans and co-designing place-based solutions to deliver the PfG outcomes and improving people’s wellbeing.

In compiling our response to this consultation, we found it easier to identify those areas where the Council is keen to work with the Executive to deliver the ambitions within the Programme for Government and also those areas where we have a specific 'ask' for further support. A summary of those is provided in the following section and is arranged around the main themes of the Programme for Government. Later sections provide more detail on your specific outcomes.

Executive Summary

<p>Growing the Economy</p>	<p>Programme for Government Outcomes:</p> <p>01) We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy</p> <p>02) We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment</p> <p>03) We have a more equal society</p> <p>05) We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential</p> <p>06) We have more people working in better jobs</p> <p>12) We have created a place where people want to live, to work, to visit and invest</p>
<p>Priority Asks and Co-design opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City-Regional Growth Deal which will bring benefits to the whole region - Transfer of Regeneration Powers and supporting integrated approaches to regeneration - City Centre Development and Infrastructure Investment (including new Tourism Infrastructure, North East Quarter, Belfast Streets Ahead, East Bank , North Foreshore, Grade A Office Space and Hotels) - Harnessing innovation to drive growth – use of information technology and better data management to support future economic growth. The SMART Cities approach is both scalable and transferable to other cities and towns across the region and should be included in the PfG - Digital Connectivity –investment in important digital infrastructure and enabling online access for businesses, communities and citizens across the city. - Inclusive Growth Programme – ensuring that as many people as possible contribute to and benefit from economic success - Local Pathways to Skills and Employability– building upon the emerging Belfast Works model - Potential devolution of funding to support local employment and skills development including any opportunities presented by the Apprentice Levy. - Urban Resilience – ability of cities to respond to economic, social and environmental shocks & stresses. - Supporting business start-up /growth, entrepreneurship & innovation - inc. infrastructure investment - Supporting International Relations and Foreign Direct Investment - Culture and Arts participation – development of an integrated cultural and arts strategy for Belfast - New World Class Visitor Attraction – wish to work in partnership to bring forward a second major world class tourism attraction (the Belfast Story) to the region 	

<p>Sustainability & Environment</p>	<p>Programme for Government Outcomes:</p> <p>02) We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment</p>
<p>Priority Asks and Co-design opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waste Infrastructure - maximising opportunities presented by the circular economy to transform approach to waste management; supporting economic growth, innovation and job creation. - Energy from Waste – opportunity to transform waste into other usable energies (e.g. electricity, fuel) - Biodiversity – cross-government approach and financial commitment required - Flood Protection – high risk for the city and region with significant financial consequences 	

Infrastructure Investment	Programme for Government Outcomes: 13) We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure
<p>Priority Asks and Co-design opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infrastructure Plan for City-Region and Economic Corridors – linked to regional framework - Financing Infrastructure – utilising innovative funding models including private/public co-financing - Infrastructure Priorities - including Belfast Transport Hub, York Street Interchange, Living with Water, Digital Infrastructure, Energy Security, Belfast Rapid Transit, City Centre Parking & Connectivity, enhancing cycle network, improving streetscape - One public estate - better use of public assets to unlocking development and regeneration opportunities and potentially financing infrastructure investment. - Transport – commitment from DfI on the implementation of policies to reduce congestion in Belfast and encourage a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport - Housing – ensuring future supply of housing matches projected need in terms of population growth, location, house sizes, types and tenures. Linkages to planning and emerging Local Development Plan. 	

Addressing Inequalities	Programme for Government Outcomes: 03) We have a more equal society 04) We enjoy long, healthy, active lives 06) We have more people working in better jobs 08) We care for others and we help those in need 11) We have high quality public services
<p>Priority Asks and Co-design opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addressing Life inequalities – working with partners through the delivery of a ‘Making Life Better’ Strategy to co-design placed-based approaches to addressing education, health and employment inequalities - Co-design local skills and ‘employability pipeline’ – building upon the Belfast Works emerging model - Development of a cross government and cross-sectoral approach to address poverty and social inequalities – linked to the emerging Regional Social Strategy. - Integrated Services - Opportunities to co-locate public services in public owned assets (e.g. Girdwood Community Hub) - Access to suitable housing – highlight the crucial role of local government through our planning functions and the zoning of land for housing through our local development plan process. - Wish to work with all partners to develop an integrated programme to address health inequalities, including enhancing mental well-being and reducing social inclusion. - Co-design measures to ensure an Age-Friendly Belfast and plan effectively to meet the needs of older people in the city, addressing social isolation, poverty, access to suitable housing and healthy aging. - Age discrimination legislation – call upon the Executive Office to extend Age Discrimination legislation to include the provision of goods, services and facilities. - Suggest that PfG make explicit reference to respecting and protecting the wellbeing of older people given the changing demographics of our society and the fact that other groups are referred to. 	

<p>Safe, Equal and Inclusive Society</p>	<p>Programme for Government Outcomes:</p> <p>07) We have a safe community where we respect the law and each other</p> <p>09) We are a shared society that respects diversity</p> <p>10) We are a confident, welcoming, outward looking society</p> <p>14) We give our children and young people the best start in life</p>
<p>Priority Asks and Co-design opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-design local interventions with the Council and the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships to support community safety and develop community confidence. - Integrated Shared Space and Interfaces Programmes - creation of shared space (and multi-use places) - better alignment of funding integration with other physical investment schemes within the city. - Use of social innovation to unlock service transformation – working with city partners and residents to co-design and deliver socially innovative solutions that can be adopted at scale across the city and beyond. - Co-design an integrated, inter-agency approach to early intervention including early years support and family programmes. - Right to play – recognition of the UNCRC Article 31 right to play to be included in the PfG alongside measures to assess how departments and agencies are meeting this right - Co-delivery of programmes such as the Ask First model, aimed at ensuring our young people are listened to and are valued, and that they are given the opportunity to confidently shape their own future - Co-design the proposed Respect Index 	

Comments on Specific PfG Outcomes

Outcome 1: ‘We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy’

The Council believes that a thriving and prosperous economy will be a key contributor to delivering many of the outcomes set out within the PfG. As the region’s capital city, major population centre and the hub for business and employment, Belfast City-Region has a critical role in driving forward Northern Ireland’s future economic competitiveness and growth.

Belfast already has a proven track record in attracting foreign direct investment. The city continues to offer favourable economic conditions including competitive labour costs; a pool of skilled graduates; and a growing international reputation as a venue for major events and tourism. Global trends tell us of the importance of growth in new sectors including financial technologies, cyber security, film and animation, connected health, advanced engineering, film/creative industries etc.

To build on our strengths and prepare for the future, systemic issues need to be addressed by all partners. For example, the city continues to suffer from high economic inactivity and relatively low rates of business start-up. And whilst we do have high skills levels in some areas in others, too many people don’t have the skills they need to succeed. There is still a substantial fiscal deficit demonstrating that the city needs higher levels of productivity. Northern Ireland still has an imbalance between our private and public sector. It is important to recognise that economic inactivity will not be addressed by economic means alone, rather a ‘whole system’ approach considering societal issues, refocusing cultural expectations and building ambitions is needed.

As a result Belfast has shown limited improvement in its competitiveness in the past five years when compared to 40 European cities. To be competitive at an international level, Belfast needs to tackle these underlying and inter-connected issues with innovative and collective action.

The Council believes that rebalancing the economy by encouraging private sector investment and supporting market diversification is essential for generating sustainable growth, increasing productivity and creating diverse and well paid jobs not only in Belfast but across the region. Central to this is improving the skills and employability levels. It is important that as many people as possible benefit from growth and the city's success – extending well beyond the city boundaries.

The Belfast Agenda (community plan for the city), currently out for consultation, sets out the following economic goals for the next four years.

- Create 15,000 new jobs
- Attract £1billion of private sector Foreign Direct Investment
- Support 4,000 small business start-ups
- Double the economic value of out-of-state tourism
- Welcome 1.5million overnight tourists stays per year

We want to work alongside our partners including the NI Executive to ensure delivery and bring significant benefit to the wider city-region.

Priority Asks / Co-Design Opportunities

The Council believes that the following could act as key catalysts for change and help further enhance the economic competitiveness of the region and should be built into the PfG.

- (i) **City-Region Growth Deal** – we are working with our local government colleagues (economic geographies can create the conditions to unlock future growth potential within the city-region, help deliver economic growth, transform public services and close the gap on inequalities.

Real opportunity to work in partnership with the Executive and Treasury to secure necessary funding, including the ability of council to borrow against growth, to plug deficits in key infrastructure and regeneration development schemes. The ability to access innovative financial mechanisms available in other cities (such as Land Value Capture, earn back rates growth schemes, ensuring public and private sector investment is integrated through co-invest Ventures, Asset backed Vehicles, use of Financial Transactions Capital etc.) could help accelerate infrastructure modernisation including sewage and energy security, and address connectivity issues.

- (ii) **Regeneration Powers** – despite the recent announcement by the Communities Minister that regeneration powers will not transfer to local government, the Council would strongly advocate that there is a commitment within the PfG that these important place-shaping functions transfer and complement the existing planning and economic development functions of councils.

If Belfast and Northern Ireland are to remain competitive and continue to attract investment, it will be important that we can respond to the needs and demands of potential investors. Experience has shown that such investors are seeking a one-stop shop approach to bringing forward development schemes in liaison with local councils instead of having to engage with multiple agencies.

- (iii) **Economic Forum** – in pursuance of a solid, partnership-based delivery approach to stimulating and driving economic growth for the city and city-region, the Council is in the process of forming an economic forum with the NI Executive, other city partners including the private sector. This forum will drive forward the achievement of our common economic goals and develop joint solutions to shared challenges.

This partnership will create an effective economic strategy for Belfast and the city-region, which supports and complements the Executive's strategy for economic growth. It will build a coherent

and evidence-based approach to improving city competitiveness, job creation and support for business. It will deliver long-term strategies for key growth sectors, including retail, hotel, office development, financial tech and creative industries, as well as export-led strategies to support business growth.

- (iv) **Inclusive Growth Programme** – The Council welcomes the commitment to adopt a ‘Local Works’ approach to improving employability and skills and would wish to work alongside central government and employers to ensure that people have the right skills to access and progress through employment and ensure a better match to business needs.

The Council is already developing an inclusive growth programme that fosters placed based growth which seeks to maximise the social and economic benefits of our investment; creating jobs and opportunities for residents to enter the workforce alongside providing accessible routes to employment through training and skills development.

The Council is aware that when the city’s economy grows it doesn’t mean that everyone is better off. Growth can pass many people and communities by unless we take steps to link that growth to better outcomes for everyone. The Council is already working with partners to develop and roll-out **a Belfast Works Employability Pathway** which is scalable and transferrable.

The Council would also recommend that consideration be given to the emerging findings of the RSA Inclusive Growth Commission (<https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/public-services-and-communities-folder/inclusive-growth-commission>) and the potential transferrable lessons for Northern Ireland.

- (v) **Resilience** – the Council believes that resilience is a key issue cutting across many of the PfG outcomes and can directly affect the economic, social and environmentally well-being of society and should therefore be given specific focus within the PfG.

The ability of localities to be able to bounce back from significant shocks and stresses as well as addressing many of the interconnected challenges that is restricting future success – systematic weaknesses in our economy, generational deprivation and inequalities and our aging infrastructure needs to be given attention.

The Council has been selected to join the Rockefeller Foundation’s 100 Resilient Cities who will support the city to create its first resilience strategy. This work will draw upon world-class expertise to explore the long term critical social, environmental and economic resilience issues in the city including unemployment, social unrest, energy, transport systems and water management. The Council would wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive and local government colleagues to bring this work forward and share any emerging learning and new approaches.

- (vi) **Business Start-Up and Growth** – The Council would wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive and Department for the Economy to develop a growth strategy to support key economic sectors and create an environment that fosters business start-up and growth which can be scalable and transferable across the region. The Council is committed to supporting innovation and has recently invested £9.2m (with ERDF support) in a new Innovative Factory that supports growth across the innovation eco-system.

- (vii) **International Relations and Foreign Direct Investment** – The Council welcomes the focus on enhancing international relations and trade connections and would wish to work alongside the NI Executive and Invest NI to ensure alignment and complementarity with our Belfast International Relations Framework to build on the success to date to maximise the future economic growth, FDI and export potential of Northern Ireland.

- (viii) **Harnessing innovation to drive growth** - The Council believes that utilising information technologies and better data management can support future economic growth. Work is underway with local universities, digital SMEs and the third sector to design and deliver a ‘**Smart Belfast Framework**’ that will build the necessary foundations required to generate innovative solutions to address major city challenges while also supporting the SME sector to develop world class products. Again, the Council believe that the **SMART Cities approach** would be a model which is scalable and transferable to other cities and towns across the region and should be included in the PfG.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 2 We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment
- Outcome 3 We have a more equal society
- Outcome 6 We have more people working in better jobs
- Outcome 10 We are a confident, welcoming outward looking society
- Outcome 12 We have created a place where people want to live, to work, to visit and invest

Outcome 2: ‘We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

The Council has a significant role in supporting the delivery of this outcome in terms of delivering its statutory duties and services, its role as the planning authority and preparing the new Local Development Plan (spatial) which will have creating a sustainable city at its core.

Priority Asks / Co-Design Opportunities

- (i) **Waste Infrastructure & Circular Economy** - Whilst waste management is a statutory duty of councils it incurs significant costs for both local and central government. There is a real opportunity to rethink our approach to waste management to move beyond the current focus on simply achieving landfill and recycling targets to maximising the potential presented through the circular economy to support business growth, innovation and job creation.

The Council notes the passing reference to the Circular Economy contained within the PfG document but believes that there should be a stronger commitment to developing a cross-government approach. Provides major opportunities to transform the way in which waste is managed in Northern Ireland but also drive economic growth and create employment opportunities. A circular economy approach will:

- reduce waste
- drive greater resource productivity
- deliver a more competitive economy
- position NI to better address emerging resource security/scarcity issues in the future
- help reduce the environmental impacts of our production and consumption

The core vision of the circular economy is of replacing the current largely linear economy of ‘make, use, dispose’ in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials and the end of each service life. This approach recognises and realises the true value of waste as a resource; the potential increased income generated helping to offset costs to local government. It will also help drive economic and business growth across the region by providing wider economic opportunities for the private and third sectors, by supporting innovation, job creation and increased profitability across the industry.

A recent report prepared by WRAP, commissioned by ReNEW (Resource Innovation Network for European Waste), examining the future employment prospects of the Circular Economy for Northern Ireland indicates that at an optimum case a transition to Circular Economy methods and models could be expected to create between 5,500 and 13,000 new jobs by 2030.

- (ii) **Waste Targets** - The Council note that there are no waste targets in the PfG but that these are contained within the Delivery Plans. The Council would recommend that the relevant target (EU Waste Framework Directive target of 50% waste from households recycled / composted by 2020) be highlighted in the main body of the PfG and not just in the relevant delivery plan.
- (iii) **Biodiversity** - The move to include an indicator on water quality and to develop a biodiversity indicator is welcomed and is seen as a very positive progression.

The Council note however that NI is failing on biodiversity targets and that the trend is downward. There is a critical need to invest in the environment to ensure economic prosperity, for example, investment in upland habitat management can alleviate flooding and reduce the costs of water purification.

The Council would like to see a commitment within the PfG for significant investment in biodiversity. A commitment to mainstreaming biodiversity across all government departments and capacity building within both central and local government is required in order to address these issues.

- (iv) **Energy from Waste (EfW)** - A commitment to supporting the strategic infrastructure for waste could be more clearly defined and expanded upon within the PfG. Whilst EfW, as a form of waste treatment can result in additional recycling (and help meet waste related targets), one of its major benefits is that the energy produced can be a valuable domestic energy source related to energy security.
- (v) **Levies to change consumer behaviour** - The Council feel that consideration should be given to using levies to encourage either a change in consumers' waste generating behaviour (as per the plastic bag levy) or to entice new developments such as a subsidy for 'good' products.
- (vi) **Flood Protection** - It is also suggested that specific measures to manage flood risk are included under this outcome. The Scottish model makes reference to 'well-designed, sustainable places' and includes a sustainable approach to flood risk management within this. There is a similar NI indicator to 'improve the supply of suitable housing' however it is proposed that specific references to increasing the number of homes and businesses which are not at risk of flooding and sustainable flood risk management are also important indicators. According to the NI Regional Risk Register (compiled by Civil Contingencies Group NI) flooding remains one of the top risks in Northern Ireland and should be included in the PfG.

By way of example the 2015 Belfast Tidal Flood Risk Study produced by Atkins identified that constructing a coastal flood defence for Belfast would cost £12million but it is estimated that it would save £120m each time it prevented Belfast from flooding. This is alongside preventing the significant non-financial impacts on residents, businesses and protecting the reputation of Belfast and Northern Ireland.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 1 We prosper through a strong, competitive regionally competitive economy
- Outcome 5 We are an innovative creative society where people can fulfil their potential
- Outcome 6 We have more people working in better jobs
- Outcome 11 We have high quality public services
- Outcome 13 We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure

Outcome 3: 'We have more equal society'

The Council welcomes and supports the focus on this outcome and its definition. Belfast must provide the opportunity for all its residents to lead healthy, engaged and fulfilling lives and are empowered to reach their full potential at every stage of life. Despite the growth experienced by the city over recent decades there still remains significant long-standing societal challenges which require a step-change in approach to addressing including concentrations of economic, educational and health inequalities.

Seven of the ten most deprived wards and nine of the most deprived Super Output Areas in Northern Ireland are in Belfast. This has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents. Suicide rates in the 10 per cent most deprived areas are almost five times higher than those in 10 per cent least deprived. Similarly, the gap in the life expectancy between the 10 per cent most and least deprived areas in Northern Ireland is approximately 10.7 years for Males and 7.7 years for females.

It is important that measures are taken to create a more equal society and to ensure people enjoy a high quality of life.

The Programme for Government rightly emphasizes the importance of place-based solutions to deal with long-standing problems particularly in terms of economic, educational and health inequalities. It is important that measures are taken to create a more equal society and have more people working in better jobs reflect the concentration of issues in urban areas - simply focusing on addressing the urban/rural distribution of jobs will not have the impact needed to turn the curve.

The Council is fully committed to providing the opportunity for all of our citizens to lead healthy, engaged and fulfilling lives as part of a vibrant

Priority Asks/ Co-Design Opportunities

- (i) **Addressing Life Inequalities** – The Council believes that working with our partners (including central government) through the delivery of the 'Making Life Better' strategy within the context of the Belfast Agenda provides a real opportunity to address many of these inequalities and achieving improved wellbeing outcomes for people – which underpins the PfG ambitions.
- (ii) **Whole System approach to Community Planning** - The Council welcomes the recognition within the PfG of the significant opportunity provided by the community planning process to support integrated place-based interventions. However, if this opportunity is to be realized it will require more than the will to do it, specific pieces of co-design are necessary so that there are connected approaches to developing and implementing economic and social policy. Whilst the economy features extensively in both the Programme for Government and local community plans; there is a danger that economic strategies will be developed separately at regional and local level when what is needed is a whole system approach designed to play to the strengths of the many stakeholders needed to effect change.

The Council must be involved in the design as well as the delivery of the economic, social and infrastructure strategies. We need to plan specific engagement to make this happen and whilst we welcome the opportunity to feed directly into SROS on draft proposals, the co-design approach needs to be explicit throughout final delivery plans.

The Council have included examples within the Delivery Plans highlighting our range of provision across the social and economic strata of the whole community – through our assets (community centres) and funding provision; best in class engagement with both young and old people; support for employability and skills through our Super Connected Communities outreach; support of the voluntary sector as a 'Learning City' and the lessons which we are taking from our emerging Resilience Strategy which aims to build a confident population and peaceful city.

- (iii) **Employability Pipeline** - The Council supports the proposal to design and implement an “employability pipeline” model in which jobs in growth sectors are ring-fenced for economically inactive clients who are then supported to access these through skills building, employability and mentoring provision and welcomes the opportunity to co-design this and sees this as a good example of the “whole system” approach to achieving outcomes and ensuring people are supported to access better jobs.

Work has been underway within Belfast to develop a placed-based employability and skills pathway ‘Belfast Works’, referred to earlier, which the council believes is scalable and transferrable. Partners in Belfast feel that it is important that resources are effectively targeted in order that we can achieve momentum with the project and quickly demonstrate potential; therefore it is proposed that the first focus would be on those aged 16-24 with low or no qualifications and no job.

- (iv) **Age Discrimination Legislation** - The Council recently passed a notice of motion to call upon the Northern Ireland Executive Office to take immediate steps to extend Age Discrimination Legislation to include the provision of goods, services and facilities. The Council would welcome that consideration be given to this within the PfG document and relevant delivery plan.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 1 We prosper through a strong, competitive regionally competitive economy
- Outcome 5 We are an innovative creative society where people can fulfil their potential
- Outcome 6 We have more people working in better jobs

Outcome 4: 'We enjoy long, healthy lives'

The Council supports the proposals to work with people to empower them to live healthier lives, improve service provision in support of better health outcomes, and work collaboratively to support positive health impacts from social programmes. We also welcome the focus given to supporting citizens to lead long, healthy and active lives through: prevention and early intervention; improving access to health and social care services; tackling health inequalities; and, delivering better outcomes from the Executive's investment in health and social care.

The Council has a key role to play in supporting this, providing a range of age-targeted programmes which are aligned to the delivery of this outcome including, for example, Leisure, Health, Parks and Open Spaces, Educational Outreach and Community Services and support.

Priority Asks / Co-Design Opportunities

- Again the Council would wish to work alongside central government and other public agencies to develop a whole system approach to supporting healthy living and wellbeing.
- (i) **Reduce life inequalities** – The Council recognise the importance of taking inter-sectoral approach to addressing the root causes of health and life inequalities within Belfast and the wider region. The Belfast Strategic Partnership was established to address the life inequalities that impact on Belfast, developing effective plans and interventions to help all residents. Supported by the Belfast Health Development Unit which is made up of staff from Belfast City Council, the Public Health Agency and the Belfast Health and Social Services Trust.

The BSP has developed a 'Framework for Action on life inequalities' which includes joint inter-agency work on mental health, alcohol and drug related health issues, life-long learning and early years/early years interventions. They are also seeking to bring forward interventions and support in cross-cutting issues such as

- **Addressing health inequalities** – in the context of the community plan for the city (Belfast Agenda) we will work with our partners including the Belfast Strategic Partnership to develop an integrated programme to address health inequalities, including enhancing mental wellbeing and reducing social inclusion. This will seek to build upon and maximise the impact of the regional 'Making Life Better Strategy' within Belfast addressing many aspects of physical health (physical activity, active travel), and mental wellbeing (particularly issues of social cohesion, community vulnerability and isolation). We will also seek to maximise the health impact of the **Council's £105million leisure transformation programme**.

In May 2016, a cross-party delegation from council meet with the Head of Fuel Poverty & Private Grants Team within DfC (Martin McDermott) to explore some of the key concerns relating to fuel poverty, some of which include:

- **Healthy Aging** - Belfast was the first city in Northern Ireland to join the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities. An age-friendly city is one in which organisations work together to make sure the quality of life for people is enhanced as they age.

We are also part of the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) which has been working for the last 18 months, consulting with over 700 older people. Specific concerns were highlighted around maintenance of pavements, public toilets and outdoor seating and home heating.

HASP, which is part of the Belfast Strategic Partnership, has developed an 'Age-friendly plan 2-14-17' to address these issues. These include, for example running an arts festival for older people; continuing with the Older Volunteer Awards; working with housing providers to communicate housing options; developing several age-friendly outdoor spaces; and developing an Age-friendly Belfast standard for businesses, and services to strive towards.

An intergenerational toolkit has been produced a guide and toolkit which is seeks to bring younger and older generations together and helping to support better engagement with younger and older people, promote participation and sense of belonging.

- **Active Belfast** - promoting healthy living and physical activity through targeted health and wellbeing programmes and utilising our assets (i.e. parks) and facilities (e.g. leisure centres, community centres). Working with the Healthy Aging Strategic Partnership, the Council is also committed to develop and deliver an 'active aging programme which informs future partner service design and planning.

(ii) **Older People / Age Friendly NI**– Most of our residents are living longer, healthier lives. People over 60 already make-up one fifth of our population and this is forecast to increase dramatically to over one third by 2050. Giving the changing demographics with an aging population with diverse needs, we believe that older people are of huge importance and should share in the progress towards each of the PfG outcomes along with other groups in our society. The Council believes that the PfG should make explicit reference to respecting and protecting the wellbeing of older people.

The Council notes that under Outcome 5 (fulfilling potential) there is a commitment to implementing the active aging strategy and the fact that specific delivery plans give focus to older people and creating an **Age Friendly NI**. The Council would seek clarification, perhaps within the delivery plans, as to how the Department will lead and drive the delivery of the active acting aging strategy including working collaboratively with local government, Trusts, Public Health Authority and others to create an Age Friendly NI.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 5 We are an innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their lives
- Outcome 8 We care for others and help those in need

OUTCOME 5 – We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential

The Council welcomes the Executive's aim to create an innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their potential and supports the issues identified in the PfG under this outcome. We believe that it is important that a clear definition of what is meant by innovation be communicated through the NI Innovation Brand to ensure that all stakeholders work towards a common goal throughout the delivery plans.

Priority Asks / Co-Design Opportunities

- (i) **Harnessing innovation to drive growth** - The Council believes that utilising information technologies and better data management can support future economic growth. Work is underway with local universities, digital SMEs and the third sector to design and deliver a '**Smart Belfast Framework**' that will build the necessary foundations required to generate innovative solutions to address major city challenges while also supporting the SME sector to develop world class products. Again, the Council believe that the **SMART Cities approach** would be a model which is scalable and transferable to other cities and towns across the region and should be included in the PfG.
- (ii) **Definition of Innovation** - The definition of innovation needs to be further defined through the Innovation NI brand with a shared understanding across all stakeholders. At present, many companies and third party organisations, see innovation as science and technology based, however innovation is wider than this and covers a wide range of sectors which are often overlooked including music, games, film and television / animation.
- (iii) **Infrastructure Investment** - The Council believes that the provision of appropriate infrastructure to encourage and support innovation including innovation hubs / co-working space – to house innovative and creative company start-ups and growth. Consideration also needs to be given to ensuring that there is the appropriate eco-system to support business growth and Council would call for a joined up approach in addressing this. Such infrastructure can also provide a dual purpose as potential 'soft-landing' for new FDI. The Council would reference by way of good practice the recent investment in a new £9.2m innovation Factory within the city.
- (iv) **Digital Connectivity** –important for driving economic growth, competitiveness and supporting the development of the knowledge based /technology based start-ups. There is currently a mismatch between the data protection policies and speed of action within the public sector and the needs of private sector companies (i.e. the innovators and solution providers) which constrains somewhat potential collaborative initiatives. In relation to innovative public sector procurement and opportunities for supporting Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) type programmes and innovation, it will be important that government seeks to removes unnecessary barriers.

The Council's Super-Connected Cities project has proved popular and is an example of how focus intervention and investment can provide necessary digital infrastructure and enabling online access for businesses, communities and citizens across the city. Such alternative programmes which invest in making are citizens digitally literate should be explored.

- (v) **Innovation Council** – the work of the Matrix panel and key stakeholders in the NI ecosystem should be recognised to avoid creating another unnecessary layer of complexity which may have the effect of delaying and hindering innovation rather than stimulating it. Caution should be exercised to avoid duplication. There should be a greater focus on place-based approaches and ensuring connections to an overall regional eco-system supporting innovation and creativity.

- (vi) **NI Innovation Brand** - While branding can be a useful exercise in terms of showcasing and internationalism, it can also confine and restrain. Providing finance to support companies who we know are innovating to showcase at local / international markets would be a better use of finance rather than creating a specific brand.
- (vii) **Innovation accreditation** – the Council would wish to further explore the scope of such an accreditation and whether or not it is recognised internationally
- (viii) **Educational Outcomes** - Increasing integration of education and work has been outlined as a key action within the school environment. Better connectivity between colleges, universities and employers would ensure skills and learning are aligned to employer needs. The Council believes that there is a need to link education, skills and careers advice with entrepreneurship and build a stronger local support package for business start-ups. Entrepreneurship is currently low within Belfast and Northern Ireland; creating an entrepreneurial culture is a goal within the Council's Employability & Skills Framework and needs to be built into career choices and embedded at an early stage in education. An enhanced curriculum to create a culture of innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship in the class-room, including increased exposure to positive role-models will be essential to create entrepreneurs of the future.
- (ix) **Cultural & Arts participation** - The Council note that research from the Continuous Household Survey and by Audiences NI suggests that the majority of people here are infrequent arts consumers. We would like to see further development of projects and measures that increase the frequency of cultural engagement.

The Council would wish to work alongside central government and other partners to deliver an integrated cultural and arts strategy which seeks to enhance the city's distinctive culture, encourage and enable access to cultural and arts activities, providing opportunities for participation in activities, events and festivals.

OUTCOME 6 – We have more people working in better jobs

The Council welcomes this Outcome and the current focus of activity as set out. Improving life chances and growth depends on the skills of citizens – and almost a third of the adult population in Belfast has no qualifications. Skill levels have a significant impact upon employment prospects: people with no qualifications are five times more likely to be unemployed than those who have higher levels of formal education. It should be recognised that to be truly effective in providing opportunities for career progression to better jobs, there is a need to consider the pipeline of skills at all levels for example via a 'skills escalator'.

The Council believes that Employability and Skills is a complex and multifaceted issue. Addressing the employability and skills challenges at all levels is a core element determining the region's future sustainable economic growth. Economic forecasts suggest that around 1 in 6 jobs in the future will be available for those with no skills.

At the other end of the employment and skills spectrum, Belfast and the region have been recognised as gaining a reputation for the high growth sectors of Cyber, Fintech and Creative Industries creating demand for higher skill levels. Addressing these diverging employment and skills needs will require a long-term strategic approach across a range of organisations. To that end, Council have developed its Employability & Skills Framework with four key aims including increasing access to jobs through entry and low level skills; generating higher level skills; career progression routes and developing a culture of entrepreneurship.

Priority Asks / Co-Design Opportunities

- (i) **Supporting Employability and Skills** - The Council would highlight the strong linkages and dependencies with Outcome 1 and the associated commitment to develop with councils a 'Local Works' approach to improving employability. The Council would welcome this approach and would wish to work alongside the Executive and other partners to ensure that such an approach is flexible enough to take account of local circumstances, priority target audiences and adequately resourced to have affect and be sustainable.

The Council is already working with central government, education institutions and employers to develop an **Employability and Skills Pathway (i.e. Belfast Works)** which seeks to support people into employment and better match skills to emerging industry needs. This will be an integrated whole life programme that will support those furthest from the labour market though to employment. We will work with employers to identify, plan and prepare for emerging job opportunities and to create effective pathways to employment.

The Council believes that this approach is both scalable and transferrable and would welcome an opportunity to work in partnership with the Executive to co-design the policy framework for improving skills and employability and to explore the potential for incorporating Belfast's Skills & Employability Strategy within a regional framework.

A shared understanding of how to target those furthest from the labour market would allow the Executive and the city to work together to engage neighbourhood-level providers to deliver employment programmes within a formal outcomes-led rather than process driven commissioning process. Joint work could be carried out to explore how existing employment and skills programmes could be streamlined at the local level as well as the potential for a city-regional apprenticeships scheme.

- (ii) **Funding for employability support** – the Council would wish to explore the potential for greater devolution of funding to support local employment and skills development including any potential offered by the **Apprentice Levy**. Making existing funding more effective is essential if the Executive is to meet its ambitious skills and growth targets, and is important for improving the life chances of all citizens. The outcomes based approach offers the opportunity for government to shape community-based services around people, identifying and dealing with their needs intensively in a holistic way with a single point of contact.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 1 We prosper through a strong, competitive regionally competitive economy
- Outcome 5 We are an innovative creative society where people can fulfil their potential
- Outcome 12 We have created a place where people want to live & work, to visit & invest
- Outcome 14 We give our children and young people the best start in life

Outcome 7: We have a safe community where we respect the law and each other & Outcome 9: We are a shared society that respects diversity

The Council believes that the two outcomes above are so closely linked and complementary that they are best addressed in a single response. The Council welcomes the proposed actions as set out to create a safe community including early intervention, increasing shared spaces, improving the justice process, strategies to reduce inequality, testing of pilots, and delivering flagship projects to address issues such as organised crime and the legacy of the past.

We also support the focus on creating a community which promotes mutual respect and understanding, which is strengthened by its diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced. We also support the creation of more shared space within the city and would commend that a cross-government space that can be used by anyone from any community; and to tackle the perceived barriers that stop people taking part.

Priority Asks / Co-Design opportunities

Addressing issues impacting on the sense of safety and creating community confidence happens at a local level. The Council and the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships have a key role to play in delivering these outcomes including supporting placed-based approaches and early intervention programmes which are preventative rather than remedial in nature.

- (i) **Shared Space** – The Council is committed to working with the Shared City Partnership to deliver an integrated plan to improve good relations and developing a sustainable, transferable and scalable approach to the management of shared space. We welcome the PfG commitment to bringing forward flagship transformational programmes to increase shared space and create multi-use places in local neighborhoods. We would be keen to work alongside the Executive to maximise potential opportunities for the city and explore potential synergies with other emerging physical investment schemes.

The Council has developed a bid for resources under the PEACE IV programme which includes a specific shared space theme. We would seek to develop a transferable approach to the identification, design, programming and management of shared space with a focus on improving community relations, physical and social regeneration and ensuring the sustainability of local neighbourhoods. We would welcome the opportunity to share this work and to develop an action plan to support a more ambitious agenda for shared space in NI.

The Council also intends to invest, under the PEACE Plan, in developing resilient networks for meaningful purposeful and sustainable engagement between individuals and communities as well as facilitating and supporting effective leadership at all levels and within all sectors of the city. This will seek to build the capacity of disengaged and marginalised communities to participate in shared space programming and enable their increased involvement in peace and reconciliation activities within wider society. In addition we will seek to develop increased skills and capacity within different sectors to facilitate increased collaboration and partnership working on developing Good Relations and shared space outcomes.

- (ii) **Respect Index** – The Council also notes the proposal to develop a Respect Index and potential for development of a Reconciliation index and would be keen to be involved in co-developing and piloting this approach in collaboration with partners in central government.
- (iii) **Together Building Sustainable Communities** – The Council welcomes the continued commitment by the Executive to TBUC and wish to continue to work with central government and other stakeholders in delivering supporting programmes including e.g. District Councils Good Relations Programme, summer camps and intervention activities. The Council believes that a specific focus should be given to better aligning all available funding streams to maximise the good relations outcomes.

- (iv) **Offending** - whilst the Council believe that the broad issues have been captured in relation to anti-social behaviour and crime; further consideration and focus needs to be given to the links between offending/ risk of offending and underlying drugs and alcohol issues. There is also a close alignment to Outcome 4 on this matter (health).

The Council would highlight the need to develop a 'whole system approach' to managing young offending (and the risk of offending) which seeks to address the root causes (e.g. substance abuse, education and employment inequalities etc) rather than taking remedial action (links outcomes 1 and 5).

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 9 We are a shared society that respects diversity
- Outcome 10 We are a confident, welcoming, outward looking society
- Outcome 12 We have created a place where people want to live & work, to visit and invest

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Outcome 8: We care for others and we help those in need

The Council endorses plans to help and care for the most vulnerable in our society, ensuring provision is adequate to meet their needs and where appropriate, giving people the opportunity and means to help themselves. We welcome the proposed actions including supporting people with disabilities to live more independent lives, reducing the inequalities faced by people with disabilities, helping people get access to suitable housing, ensuring housing is of a suitable standard, and assisting those living with the most difficult conditions.

Priority Asks

- (i) **Reduce poverty and social Inequalities** – There is a need to adopt a cross-government and cross-sectoral approach to addressing poverty and social inequalities help alleviate many of the social pressures which exist across region and particularly within Belfast as an urban area. The Council would wish to work alongside the Executive, Department for Communities and other stakeholders in bringing forward the delivery plans attached to this PfG Outcome as well as the new Social Strategy which is to emerge.

Addressing fuel poverty is a key area of concern for the council and elected Members; who have previously highlighted the need for a more targeted and sustainable approach to the development and delivery of support schemes such as (or example, the Affordable Warmth Scheme funded by the Department for Communities and administered by local government, the bolder replacement scheme administered by the NIHE); developing preventative measures and financial assistance.

- (ii) **Age Friendly NI** - The Council believes that this outcome being closely linked to Outcome 4 and therefore would again recommend that the PfG should make explicit reference to respecting and protecting the wellbeing of older people. Giving the changing demographics with an aging population with diverse needs, we believe that older people are of huge importance and should share in the progress towards each of the PfG outcomes along with other groups in our society.

The Council notes that under Outcome 5 (fulfilling potential) there is a commitment to implementing the active aging strategy and the fact that specific delivery plans give focus to older people and creating an Age Friendly NI. The Council would seek clarification, perhaps within the delivery plans, as to how the Department will lead and drive the delivery of the active acting aging strategy including working collaboratively with local government, Trusts, Public Health Authority and others to create an Age Friendly NI.

- (iii) **Housing Provision** – Housing is a key issue in creating sustainable communities. Affordable and safe housing is fundamental to the quality of life of our residents. In 2015, there were over 6,900 people stress in the city. The Council welcomes the commitment given to helping people get access to suitable housing and would highlight the role of local government in supporting this process through its planning functions, the zoning of land for housing and different types of tenure through the **Local Development Plan process**.

The Council is committed to working with central government, the NIHE and other partners to maximise the benefits of housing investment in the city, increasing the tenure mix, growing the population of the city and city centre and helping create sustainable, safe and cohesive communities.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 4 We enjoy long, healthy, active lives
- Outcome 13 We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure.

Outcome 10: We are confident, welcoming, outward-looking society &

Outcome 12: We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest

The Council believe that the two outcomes above are so closely linked and complementary that they are best addressed in a single response. We support the PfG plans towards creating a confident, welcoming and outward-looking society and a place where people would want to leave and work, to visit and invest. The Council believe that the actions identified within the delivery plans supporting these two outcomes are wide in scope and will deliver against a number of the outcomes identified across the Programme for Government.

The Council believe that the importance of Belfast as a regional gateway, an investment location and key driver for economic growth must not be overlooked. It is the face we present to the world and provides the impetus to those thinking of investing, living and starting businesses here. Its success drives the prosperity of the whole city and region.

Key Asks / Opportunities for Co-delivery

- (i) **Tourism & Events** – We would see value in Government agencies and Councils working together to determine event and festival priorities, and also to seek an agreed position in relation to liquor licensing and hospitality opening hours to promote the region globally in terms of tourism and events. A commitment to support a second major tourist attraction in Belfast would also be welcomed.

The Council would recommend that there is a more streamlined and co-ordinated approach across Departments to assist cities and the wider region in regard to staging major international events. This will avoid delays which may impact whether such projects are staged in NI.

The Council acknowledge that much work is already underway. We are engaged with Tourism NI on the NI Tourism Strategy work and InvestNI's international work, and with both universities and the Belfast Met (exchanging strategies and agree KPIS, etc.). The Council feel that they are best placed to lead on some sectoral developments where the critical mass of companies/research resides – for e.g. cyber security, business tourism, creative industries, green technologies.

- (ii) **New World-Class Visitor Attraction (Belfast Story)** – the Council would wish to work in partnership with the Executive and private sector partners to bring forward plans to create a second major world-class tourism attraction which would be a regional asset; complementing and transforming our current tourism offer and attracting large numbers of new and repeat visitors who will spend across the regional economy.

Given the significance of this project to the regional economy in terms investment, economic growth, employment creation, tourism offer and international profile, the Council would ask that this be including the PfG and emerging Investment Strategy. The Council will work with Executive to progress considerations around detailed design, masterplanning, governance arrangements, delivery and funding models.

The significant benefits and success of a collaborative approach between central/ local government and the private sector has already been proven with the success of the Titanic Signature Project which has experience record visitor numbers and was recently winning 'World Leading Tourism Attraction' at the prestigious World Travel Awards. Titanic Belfast is making a significant contribution to the regional economy and to a positive profile of Northern Ireland across the world.

(iii) Economic Growth and Investment

- **Europe and USA:** Additional issues and uncertainties include the impact of Brexit and US President Elect's statements relating to Corporation Tax which will influence the future economic performance of NI.
- **Attracting FDI and Increasing International Trade:** The proposed actions relating to External Visitors and National Brands focus on attracting foreign investment and increasing international trade; however there are no direct indicators within the applicable delivery plan at present.
- **International Relations:** Although implicitly referenced with regards to this outcome (and also in the context of outcomes 1 (economy) and 12 (live, work, visit and invest), BCC would welcome a stronger focus on this matter. Building our place on the international stage, and actively promoting NI as an investment and tourist destination will be a key catalyst for economic growth. The Council is also investigating options for developing a City Investment Advice Service and support scheme to identify a package of measures and supports that the city can offer to business start-ups, businesses wishing to grow and those wishing to invest in Belfast. This is being developed with input from Incest NI to ensure that it augments existing services, and we would welcome the opportunity to work with the NI Executive to develop this for the benefit of the whole region.
- **Partnerships:** Agreements and international connections between local government and sister city partners can provide a unique platform to open doors for stakeholders, and would also have a positive effect on the outcome, and should be considered within the applicable delivery plans.

(iv) City Centre Regeneration

The importance of the city centre as a regional gateway, an investment location and key driver for economic growth cannot be overlooked. It is the face we present to the world and provides the impetus to those thinking of investing, living and starting businesses here. **Its success drives the prosperity of the whole city and region.**

The **Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy** sets out our ambition for the continued growth and regeneration of the city core and its surrounding areas up until 2030 and sets the key drivers change and investment priorities. It seeks to deliver transformational change by co-ordinating major capital projects mobilising available funding to address areas of market failure.

The Council would want to work with the Executive and the relevant Departments to **agree prioritisation and joint financing models** to bring forward the key schemes outlined within the Strategy which will impact on the prosperity of both the city and the wider region and would request that these investment opportunities find expression in the emerging NI Investment Strategy and Economic Strategy.

- **The North East Quarter (Royal Exchange)** – would seek to develop a partnership with the private sector to ensure delivery of high quality investment into this currently underdeveloped but key strategic gateway into the city. The project will integrate the mixed use plans with Belfast city centre's wider retail, leisure and cultural offer and link the established Victoria Square and CastleCourt shopping centres.
- **Delivery of Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3** – £32million regeneration scheme which will revitalise the city centre, creating new streetscape, open space and connect with other key developments including the University of Ulster scheme. The Council has already committed £5m contribution towards the redevelopment of Cathedral Gardens.

- **East Bank** – working with partners, including the private sector to maximise the investment potential of this key development area (which includes Queens Quay and Sirocco). There is an opportunity to attract significant investment and jobs into this area and to reconnect what was once a thriving industrial site with the city centre, Titanic Quarter, the Harbour as well as to the adjoining neighbourhoods and communities.
- **North Foreshore** – 340 acres (138ha) former landfill site. Largest regeneration site in Belfast. £9.5million infrastructure investment nearing completion (part ERDF funded) and future potential around cleantech hub/environmental resource park and private sector lead commercial leisure/mixed use scheme (200acres). £20m investment in new Film Studio currently underway.
- **Bel Tel Joint Venture** - The Council have, for the first time, undertaken a Joint Venture with a private sector partner and acquired a key city centre building with the intention of redeveloping the site as a regeneration catalyst for the wider area and proposing it as a new location for BBC NI HQ. The aspiration is to build upon the Ulster University £250 million investment (and 12,000 students) and unlock other investment such as he planned £40 million investment and extension to our City Centre Library, the Belfast Story attraction, and other private sector-led development in Royal Exchange and in the retail core
- Increasing demand for **Grade A Office Space** in the city. If we are to ensure Northern Ireland prospers as a foreign direct investment location, we must meet the demands of the major city investors who require modernised buildings with excellent natural light, generous common areas and enhanced environmental credentials which in turn help to reduce office running costs.
- We have developed a vision for our traditional office area -**The Linen Quarter** – which seeks to inform and shape the many planning applications coming forward for hotel and office developments and link this emerging activity to the planned transport hub project. We are also developing **Planning Frameworks** for the **East Bank** area and the river as well as the **Inner North** of the city centre.
- **Hotel developments** - the recent **£30 million** extension to our Waterfront Hall exhibition centre has enabled the city to accommodate large scale conferences in the heart fo the city centre. As a result of this and our already burgeoning tourist offer our Hotel sector has responded with 9 applications for new hotels, all of which are approved by our Members, 5 are already under construction and one has recently opened (The Bullit).

Outcomes 10 and 12 also impact positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 1 We prosper through a strong, competitive regionally competitive economy
- Outcome 4 We enjoy long, healthy, active lives
- Outcome 6 We have more people working in better jobs
- Outcome 13 We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure

Outcome 11: We have high quality public services

The Council welcomes this outcome which is about ensuring that the public services we provide for people are responsive, efficient and effective, that they are shaped to meet the needs of people, and that they are accessible in ways and at times that fit into people's lives.

Priority Asks / Opportunities for Co-Design

The broad issues relating to service quality, responsiveness, the need to reduce duplication, focus on the frontline delivery, and digitisation have been captured.

- (i) **Placed-Based Approaches** – the Council has previously highlighted how regional and sub-regional data can mask issues such as clusters of deprived communities, economic inactivity and poverty. With this in mind it is important that public service delivery considers the localised needs of communities in urban areas.

The Council would support in particular the focus on **responsive** and **citizen-focused** services which are co-designed in association with local and community expertise with the end-user in mind; and looks forward to seeing the detail of how this will be achieved across the relevant delivery plans.

The Council would support in particular the focus on **responsive** and **citizen-focused** services which are co-designed in association with local and community expertise with the end-user in mind; and looks forward to seeing the detail of how this will be achieved across the relevant delivery plans.

- (ii) **Maximising the impact of local assets** – partners across the city are investing in important community assets, while communities themselves are bringing forward and delivering investment projects. The Council would highlight the importance of physical assets being brought forward with a focus on delivering outcomes. Agency's need to work together to maximise the benefits of local assets and where possible use them as a means of making services more integrated and accessible.

There are a number of programmes seeking to improve community assets as a driver for regeneration including the Council's Local Investment and Belfast Investment Funds, Urban Villages and Building Sustainable Communities. It is important that we take a strategic overview to ensure that interventions are planned and managed in a way that maximises their benefit to local people. The Council is conscious that in the years ahead community planning partners will be building houses, schools, health-care assets, new leisure centres and many other community based assets.

Again, the Council believe that there is a real opportunity to work across government and sectors to better plan, maximise opportunities for co-location of services and in turn provide better services, deliver monetary savings and achieve better outcomes for local people.

- (iii) **Use social innovation to unlock service transformation** – the Council would wish to work with the Executive and city partners to explore how we can maximise social innovation tools and techniques to help transform and improve the way we plan and deliver services at both the city and local level. Through our smart cities work we will explore how we can work with residents and partners to co-design and deliver more effective service provision. We believe that this approach can be adopted at scale in other parts of the region.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 3 We have a more equal society
- Outcome 4 We enjoy long, health, active lives

Outcome 13: We connect our people and opportunities through our infrastructure

Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to meet today with the Committee for Infrastructure. It is our desire to work in partnership with central and local government as well as the private and third sectors to create a resilient, sustainable and inclusive city-region.

The Council strongly believes that if Belfast and Northern Ireland is to make a further step change and compete on a global scale there is a need for targeted investment in the physical, economic and social infrastructure of the city-region. Having modern infrastructure in place will enable and support economic growth and ensure that the city-region remains competitive in terms of being an attractive place to live, work and invest. It is also important in terms of supporting future development and plans for growth.

Understanding Northern Ireland's priority infrastructure needs, and planning to address these on an affordable and property sequenced basis, should be at the heart of the PfG and new Investment Strategy. We wish to work in partnership with central and local government as well as the private sector to ensure that critical infrastructure schemes are identified, prioritised and importantly finance to ensure delivery.

Priority Asks / Opportunities for Co-Design

Whilst the Council clearly welcomes the commitment within the PfG to progress the Belfast Rapid Transit and Belfast Integrated Transport Hub, we would recommend that the following is given specific consideration in finalising the PfG and associated draft Investment Strategy.

- (i) **Infrastructure Plan for the City-Region** - the Council would wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive, the Department for Infrastructure and other government to develop an Infrastructure Plan for the city-region and connections with other economic corridors. This will seek to identify the key infrastructure priorities and will complement any regional infrastructure plan which may be brought forward.
- (ii) **Financing Infrastructure Investment** – the Council would wish to wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive, Department for Infrastructure and Department to explore and identify potential new financial mechanisms and vehicles which could be utilised to deliver critical city infrastructure projects and support economic growth and job creation across the region (e.g. joint ventures with private sector, European Investment Bank investment, asset backed vehicles, land value capture, financial transactions capital, social impact bonds, earn-back incentive schemes).

The DoF and Executive are proactively looking at the practicalities and merits of other funding vehicles - in the context of the emerging new Programme for Government, NI Investment Strategy and the deliverability of Executive priorities. Initial discussions have already taken place with DoF officials who are keen to work with council, the Strategic Investment Board and other partners to co-commission a specific piece of work around innovative financing models. This will seek to identify options and examine their merits and practicalities of implementation.

It is important to recognise the financial tools available to the council, including, for example, ability to borrow to invest in capital schemes, ability to access other funds, and the ability to enter into Joint Ventures with the private sector to unlock major investment and development opportunities.

The Council would also wish to explore with DFI, DoF, the NI Executive, other Departments and the Strategic Investment Board the potential to utilise government assets to incentivise investment and unlock major development and infrastructure schemes. We would also wish to explore more commercial alternatives to bringing forward and financing important such schemes. This is linked to the earlier discussions on the agenda regarding the possible creation of an 'Infrastructure Plan for the City'.

(iii) **City Infrastructure Priorities** – to meet the infrastructure needs of the city, the Council would wish to work with the Executive and Department for Infrastructure and other partners, including the private sector, to bring forward the following schemes:

- Belfast Transport Hub
- York Street Interchange
- Transportation Infrastructure
- Car Parking Strategy
- Living with Water Programme
- Energy Security Programme
- Digital Infrastructure
- Belfast Rapid Transit
- City Centre Parking & Connectivity
- Enhanced Cycle Network
- Streetscape

- **York Street Interchange** – the Council welcomes the recent announcement by the Infrastructure Minister that this important scheme will be taken forward but are concerned about the current uncertainty around financing. Given the significance of this scheme to supporting the regional economy and improving connectivity between Belfast (and Port) to the rest of the region, the Council believes that this £160million scheme should be explicitly referenced within the Programme for Government and prioritised within the emerging NI Investment Strategy.

It is recognised that the York Street Interchange proposal will alleviate a significant bottleneck at the M2/Westlink junction which adversely impacts on city centre traffic volumes and congestion on a daily basis. The Council believes that this scheme is critical in supporting regional economic growth and competitiveness, accommodating 1000,000 vehicles each day, mostly commuters to and from Belfast as well as connecting freight /haulage transport through the port of Belfast to the strategic road network throughout the wider region.

- **Transport Infrastructure** – ensuring that the city and city-region has appropriate transportation infrastructure which supports and enables access, mobility and connectivity is a key priority. Effective infrastructure and transportation planning will be critical components of the Local Development Plan and the creation of a sustainable land-use strategy for the city and city-region.

Within the Belfast Agenda, we are committed to developing an integrated city transport plan which will seek to maximise the opportunities presented by the £150million investment in the Belfast Transport Hub and Rapid Transit System. It will also seek to address under-use of public transport, particularly in relation to commuter patterns and work to promote active travel.

The Council would wish to work closely with the Executive and Department for Infrastructure to bring this forward and ensure alignment with regional priorities which may emerge in the Investment Strategy and revised Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan. It will be important that we establish shared transport objectives and priorities.

- **City Centre Transport and Parking** – Again, we would wish to work with the Executive and DfI in bringing forward a Car Parking Strategy for the city which will include a comprehensive solution to addressing city centre transportation and parking related pressures.

- The delivery of the **Belfast Rapid Transit Phase I** in the West and East of the city and developing proposals for **Phase II for the North and South of the city**.
- **Enhancing the cycle network** – develop strategy for cycling, securing necessary funding and ensuring that cycling is a consideration within planning processes.
- **Living with Water Programme** – ensuring that the drainage infrastructure within Belfast is fit-for-purpose and alleviates potential risks around flooding and pollution. The ‘Living with Water Programme’ has identified that Belfast has the worst drainage infrastructure in Northern Ireland and a failing to act could result in significant consequences including e.g. financial impact, reputational damage, impeding housing and business growth and adversely impacting on construction. Estimates to deliver the necessary infrastructure are around £750m for Belfast alone.
- **An energy security programme** – The Council would wish to work alongside the NI Executive, other city partners and utility providers to develop a city-region energy programme. We will work with partners to better manage energy usage across the city’s public estate and support better acquisition, management and finance of energy. We will build opportunities with partners, including the private sector and local communities, to encourage investment and deployment of renewable sources in order to make the city more attractive to investors and to tackle fuel poverty.
- **Housing Provision** – Again the Council would highlight the fact that housing is a key issue in creating sustainable communities. Affordable and safe housing is fundamental to the quality of life of our residents. In 2015, there were over 6,900 people stress in the city. The Council welcomes the commitment given to helping people get access to suitable housing and would highlight the role of local government in supporting this process through its planning functions, the zoning of land for housing and different types of tenure through the **Local Development Plan process**.

The Council is committed to working with central government, the NIHE and other partners to maximise the benefits of housing investment in the city, increasing the tenure mix, growing the population of the city and city centre and helping create sustainable, safe and cohesive communities.

- **Digital infrastructure** – important for driving economic growth and competitiveness and enhancing international connectivity and proposition as an investment location. Also supports the development of the knowledge based and technology start-ups. The region also has a strong record of staying at the forefront of communications technology. It became the first region in Europe to achieve 100 per cent broadband coverage and one of the first to operate and experience high speed, next generation services with a new 40-gigabyte per second transatlantic and terrestrial telecommunications link between Northern Ireland, North America and Europe. This is providing secure, reliable service and delivering prices up to 20 per cent below market rates in London, Dublin, Manchester and Glasgow.
- **Streetscape** – Investment in high-quality streetscape which creates a sense of place, improves the attractiveness and animation of localities and helps attract tourism and inward investment, including the potential future use of developer contributions to fund this.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 3 We have a more equal society
- Outcome 4 We enjoy long, health, active lives

Outcome 14: We give our children the best start in life

The Council welcome this outcome which is about ensuring that all of our children and young people grow up safely and happily in a society where they receive the support they need to achieve their full potential, and where they have the opportunity to express their views and have a say in decisions that affect them. We would commend the focus on early intervention and the proposal to strengthen relationships and partnership working to integrate health, education and community assets to meet the needs of children.

The Council delivers a range of age-targeted programmes to support this outcome through our provision for example in Leisure, Health, Parks and Open Spaces, Educational Outreach and Community Services. These services deliver a variety of interventions designed to promote active and healthy lifestyles for the breadth of age-groups.

In addition, Council administers a significant grant aid programme to support local community and voluntary organisations to deliver initiatives which will advance this outcome in their local communities. We have a dedicated Children and Young People's Unit which has a remit not only to deliver direct services to children and young people via the Play Service, but also to champion their needs and enable them to have a voice in the city via the Belfast City Council Youth Forum. The Council would therefore welcome the opportunity to work more closely in partnership with other key stakeholders to ensure that our services are targeting those children who are in greatest need.

Priority Asks / Opportunities for Co-Design

- (i) **Early intervention up to 18 years of age** – Belfast City Council has adopted an outcomes framework for our work with children and young people which is aligned to the outcomes for the Programme for Government. The Council is making a commitment as part of the Belfast Agenda to enable children and young people to play their part in shaping their city and communities, and aims to contribute to children being healthy, happy and achieving at each stage of life. We also aim to support children to feel safe in their community and encourage them to reach their full potential.

There are a number of points in a child's life particularly when transitioning to post-primary education, or experiencing adversity where they are at greater risk of becoming involved in risk-taking behaviours, or where they are more susceptible to poor mental health, or experiencing poor educational attainment. However the focus of the PfG is very much on early year's provision. **We would welcome a greater recognition of the importance of early intervention for all children up to the age of 18 years.**

- (ii) **A fully integrated, inter-agency approach to family support** - building on the work already done by the Executive and partners we will work together to ensure we see the whole picture of a child's development so that they have the continual support they need to reach their potential. We will encourage a focus on support for families in the city through an integrated family early intervention programme. Our aim is for an integrated service provision to support families facing challenges, maximising the impact of the city's ten Family Support Hubs. The Council believe that this type of intervention is both scalable and transferable to the wider community sector and should be considered within the PfG.

- (iii) **Right to play** - within the intervention to ensure that every child, whose parents want it can access a funded place in the Pre-school Education Programme in their immediate pre-school year, it would be helpful if a commitment could be given to ensuring that each child attending this provision has access to freely chosen play opportunities. Article 31 of the UNCRC formally enshrines the child's right to play and the right to engage in other recreational activities including participation in cultural activities and the arts. It states:
- State Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
 - State Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational leisure activity.

The Council would welcome greater recognition of this right to play within the PfG and the inclusion of outcome measures to assess how departments and agencies are meeting this.

- (iv) **Co-delivery of Play Programmes** – The Council would be keen to work in partnership with the Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast Childcare Partnership and Community and Voluntary organisations to design and deliver play programmes for parents and pre-school children. Council would also welcome opportunities to engage with hard to reach / at risk families / parents perhaps via the Family Nurse Partnership to introduce play opportunities and contribute to supporting parents as the first educators of children. **Council would welcome opportunities to work more collaboratively and co-design interventions with local grant-aided groups which are aimed at giving children the best start in life**
- (v) **Youth Forum and Ask First model** – the Council recognises the importance of engaging young people in meaningful and constructive activities and creating opportunities for them to make a contribution to civic life and gain valuable employability skills. Our Belfast City Council Youth Forum provides opportunities for young people to do this. The Council has adopted the Ask First principles of participation as advocated by the Participation Network (CINI) to ensure that we consult effectively with children and young people.

The Council is committed to working with a range of city and regional partners to safeguard everyone, address child poverty and ensure effective family services are available at each stage of a child or young person's life. We will encourage our children and young people to have the best start in life by providing 1000's of free, accessible play opportunities across the city through our outreach and After-schools provision, organising activities and events in our parks, delivering summer schemes, community centre programmes, city events and festivals. We will support our Belfast Youth Forum members to be the city's young advocates and provide high quality safe open spaces in parks and play areas for our children and young people.

The Council believe that the Programme for Government should consider adopting the Ask First model for consultation with children and young people to ensure that their voices are heard and feedback is given as to how their responses have been acted upon.

Also impacts positively on the following PfG outcomes:

- Outcome 3 We have a more equal society
- Outcome 6 We have more people working in better jobs

DRAFT

Section 3:

Comments on specific Programme for Government Delivery Plans.

DRAFT



Outcome(s): 1. We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy

Delivery Plan: Indicator 21 External Sales (BCC ref 2)

PfG SRO: Derek Baker, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Policy Group, DfE
NI-Economic-Strategy@economy-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	<p>Yes the main issues have been addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belfast City Council welcome the focus on targeting those businesses that are not currently exporting due to their sector or size and outside of INI's radar. This is in line with the Belfast Agenda commitments to grow the economy to support businesses to deliver export led strategies to encourage business growth and maximising new and existing international connections.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need a clear definition with regards to what is meant by a regionally balanced economy. It should be clearly articulated that a strong Belfast is necessary to support a strong regionally balanced economy. As the region's capital city, major population centre and the hub for business and employment, Belfast is critical to Northern Ireland's economic future. Need to consider the potential impact of the new US presidency on FDI. Exporting and US relations should be included along with the plans for dealing with Brexit in light of the Autumn Statement and the implications with exporting to the EU. Councils will have a key role in terms of communicating Brexit implications locally to the business sector and to international city partners. For companies seeking investment (VC, Private equity etc) from the US, additional specialist support is required to help them do so. Legal, Visa, and company set up support for companies looking to expand and grow in the US is essential and can often be expensive for smaller companies to action. Ad-hoc support has been provided in the past as and when an outward trade mission is organised, however, providing this support on a rotational basis will enable companies to be better prepared and more informed in relation to their expansion goals. Exporting to the EU should include reference to exploration of the economic potential of the Belfast-Dublin economic corridor in improving transport connections and boosting trade which is in line with Belfast City Council's relationship commitments. Further information required on future measures that Invest NI will adapt in relation to their Access to Finance initiative (Techstart NI, Co-Fund NI and the Development Funds which are part financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the EU Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014-2020) and what measures they will put in place when these funds cease or new measures proposed to support exporters. There are issues around productivity, NI now has the lowest levels in the Western World. Belfast is more productive than other parts of NI (we would refer to INI Stats in Economic Briefing: CG&R 12.10.16)
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	<p>The Council believes that the actions as set out with the exceptions of the following points:-</p> <p>Proposal 2 – Provide authoritative information and guidance to inform and consult with NI businesses on trade related issues during the European Union exit process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> US / North America should be included as a track alongside the EU / Brexit preparations. INI has contacted 1000 businesses to date to gain understanding of issues – this is a very low number and Council would like to ensure that all companies (from business start to established) are consulted to ensure that they are all fully supported in terms of their export aspirations and issues, no matter how small.



	<p>Proposal 4 - Increase support for market diversification through continued investment in a global network of in-market trade advisors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest NI's in-market resource / trade advisors are too generic in nature and often provide basic information and advice to companies in relation to the specific market and sector they are working in and targeting. Having support on the ground in terms of organising meetings, briefings and addressing specific company issues would be of greater value if they have engaged more fully with the exporting company. <p>Proposal 7 - Review and refresh the plans under Export Matters for a new suite of actions commencing no later than April 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> US / North America should be included as a track alongside the EU / Brexit preparations.
<p>Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?</p>	<p>Proposal 1 - Develop, promote and embed the "Export Pathway" and "Support Escalator" models with delivery partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council believes that rebalancing the economy by encouraging private sector investment and supporting market diversification is essential for generating sustainable growth, increasing productivity and creating diverse and well paid jobs not only in Belfast but across the region. Central to this is improving the skills and employability levels. It is important that as many people as possible benefit from growth and the city's success – extending well beyond the city boundaries. To provide bespoke support to companies planning on attending new market visits and participating on trade missions (post and pre visit). Providing companies as much specific and one to one support prior to export visits will enhance their time and success in the proposed market. With the number of businesses exporting identified as reducing, potential to consider this as an indicator for monitoring. There is a need for a more active inclusion of BCC in economic development.
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<p>Proposal 1 - Develop, promote and embed the "Export Pathway" and "Support Escalator" models with delivery partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Belfast Agenda includes a commitment to develop a collaborative approach to raising entrepreneurship levels and business start-ups, providing a continuum of support from business start to growth and export. This is a key area where there is value in co-designing. Belfast City Council is able to work with many SMEs who perhaps due to their size or stage of growth fall outside the INI remit. We can provide valuable export support to these companies to prepare them for making their first plans to enter export markets for the first time. For more established companies, who are planning on visiting new markets (outside of INI's trade programme and identified markets), Council can provide the necessary support to prepare them for new market visits and post market follow up. For Belfast based companies attending INI's trade missions / availing of market support (travel and accommodation), Council can provide the post market support that is not provided by INI and will enable greater success and focus for the participating companies. In line with the Belfast Agenda, under the Growing the Economy theme, initiatives such as a clear city business proposition and a concierge service for investors should be considered.
<p>Other Comments:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for company participation and export related support from INI should be aligned with the Council's international activity E.g. Boston and Nashville are key sister cities for Belfast City Council and are not identified areas by INI (as part of their trade programme). Supporting Council in realising the economic opportunities in (these) new international locales for Belfast based companies would enhance the overall relationships between the participating cities. Include fostering stronger trade links with China and India in line with Belfast City Council's plans to discuss investment opportunities and establish business leads and developing stronger relationships. Also consider the City's role in developing partnerships with Dublin, London as well as the Sister Cities. Belfast's City Centre Regeneration Strategy suggests boosting tourism by "identifying and implementing 'quick wins' such as changes to licensing laws and encouraging businesses to open on Sunday mornings." This has implications in terms of attracting international events that provide a global platform for NI. Need to be cognisant of our current liquor licensing and hospitality opening hours which are externally viewed as archaic and out-of-step with a modern international city. There is a need for an agreed position on the changes to liquor licensing and hospitality opening hours. Much of the detail around the Delivery Plan appears to be reliant on other strategies [Export Matters framework 2016-25]. However the action plan included will be reviewed at 2018, to take stock. While the Export Matters plan was published before Brexit, the PfG delivery plan indicates that this will be used as an opportunity to assess the changes resulting from the UKs exit from the EU and refocus. As Council's now have responsibility for Regional Start Initiative and business start-ups, Councils should have a key role in the communication plan and process regarding the implications for Brexit and changes within the US on local businesses. Consideration should also be given to understanding why investment doesn't come at all (losses) as well as businesses leaving.



Outcome(s): 1. A strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy. 5. An innovative, creative society.

Delivery Plan: Indicator 22 **Rate of innovation activity** (BCC ref 3)

PfG SRO: Derek Baker, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Policy Group, DfE
NI-Economic-Strategy@economy-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main issues are identified, however the definition of what innovation is and refers to, needs to be made clearer. At present, many companies and third party organisations, see innovation as science and technology based, however, innovation is wider than this and covers a wide range of sectors (which are often overlooked as being innovative – e.g. music, games, film and television / animation). One issue not addressed is that of innovation space / co-working space. Having space that can help innovate companies and host events / networking / competitions / hackathons and house innovative company start-ups (aligned with the re-definition) would help accelerate innovation growth and provide a much needed focal point for the proposed activities to take place. This may also provide a ‘soft landing space’ for new FDI. Increasing integration of education and work has been outlined as a key action within the school environment. However there should be more focus on working with academic institutions (starting at school level) to raise awareness of entrepreneurship as a viable career option for graduates and providing them with the support to take positive steps towards starting up.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data protection policies and speed of action with the public sector is not currently aligned with the speed and needs of private sector companies i.e. the innovators and solution providers. In relation to innovative public sector procurement and SBRI type programmes, both the data and public sector broadband speed requirements need to be relevant, readily available and provided in a suitable format. A more detailed definition of what Innovation is should be included. This would be further defined through the development of the Innovation NI brand strategy. This needs to be streamlined across all stakeholders.
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	<p>Most actions are suitable with a few noted exceptions:</p> <p>Create an NI Innovation Brand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While branding can be a useful exercise in terms of showcasing and internationalisation, it can also confine and restrain. Providing finance to support companies who we know are innovating (e.g. immersive tech) to showcase at local / international markets would be a better use of finance rather than create a specific brand. <p>Innovation accreditation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What good will this really achieve and how well recognised is this internationally / what impacts does it have? <p>Innovation Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work of the Matrix panel and key stakeholders in the NI ecosystem should be recognised to avoid creating another layer in the ecosystem which may have the effect of delaying and hindering innovation rather than stimulating it. Caution should be exercised to ensure that work is not being duplicated and that the creation of additional bodies adds value. The definition of Innovation should be included as part of the new Innovation NI Brand and communication strategy on Innovation. This is an opportunity to ensure that all stakeholders continue to work under the same definition throughout the delivery of the action plan.
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	<p>Harnessing innovation to drive growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council believes that utilising information technologies and better data management can support future economic growth. Work is underway with local universities, digital SMEs and the third sector to design and deliver a ‘Smart Belfast Framework’ that will build the necessary foundations required to generate innovative solutions to address major city challenges while also supporting the SME sector to develop world class products. Again, the Council believe that the SMART Cities approach would be a model which is scalable and transferable to other cities and towns across the region and should be included in the PfG.



Definition of Innovation

- The definition of innovation needs to be further defined through the Innovation NI brand with a shared understanding across all stakeholders. At present, many companies and third party organisations, see innovation as science and technology based, however innovation is wider than this and covers a wide range of sectors which are often overlooked including music, games, film and television / animation.

Infrastructure Investment

- The Council believes that the provision of appropriate infrastructure to encourage and support innovation including innovation hubs / co-working space – to house innovative and creative company start-ups and growth. Consideration also needs to be given to ensuring that the appropriate eco-system to support business growth. Such infrastructure can also provide a dual purpose as potential ‘soft-landing’ for new FDI. The Council would reference by way of good practice the recent investment in a new £9.2m innovation Factory within the city.

Digital Connectivity

- Important for driving economic growth, competitiveness and supporting the development of the knowledge based /technology based start-ups. There is currently a miss-match between the data protection policies and speed of action within the public sector and the needs of private sector companies (i.e. the innovators and solution providers) which constrains somewhat potential collaborative initiatives. In relation to innovative public sector procurement and opportunities for supporting Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) type programmes and innovation, it will be important that government seeks to removes unnecessary barriers.
- The Council’s Super-Connected Cities project has proved popular and is an example of how focus intervention and investment can provide necessary digital infrastructure and enabling online access for businesses, communities and citizens across the city. Such alternative programmes which invest in making are citizens digitally literate should be explored.

Cultural & Arts participation

- The Council note that research from the Continuous Household Survey and by Audiences NI suggests that the majority of people here are infrequent arts consumers. We would like to see further development of projects and measures that increase the frequency of cultural engagement.
- The Council would wish to work alongside central government and other partners to deliver an integrated cultural and arts strategy which seeks to enhance the city’s distinctive culture, encourage and enable access to cultural and arts activities, providing opportunities for participation in activities, events and festivals.

Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?

Establishment of a Data Analytics Research and Exploitation Centre:

- The Belfast Agenda identifies the need to work with partners to design and deliver a Smart Belfast framework which will build the necessary foundation required to generate innovative solutions to address city challenges. A key opportunity is Belfast’s participation in the 100 Resilient Cities programme which will develop a targeted approach to address issues that pose greatest risk to the city and its economy.
- BCC are active in supporting local SMEs in terms of showcasing, collaboration and networking. The Council is currently supporting the Immersive Tech Cluster and Digital Catapult NI in these areas.
- BCC can introduce local SMEs to attaining the Innovation accreditation (if relevant) and facilitate competition type activity such as the SBRI, were relevant to BCC data and objectives.
- The Council should also provide input into the following:
 - NI Innovation Brand, Communication & Definition
 - NI Innovation Fund: Under the new Community Planning Powers, this could present a good opportunity to allow Councils to make investments in high growth innovative companies. It could present a great opportunity in light of Brexit.
 - Increase focus on entrepreneurship, collaboration and creativity within the education system. Having an input into this and knowing what is happening in terms of entrepreneurship in education will allow us to make more informed decisions regarding the support that we provide under our remit of enterprise awareness, in particular the regular sponsorship requests that we receive for support in this area.

Other Comments:

- The new Community Planning Powers provides an excellent opportunity for Councils to make bolder decisions and to take a ‘higher risk, higher return’ approach. This would mean providing better, more tailored support targeting growth sectors including innovative companies.
- The Council would be keen to ensure that the support for innovation is not limited to science and technology but also considers other sectors such as music, animation, film and television.



Outcome(s): 1. A strong, competitive, regionally balanced **economy**, 3. A more **equal** society, 6. More people working in **better jobs**

Delivery Plan: Indicator 16, 18, 34 **Employment rate** (BCC ref 4)
PfG SRO: Derek Baker, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Policy Group, DfE
NI-Economic-Strategy@economy-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	<p>Yes, the Council welcomes this Outcome and the current focus of activity as set out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is however a need to understanding the current and future skill base of the various sector clusters and the opportunities to address the needs of new clusters. This should take into account the pace of technological and industry development to ensure our local labour market possess the right combination of skills required in the future by FDI and indigenous businesses. • Working closely with the FE and HE sectors is key to preparing the potential workforce for new high growth industries – their role and impact should be highlighted more in the actions. Consideration should be given to the provision of academic but also vocational skills, as well as employability and enterprise skills. • The roles and responsibilities of key partners need to be clearly communicated from the outset to streamline and ensure co-ordinated future delivery i.e. support for high growth start-ups. This is an area where both Council and Invest NI provide support, therefore it is critical that co-ordinated design and delivery is programmed to maximise impact. • How we monitor success / progress across the various stakeholder organisations needs to be better aligned to ensure we are supporting business growth across all sectors, including high growth areas. This will require a pipeline approach recognising each stakeholders’ responsibilities in each stage of a business’ creation and development journey, requiring key stakeholders to work collaboratively to ensure that where support gaps are lacking that these can be addressed. Equally whilst business support is one mechanism through which businesses can prosper and grow consideration needs to be given to creating an environment which enables and encourages economic growth. • Council support the data development agenda and would suggest that more appropriate indicators of success could be developed rather than relying on the production of business plans.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving life chances and growth depends on the skills of citizens – and almost a third of the adult population in Belfast has no qualifications. Skill levels have a significant impact upon employment prospects: people with no qualifications are five times more likely to be unemployed than those who have higher levels of formal education. • Need to provide support to the new innovation company growth starts with small teams, limited finance but high growth ambitions. Support at this stage is limited across a number of public and private stakeholders such as Catalyst Inc, Council and INI. Scaling support is aimed at companies from high turnover levels (£10mill +) to those turning over between £1m - £3m. More needs to be done to be open, inclusive and risk averse to help these companies grow. As highlighted above better coordination and collaboration is required across regional and local stakeholders to create a pipeline of support which facilitates business growth throughout their development journey. • Flexibility is required in business support structures to provide a business centred approach which reflects the growth potential of individual businesses and the growth ambition of the entrepreneur and/or management team. The structure of supports need to enable business creation and innovation this will only be achieved if flexibility is allowed for within support interventions. • Consideration to the non-impact of current schemes such as ESF.
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	<p>Most actions are suitable with a few noted exceptions:</p> <p>Access to Finance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and innovative finance / investment models need to be considered to reflect the original business idea / sustainability and enable risks to be taken. The critical point of a company development cycle is missing and only when a company can show some success will support be given. We can increase the number and scale of high growth start-ups at this stage, in turn leading to greater innovation and confidence.



Availability of a skilled workforce:

- Sector specific skills programmes need to be aligned with needs of the private sector. They need to be agile in terms of adapting to rapidly changing needs and focus on those companies needing to employ small numbers but at higher wages as well as the large numbers at a basic wage.

Science Park (Catalyst Inc):

- The Council would welcome the creation of better coordination and collaboration amongst support providers including the Science Park. The Council’s new Innovation Factory and North Foreshore development are two existing initiatives the Council is developing, potential exists to collaborate with the Science Park to cross pollinate and create specialisms. However plans to extend services should ensure that new activities do not duplicate existing provision and is relevant to all high growth potential start-ups.
- Reference is made to the local Councils ‘new and tailored programmes to support business start-ups at a local level’. There needs to be a move away from business plan development to measure business start and more of a focus on creating businesses that are sustainable. Councils are uniquely placed to coordinate local enterprise delivery whilst providing mainstream and bespoke support to encourage start-up activity within their locality, reflecting local government’s new enterprise and business start powers transferred through Local Government Reform.

Support to Underrepresented Groups

- The levels of business start-up are low when compared to other regions and Belfast is consistently ranked the lowest performing in relation to the levels of starts when compared to 63 other UK Cities (Centre for Cities). The proposed Delivery Plan incorporates a district programme for female entrepreneurship, whilst we recognise females are underrepresented, they are not the only underrepresented group. Others, such as students, graduates, migrants and young people are also underrepresented, consideration should therefore be given to how all underrepresented groups should be supported. The Council would consider itself to have a key role in this area, given the LGR transfer and would wish to be involved in any development work to inform provision in this area. It should also be understood as to the level of provision across departments and local government.

Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?

Access to Finance

- Previous support delivered under ‘Access to finance’ hasn’t necessarily been that accessible for new businesses. Further work needs to be done to make this more accessible for those organisations that do not meet the criteria of the support provided by Invest NI to further support the development of new high potential start-ups.
- **Funding for employability support** - the Council would wish to explore the potential for greater devolution of funding to support local employment and skills development including any potential offered by the **Apprentice Levy**. Making existing funding more effective is essential if the Executive is to meet its ambitious skills and growth targets, and is important for improving the life chances of all citizens. The outcomes based approach offers the opportunity for government to shape community-based services around people, identifying and dealing with their needs intensively in a holistic way with a single point of contact.

Supporting Employability and Skills

- The Council would highlight the strong linkages and dependencies with Outcome 1 and the associated commitment to develop with councils a ‘Local Works’ approach to improving employability. The Council would welcome this approach and would wish to work alongside the Executive and other partners to ensure that such an approach is flexible enough to take account of local circumstances, priority target audiences and adequately resourced to have affect and be sustainable.
- The Council is already working with central government, education institutions and employers to develop an **Employability and Skills Pathway (i.e. Belfast Works)** which seeks to support people into employment and better match skills to emerging industry needs. This will be an integrated whole life programme that will support those furthest from the labour market though to employment. We will work with employers to identify, plan and prepare for emerging job opportunities and to create effective pathways to employment.
- The Council believes that this approach is both scalable and transferrable and would welcome an opportunity to work in partnership with the Executive to co-design the policy framework for improving skills and employability and to explore the potential for incorporating Belfast’s Skills & Employability Strategy within a regional framework.
- A shared understanding of how to target those furthest from the labour market would allow the Executive and the city to work together to engage neighbourhood-level providers to deliver employment programmes within a formal outcomes-led rather than process driven commissioning process. Joint work could be carried out to explore how existing employment and skills programmes could be streamlined at the local level as well as the potential for a city-regional apprenticeships scheme.



Inclusive Growth Programme

The Council welcomes the commitment to adopt a ‘Local Works’ approach to improving employability and skills and would wish to work alongside central government and employers to ensure that people have the right skills to access and progress through the labour market – matching skills with business needs.

The Council is already developing an inclusive growth programme that fosters placed based growth which seeks to maximise the social and economic benefits of our investment; creating jobs and opportunities for residents to enter the workforce alongside providing accessible routes to employment through training and skills development.

The Council is aware that when the city’s economy grows it doesn’t mean that everyone is better off. Growth can pass many people and communities by unless we take steps to link that growth to better outcomes for everyone. The Council is already working with partners to develop and roll-out a **Belfast Works Employability Pathway** which is scalable and transferrable.

The Council would also recommend that consideration be given to the emerging findings of the RSA Inclusive Growth Commission (<https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/public-services-and-communities-folder/inclusive-growth-commission>) and the potential transferrable lessons for Northern Ireland.

Economic Forum

- The Council notes reference to the proposed creation of an Employment Forum. In pursuance of a solid, partnership-based delivery approach to stimulating and driving economic growth for the city and city-region, the Council is in the process of forming an economic forum with the NI Executive, other city partners including the private sector. This forum will drive forward the achievement of our common economic goals and develop joint solutions to shared challenges.
- This partnership will create an effective economic strategy for Belfast and the city-region, which supports and complements the Executive’s strategy for economic growth. It will build a coherent and evidence-based approach to improving city competitiveness, job creation and support for business. It will deliver long-term strategies for key growth sectors, including retail, hotel, office development, financial tech and creative industries, as well as export-led strategies to support business growth.

Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?

Belfast City Council’s International Relations Framework and priorities grow the Belfast economy by promoting entrepreneurship and provide several opportunities for co-design and co-delivery for more regional benefit:

- Trade missions such as South by Southwest.
- BCC can help support INI in relation to FDI requests / visits in relation to civic meetings and presentations on Council business related activity.
- BCC can help identify and support scalable businesses in the Belfast City Council area with a focus on start-ups and those with high grow potential.
- BCC can support the development of key sectoral clusters e.g. creative digital industries.
- BCC can support the development of initiatives such as City Proposition and Concierge Service.
- BCC should provide input to:
 - Business start-up support programme
 - High Potential start up programmes
 - Female Entrepreneurship Initiative
 - Scaling business support programmes
 - Lessing the regulatory burden on businesses through our own procurement practises, at above and below threshold level.
 - Supply chain enhancement
 - Access to finance

Other Comments:

- Need to ensure that access to finance programmes are aligned to the new and rapidly changing digital industry platforms and business models.
- Need to ensure skill development programmes are aligned with key industry clusters and requirements.
- Whist the actions aim to lessen the regulatory burden on businesses the executive could also consider working with Local Councils to enable the development and delivery of initiatives that are appropriate to meet the needs of local entrepreneurs/business base and have a greater impact.
- The delivery plan does not allude to any focus on support for the Social Economy Sector. As a key provider of social economy support, the Council would welcome working with the Department to create a joined up approach to supporting future social enterprise development.
- There is a need for collaborative working on key sectors and clusters e.g. Cyber.



Outcome(s): 1. We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced **economy**

Delivery Plan: Indicator 43 (% change in energy security of supply margin) (BCC ref 5)

PfG SRO: Chris Stewart, Deputy Secretary, Operational Policy, Infrastructure and Regulation, DfE
NI-Economic-Strategy@economy-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	The move to include an indicator on energy security is welcomed; however as the Delivery Plan is not available at the time of consultation, BCC have provided comments below in relation to issues and potential actions.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy from Waste (EfW)/ Renewable Energy: Outcomes 1 (regionally balanced economy) and 2 (protecting the environment) could be linked within the PfG much more clearly while contributing to Northern Ireland’s future sustainability by disconnecting from fossil fuel reliance and increasing its resilience • BCC notes that the consultation document state that the electricity supply margin currently meets security standards and that in terms of generation adequacy, the level is sufficient in Northern Ireland in the medium term. We would seek clarification as there has been local media reporting to the contrary
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	Note at the time of preparing consultation feedback, the relevant Delivery Plan is not available.
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	An energy security programme - The Council would wish to work alongside the NI Executive, other city partners and utility providers to develop a city-region energy programme. We will work with partners to better manage energy usage across the city’s public estate and support better acquisition, management and finance of energy. We will build opportunities with partners, including the private sector and local communities, to encourage investment and deployment of renewable sources in order to make the city more attractive to investors and to tackle fuel poverty.
Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?	<p>Potential opportunity in relation to economy/ energy/ environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An energy security programme - The Council would wish to work alongside the NI Executive, other city partners and utility providers to develop a city-region energy programme. We will work with partners to better manage energy usage across the city’s public estate and support better acquisition, management and finance of energy. We will build opportunities with partners, including the private sector and local communities, to encourage investment and deployment of renewable sources in order to make the city more attractive to investors and to tackle fuel poverty. • North Foreshore – 340 acres (138ha) former landfill site. Infrastructure investment nearing completion and future potential around cleantech hub/ environmental resource park.
Other Comments:	



Outcome(s): 2. We live and work sustainably – protecting the **environment**

Delivery Plan: Indicators 45 (Biodiversity) - (BCC ref 11)

PfG SRO: David Small, Deputy Secretary of the Environment Marine and Fisheries Group
Chief Executive Northern Ireland Environment Agency, DAERA
pfg.emfg@daera-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	The move to include an indicator on water quality and develop a biodiversity indicator is welcomed and a very positive progression; however as the Delivery Plan for Biodiversity is not available at the time of consultation, BCC have provided comments below in relation to issues and actions.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI is failing on biodiversity targets and the trend is downward. Only 1 of NI’s 49 European Priority Habitats is at favourable status and long term decline in populations of species of plants and animals continues. There is a critical need to invest in the environment to ensure economic prosperity. For example investment in upland habitat management can alleviate flooding and costs of water purification. Mainstreaming biodiversity across all government departments and capacity building within central and local government is required as there has been significant loss in intellectual capital within government due to redundancies. A sectoral approach is also necessary rather than the historic reliance on environmental NGOs. We know we are failing in terms of targets, but we don’t know by how much or why. We need to measure in order to manage, and therefore action on data collation and promotion of standardised monitoring across central and local government would be welcomed. Also promoting the recording of citizen science projects should be encouraged. There has been no published report on the NI Biodiversity Strategy. Actions should be monitored and reported upon to ascertain their effectiveness and to inform future progress.
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The identified actions (within the Biodiversity Strategy) are not adequate to address the issues as biodiversity has been declining, with resultant economic and health implications. There is too much emphasis on designated sites and agriculture. An emphasis on designated sites has not historically or currently conserved biodiversity. Much broader and wide ranging actions are required. Actions should not just be at National level but also incorporate issues at a local level. Local Biodiversity Action Plans can help address this. Urban environments must be taken into account and people in particular reconnecting them with nature. Criteria needs to be developed to ensure that a sustainable long term and holistic approach is applied to natural capital. Whilst a focus on natural capital may be useful given that Agriculture is responsible for 28% of total NI Greenhouse Gas emissions, BCC would welcome clarification on how provisioning services such as food production can be balanced and assessed against regulating services such as carbon sequestration or purification of water and air. Rather than setting up a Forum on Natural Capital it would be a better use of resources to support and utilise established structures such as the Northern Ireland Biodiversity GrOup.
Q4 Are there any additional actions	Yes, the Council would suggest that consideration be given to the following:



we wish to raise? And associated case around these?

- **Additional actions on soils** should be included in particular the physical and biological components. The Sustainable Agriculture Land Use Strategy does not address this as it simply focuses on soil PH. Improved soil structure and biodiversity will help address issues by increasing carbon storage and reducing above ground run off resulting in water eutrophication.
- There is a need for effective National legislation on **Invasive Alien Species (IAS)** to ensure effective action can be undertaken. The current NI legislation framework is inadequate to deal with this complex and wide ranging issue. Without this we will accrue future costs and indeed many species will become established and too costly to address.
- Need action on biodiversity outside of designated sites and within the **urban environment**.
- Include actions on **priority habitats and species** in the wider countryside, and look at connectivity and **building resilience across landscapes**.

Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?

- Yes, the Council would be keen to be directly involved in the development of the biodiversity indicator and delivery plan.

Other Comments:

Sustainable Water - A long Term Water Strategy for NI (2015-2040) : Draft Strategy Implementation Plan

- The Council would note that at time of responding to this delivery plan, we are also consideration and responding Note that at the time of consultation, BCC are also providing feedback in relation to the 'Sustainable Water – A Long-Term Water Strategy for NI (2015-2040) – Draft Strategy Implementation Plan'
 - Drinking water supply and demand
 - Flood risk management and drainage
 - Environmental protection and improvement
 - Water and sewerage services.

In particular BCC are commenting on roles suggested for local government within the implementation plan and would welcome consideration to be given within the applicable PfG Delivery Plans. For example it is Council's understanding that, under the Living with Water Programme, discussions have taken place regarding the use of Council's parks and open spaces to support the delivery of sustainable flood resilient development. It is essential that the appropriate officers, both operational and planning are involved in future discussions with DfI, if Council are to support this aim, given that any actions implemented will have a significant impact on the use of Councils parks and open spaces and again any potential impacts of a capital or revenue nature that may require further discussion



Outcome(s): 2. We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

Delivery Plan: Indicators 29 (Greenhouse gas emissions), 36 (% household waste that is reused, recycled or composted), 37 (Annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentration at monitored urban roadside locations) - (BCC ref 7, 8, 9)

PfG SRO: David Small, Deputy Secretary of the Environment Marine and Fisheries Group
Chief Executive Northern Ireland Environment Agency, DAERA
pfg.emfg@daera-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

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Feedback

Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?

The Council welcomes the outcomes based approach and would highlight the commonalities with our own approach to development the community plan for the city (Belfast Agenda). We would highlight the following for consideration:

- The Delivery Plan highlights that in NI, over 6 million tonnes of waste are produced annually and of this, household waste accounts for just over 839,000. It would have been encouraging to see some **commitment to dealing with other waste streams in NI that aren't household waste – e.g. commercial, industrial and C&D waste.**
- The plan refers to the EU 65% target of 65% recycling of *municipal waste* by 2030, but in terms of Northern Ireland, it references “waste from households” recycling rates and targets. The indicator specifies “percentage household waste”. The plan should be **clear and consistent with its terminology** around “municipal” and “household” waste so as to avoid any confusion.
- The commitment to supporting the **development of strategic infrastructure for waste** could be more clearly defined and expanded upon within the Programme. Whilst **Energy from Waste (EfW)**, as a form of waste treatment can add additional recycling, (and help meet waste related targets), one of its major benefits is that the energy produced can be a valuable domestic energy source contributing to energy security. This is another example where Outcomes 1 (regionally balanced **economy**) and 2 (protecting the **environment**) could be linked within the PfG much more clearly while contributing to Northern Ireland’s future sustainability by disconnecting from fossil fuel reliance and increasing its resilience.
- BCC notes that the consultation document state that the **electricity supply margin** currently meets security standards and that in terms of **generation adequacy**, the level is sufficient in Northern Ireland in the medium term. We would seek clarification as there has been local media reporting to the contrary.
- As a partially renewable energy source EfW could also contribute to renewable energy targets. Beyond electricity, CHP plants and other technologies that could **transform waste into other energy products** (such as transport fuels or substitute natural gas) all have the potential to contribute towards a range of the outcomes under the PfG and there is a real **opportunity** here to highlight that.

Q2. What additional issues are there?

Waste Infrastructure

- Waste management is a statutory duty of councils it incurs significant costs for both local and central government.
- There do not appear to be an explicit **link** between outcome 2 (protecting the **environment**) and outcome 1 (regionally balanced **economy**). A number of respondents to the first stage of the consultation highlighted the importance of links between the two outcomes, including in respect to the **Circular Economy**. However, this does not appear to have been given consideration within this second phase of the consultation (this was referenced on page 104 of the Framework consultation). It is disappointing that overall, there is minimal focus on the Circular Economy within the Programme and where it is mentioned, it is very generalised e.g. *Increased recycling will contribute to the development of the circular economy concept within Northern Ireland by keeping our natural resources in use for as long as possible.* BCC would welcome a specific target to create XXX jobs directly related to increase recycling.
- The Council believes that the circular economy provides a real opportunity to rethink our approach to waste management to move beyond the current focus on simply achieving landfill and recycling targets to maximising the potential presented through the circular economy to support business growth, innovation and job creation.
- The core vision of the circular economy is of replacing the current largely linear economy of ‘make, use, dispose’ in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials and the end of each service life. This approach recognises and realises the true value of waste as a resource; the potential increased income generated helping to offset costs to local government. It will also help drive economic and business growth across the region by providing wider economic opportunities for the private and third sectors, by supporting innovation, job creation and increased profitability across the industry.
- A recent report prepared by WRAP, commissioned by ReNEW (Resource Innovation Network for European Waste), examining the future employment prospects of the Circular Economy for Northern Ireland indicates that at an optimum case a transition to Circular Economy methods and models could be expected to create between 5,500 and 13,000 new jobs by 2030.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to capture the targets in the delivery plans in the main document. E.g. the EU WFD target - 50% “waste from households” recycling/composting by 2020. <p>Air Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As previously mentioned, the PfG delivery plans fall short at times in providing Belfast only comparisons and the delivery plans opt for regionalised actions. This is of particular relevance to indicator 37 which reports a regional annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentration at monitored urban roadside locations. We have concern that a wider regional indicator dilutes the existing issues in Belfast and may bring about funding cuts which could compromise any air quality improvements. There is a need for the indicator to reflect more clearly how a regional approach will address existing localised problems within identified Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). In addition to a primary indicator, it may be useful to have a secondary indicator identifying exceedences at individual monitoring locations and associated actions. Under the plan, as a district council we are required to draw up actions plans to deal with air quality problems at localised level. We have developed an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2015-2020 to achieve compliance with relevant nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) objectives in AQMAs and also to reduce NO₂ background concentrations city wide. Many of the actions within Belfast AQAP are transport related and we have no powers to implement these actions. Despite efforts on our part, engagement with key partners responsible for implementing transport related actions in our plan has been difficult. We would therefore support establishment of a NI Air Quality Forum.
<p>Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the comments above relating to dealing with waste from other streams, and development of strategic infrastructure from waste.
<p>Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated costs around these?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCC would like consideration to be given to using levies to encourage either a change in consumers’ waste generating behaviour (as per the plastic bag levy) or to entice new developments such as a subsidy for “good” products.
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<p>BCC welcomes continued partnership working in relation to waste.</p>
<p>Other Comments:</p>	

Outcome(s): **2.** We live and work sustainably – protecting the **environment**, **13.** We connect people and opportunities through our **infrastructure**



Delivery Plan: Indicators 23 (Average journey time on key economic corridors), 25 (% of all journeys which are made by walking/cycling/public transport) - (BCC ref 6)

PfG SRO: John McGrath, Deputy Secretary, Transport and Resources, DfI

pfg@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	Yes, the key issues are addressed.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average journey time on key economic corridors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is unlikely to reduce the growing dependency on private vehicles. It is unclear if this includes public transport journeys. Government and the Council have a large amount of Private Non Residential (staff and other) car parking spaces in Belfast City Centre. These are often used by commuting staff adding to peak congestion. There are too many small low density surface car parks in Belfast and a lack of information systems, which mean vehicles are driven around looking for car parking. This in turn increases congestion and perception of insufficient parking availability.
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	Yes, the proposed actions are suitable; however some additional suggestions are outlined below.
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	<p>The Council would seek consideration and inclusion of the following issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Infrastructure – ensuring that the city and city-region has appropriate transportation infrastructure which supports and enables access, mobility and connectivity is a key priority. Effective infrastructure and transportation planning will be critical components of the Local Development Plan and the creation of a sustainable land-use strategy for the city and city-region. <p>Within the Belfast Agenda, we are committed to developing an integrated city transport plan which will seek to maximise the opportunities presented by the £150million investment in the Belfast Transport Hub and Rapid Transit System. It will also seek to address under-use of public transport, particularly in relation to commuter patters and work to promote active travel.</p> <p>The Council would wish to work closely with the Executive and Department for Infrastructure to bring this forward and ensure alignment with regional priorities which may emerge in the Investment Strategy and revised Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan. It will be important that we establish shared transport objectives and priorities.</p> City Centre Transport and Parking – Again, we would wish to work with the Executive and DfI in bringing forward a Car Parking Strategy for the city which will include a comprehensive solution to addressing city centre transportation and parking related pressures. BCC would welcome a commitment from DfI to implementing policies that will encourage a modal shift in relation to car usage and public transport; that transfers users to more sustainable mode of transport e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government bodies could remove or reduce their parking provision within Belfast City and consider charging for use.



- Currently evidence is that drivers drive around large numbers of small surface car parks looking for spaces - develop better use of technology and signposting to efficiently direct drivers to available car parking in Belfast.
- Work with BCC and other stakeholders to consolidate small surface car park into multi storey car parks.
- Work with BCC to implement the councils Car Parking Strategy for the City.

• **York Street Interchange** – the Council welcomes the recent announcement by the Infrastructure Minister that this important scheme will be taken forward but are concerned about the current uncertainty around financing. Given the significance of this scheme to supporting the regional economy and improving connectivity between Belfast (and Port) to the rest of the region, the Council believes that this £160million scheme should be explicitly referenced within the Programme for Government and prioritised within the emerging NI Investment Strategy.

• It is recognised that the York Street Interchange proposal will alleviate a significant bottleneck at the M2/Westlink junction which adversely impacts on city centre traffic volumes and congestion on a daily basis. The Council believes that this scheme is critical in supporting regional economic growth and competitiveness, accommodating 1000,000 vehicles each day, mostly commuters to and from Belfast as well as connecting freight /haulage transport through the port of Belfast to the strategic road network throughout the wider region.

• **Local Development Plan** - The planning function and role of Councils in integrating land use and transportation is important here.

• **Infrastructure Plan for the City-Region** - the Council would wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive, the Department for Infrastructure and other government to develop an Infrastructure Plan for the city-region and connections with other economic corridors. This will seek to identify the key infrastructure priorities and will complement any regional infrastructure plan which may be brought forward.

• **Financing Infrastructure Investment** – the Council would wish to wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive, Department for Infrastructure and Department to explore and identify potential new financial mechanisms and vehicles which could be utilised to deliver critical city infrastructure projects and support economic growth and job creation across the region (e.g. joint ventures with private sector, European Investment Bank investment, asset backed vehicles, land value capture, financial transactions capital, social impact bonds, earn-back incentive schemes).

The DoF and Executive are proactively looking at the practicalities and merits of other funding vehicles - in the context of the emerging new Programme for Government, NI Investment Strategy and the deliverability of Executive priorities. Initial discussions have already taken place with DoF officials who are keen to work with council, the Strategic Investment Board and other partners to co-commission a specific piece of work around innovative financing models. This will seek to identify options and examine their merits and practicalities of implementation.

It is important to recognise the financial tools available to the council, including, for example, ability to borrow to invest in capital schemes, ability to access other funds, and the ability to enter into Joint Ventures with the private sector to unlock major investment and development opportunities.

The Council would also wish to explore with DFI, DoF, the NI Executive, other Departments and the Strategic Investment Board the potential to utilise government assets to incentivise investment and unlock major development and infrastructure schemes. We would also wish to explore more commercial alternatives to bringing forward and financing important such schemes. This is linked to the earlier disc

Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?

The delivery, with government bodies and other stakeholders, of an agreed Car Parking Strategy for the City.

Other Comments:

- BCC’s responsibility for car parking and the Belfast Bike Share Scheme are referenced with the Delivery Plan for journey times (Indictors 23 & 25 / Outcomes 2 & 13); however this is limited to 6% of car parking spaces in the city. DfI’s responsibility for On Street parking should also be referenced.
- Both DfI/TNI and BCC should review tariffs together to encourage short stay car parking.
- Increased enforcement is mentioned - this should perhaps include enforcement of over staying as there is evidence of “Feeding the Meter” in priority parking areas

Outcome(s): 2. We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

Delivery Plan: Indicator 44 (% water bodies at ‘good’ status) (BCC ref 10)



PfG SRO: David Small, Deputy Secretary of the Environment Marine and Fisheries Group/
Chief Executive Northern Ireland Environment Agency, DAERA
pfg.emfg@daera-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	As the Delivery Plan is not available at the time of consultation, BCC have provided comments below in relation to issues and potential actions.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	Note at the time of preparing consultation feedback, the relevant Delivery Plan is not available. BCC assumes that actions would relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring catchments are managed economically and efficiently; • Reducing agricultural pollution; • Controlling urban pollution; • Monitoring and reducing chemical pollutants; and • Managing waste-water, sludge and septic tanks.
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	<p>Flood Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BCC would welcome specific measures to manage flood risk under outcomes 2 (environment) and/ or 13 (infrastructure), and therefore within this or other delivery plans. The Scottish Programme for Government/ Outcomes Model makes reference to ‘well-designed, sustainable places’ and includes a sustainable approach to flood risk management within this. There is a similar NI indicator to ‘improve the supply of suitable housing’ however it is proposed that specific references to increasing the number of homes and businesses which are not at risk of flooding and sustainable flood risk management are also important indicators. According to the NI Regional Risk Register (compiled by Civil Contingencies Group NI) flooding remains one of the top risks in Northern Ireland and should be included in the PfG. - By way of example the 2015 Belfast Tidal Flood Risk Study produced by Atkins identified that constructing a coastal flood defence for Belfast would cost £12million, but it is estimated that it would save £120m each time it prevented Belfast from flooding. This is alongside preventing the significant non-financial impacts on residents, businesses and protecting the reputation of Belfast and Northern Ireland. <p>Living with Water Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCC would like the PfG Delivery Plans to take account of the drainage infrastructure within Belfast is fit-for-purpose and alleviates potential risks around flooding and pollution. The ‘Living with Water Programme’ has identified that Belfast has the worst drainage infrastructure in Northern Ireland and a failing to act could result in significant consequences including e.g. financial impact, reputational damage, impeding housing and business growth and adversely impacting on construction. Estimates to deliver the necessary infrastructure are around £750m for Belfast alone. <p>Infrastructure Plan for the City-Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive, the Department for Infrastructure and other government to develop an Infrastructure Plan (including Waste) for the city-region and connections with other economic corridors. This will seek to identify the key infrastructure priorities and will complement any regional infrastructure plan which may be brought forward. <p>Financing Infrastructure Investment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would wish to wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive, Department for Infrastructure and Department to explore and identify potential new financial mechanisms and vehicles which could be utilised to deliver critical city infrastructure projects and support economic growth and job creation across the region (e.g. joint ventures with private sector, European Investment Bank investment, asset backed vehicles, land value capture, financial transactions capital, social impact bonds, earn-back incentive schemes).



The DoF and Executive are proactively looking at the practicalities and merits of other funding vehicles - in the context of the emerging new Programme for Government, NI Investment Strategy and the deliverability of Executive priorities. Initial discussions have already taken place with DoF officials who are keen to work with council, the Strategic Investment Board and other partners to co-commission a specific piece of work around innovative financing models. This will seek to identify options and examine their merits and practicalities of implementation.

It is important to recognise the financial tools available to the council, including, for example, ability to borrow to invest in capital schemes, ability to access other funds, and the ability to enter into Joint Ventures with the private sector to unlock major investment and development opportunities.

The Council would also wish to explore with DFI, DoF, the NI Executive, other Departments and the Strategic Investment Board the potential to utilise government assets to incentivise investment and unlock major development and infrastructure schemes. We would also wish to explore more commercial alternatives to bringing forward and financing important such schemes. This is linked to the earlier disc

Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?

Sustainable Water - A long Term Water Strategy for NI (2015-2040) : Draft Strategy Implementation Plan

- The Council would note that at time of responding to this delivery plan, we are also consideration and responding Note that at the time of consultation, BCC are also providing feedback in relation to the 'Sustainable Water – A Long-Term Water Strategy for NI (2015-2040) – Draft Strategy Implementation Plan'
 - Drinking water supply and demand
 - Flood risk management and drainage
 - Environmental protection and improvement
 - Water and sewerage services.
- In particular BCC are commenting on roles suggested for local government within the implementation plan and would welcome consideration to be given within the applicable PfG Delivery Plans. For example it is Council's understanding that, under the Living with Water Programme, discussions have taken place regarding the use of Council's parks and open spaces to support the delivery of sustainable flood resilient development. It is essential that the appropriate officers, both operational and planning are involved in future discussions with DfI, if Council are to support this aim, given that any actions implemented will have a significant impact on the use of Councils parks and open spaces and again any potential impacts of a capital or revenue nature that may require further discussion

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Outcome(s): **3.** We have a more **equal** society, **5.** We are an **innovative, creative society** where people can fulfil their potential,

11. We have high quality **public services**, **14.** We give our **children** and young people the best start in life

Delivery Plan: Indicators 11 (% school leavers achieving at level 2 or above including English and Maths), 12 (Gap between % non-FSME school leavers and % FSME school leavers achieving level 2 or above including English and Maths), 13 (% schools found to be good or better) - (BCC ref 13)

PfG SRO: **Dr David Hughes**, Director of Curriculum, Qualifications and Standards, DoE
PfGconsultation@education-ni.gov.uk



The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst not a direct provider of formal educational programmes for children and young people, BCC have a range of services targeted at different age groups which all work to support the identified outcomes and contribute to supporting people to fulfil their potential. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivered through our community and play centres (direct provision of play services to children and young people) outreach programmes in schools and communities and our parks and open spaces provision of after-schools services for Primary School aged children (BCC seek to work with children in deprived communities across the city) <p>Our services make effective connections between schools and communities and provide access to free non-formal education opportunities. We would be keen to strengthen those connections to reach out to schools more directly, explore how we target those children and families in greatest need, help them access our services, and play a greater role in supporting children and young people achieve their potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 12 of the UNCRC recognises that the opinions of children and young people matter and that they should be consulted on decisions that impact on them. It states: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.”</i> <p>Council is committed to supporting young people to articulate their own priorities and to ensure that they have a voice in influencing the development of policies and the strategic direction of the organisation for example influencing the Belfast Agenda and ensuring that our consultation with children and young people is in line with the best practice guidance Ask First for participation as promoted by Children in NI (CINI).</p>
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCC welcomes the inclusion of indicators relating to achievement of formal qualifications in English and Maths, but would also want to highlight the achievement of Open College Network qualifications which suit many young people for whom the traditional education model does not appear to work. Young people need to be supported to achieve success and to recognise that they have a range of skills and talents. One example of this is the BCC Youth Forum where young people from across Belfast have an opportunity to debate and campaign on those issues that impact on the lives of children and young people across the city. The young people set their own priorities and to date they have focused on issues such as youth homelessness, poverty and emotional health & well-being and have sought to influence policy-makers and decision-makers to have regard to the needs and wishes of young people. In addition Council seeks to support the Youth Forum to act an engagement tool for other young people across Belfast to ensure that Council policies are informed by, and take account of, the needs of children and young people. During their term in office all Youth Forum members develop their employability skills and work towards achieving accreditation in an OCN award in Leading Change. Other forms of educational achievement like this are important to recognise. BCC plan to work with Youth Forum members to develop pathways to additional education, training or employment opportunities following their involvement in the Youth Forum and would welcome a collaboration with DE, DfE and FE colleges to explore what might be possible. This fits closely with BCC’s Employability and Skills Framework 2015 -25 which sets a vision of “realising the potential of Belfast’s people and its economy by transforming skills, employability and aspiration”. To this end we will seek to ensure our young people are supported to develop the skills that will match the needs of employers.
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	Yes
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated costs around these?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Employability and Skills - The Council would highlight the strong linkages and dependencies with Outcome 1 and the associated commitment to develop with councils a ‘Local Works’ approach to improving employability. The Council would welcome this approach and would wish to work alongside the Executive and other partners to ensure that such an approach is flexible enough to take account of local circumstances, priority target audiences and adequately resourced to have affect and be sustainable. <p>The Council is already working with central government, education institutions and employers to develop an Employability and Skills Pathway (i.e. Belfast Works) which seeks to support people into employment and better match skills to emerging industry needs. This will be an integrated whole life programme that will support those furthest from the labour market though to employment. We will work with employers to identify, plan and prepare for emerging job opportunities and to create effective pathways to employment.</p>



	<p>The Council believes that this approach is both scalable and transferrable and would welcome an opportunity to work in partnership with the Executive to co-design the policy framework for improving skills and employability and to explore the potential for incorporating Belfast’s Skills & Employability Strategy within a regional framework.</p> <p>A shared understanding of how to target those furthest from the labour market would allow the Executive and the city to work together to engage neighbourhood-level providers to deliver employment programmes within a formal outcomes-led rather than process driven commissioning process. Joint work could be carried out to explore how existing employment and skills programmes could be streamlined at the local level as well as the potential for a city-regional apprenticeships scheme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Youth Forum members have a remit to consult and engage with other children and young people within local communities in Belfast and to raise issues that are impacting on their lives. The Youth Forum campaigns on issues related to social disadvantage and inequality and makes recommendations for action - it would be very helpful if opportunities were created for these young people to lobby Executive Departments and have clear channels of communication with politicians and decision-makers. <p>Improving Public Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximising the impact of local assets – partners across the city are investing in important community assets, while communities themselves are bringing forward and delivering investment projects. The Council would highlight the importance of physical assets being brought forward with a focus on delivering outcomes. Agency’s need to work together to maximise the benefits of local assets and where possible use them as a means of making services more integrated and accessible. <p>There are a number of programmes seeking to improve community assets as a driver for regeneration including the Council’s Local Investment and Belfast Investment Funds, Urban Villages and Building Sustainable Communities. It is important that we take a strategic overview to ensure that interventions are planned and managed in a way that maximises their benefit to local people. The Council is conscious that in the years ahead community planning partners will be building houses, schools, health-care assets, new leisure centres and many other community based assets.</p> <p>Again, the Council believe that there is a real opportunity to work across government and sectors to better plan, maximise opportunities for co-location of services and in turn provide better services, deliver monetary savings and achieve better outcomes for local people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use social innovation to unlock service transformation – the Council would wish to work with the Executive and city partners to explore how we can maximise social innovation tools and techniques to help transform and improve the way we plan and deliver services at both the city and local level. Through our smart cities work we will explore how we can work with residents and partners to co-design and deliver more effective service provision. We believe that this approach can be adopted at scale in other parts of the region.
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish closer links with the Education Authority to ensure that Council services to school-aged children are targeted at those who are in greatest need. With area planning in education, there may be an option for Council to contribute to the development of plans and co-design / co-deliver interventions targeted at those in greatest need. Better match education curriculums with future skills and business needs.
<p>Other Comments:</p>	<p>In relation to outcomes 1 (regionally balanced economy) and outcome 3 (more equal society), the Council would highlighted how regional and sub-regional data can mask issues such as clusters of deprived communities, economic inactivity and poverty. With this in mind it is important that public service delivery considers the localised needs of communities in urban areas.</p>

Outcome(s): 3. We have a more equal society, 6. We have more people working in better jobs

Delivery Plan: Indicator 17, 32, 33 **Economic inactivity rate** (BCC ref 15)

PfG SRO: Derek Baker, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Policy Group, DfE
NI-Economic-Strategy@economy-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.



Feedback

<p>Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?</p>	<p>Yes - The delivery plan covers the majority of the key issues which would be expected.</p>
<p>Q2. What additional issues are there?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills provision - whilst formal skills attainment is critical factor in moving individuals from economic inactivity towards employment, there is a need to look at the development of softer employability skills. These combine basic attitudes and abilities that are essential to work, as well as generic skills that contribute to productivity and success. Additionally consideration needs to be given to promoting alternative employment pathways such as through self-employment for those individuals for which this may be the most viable entry into the labour market. • Family cultures – consideration should be given to changing the mind-sets of individuals and the wider friends and family circle to change attitudes to employment. • Employer needs – it is recognised the delivery plan focuses on the supply of individuals into the labour market, however as referred to within the delivery plan, the supply of individuals needs to be aligned to employer needs and the availability of local employment opportunities. IT is therefore important interventions to address ‘supply’ are informed by and reactive to employer demands.
<p>Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – the actions are framed around the barriers to employment and provide a wide ranging approach to tackling the issues faced in addressing economic inactivity. • We welcome the recognition of the need for local area solutions and the recognition that individuals have different circumstances impacting upon their ability to enter employment necessitating the need for a personalised and individualised support journey. • Making Work Pay- We also welcome these proposals including the removal of the working hours cap and the accommodations for childcare provision, both of which impact the level of degree individuals can be engaged in the labour market.
<p>Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Work Pay - the inclusion of the Cost of Work allowance is also positive recognising the poverty trap faced by those on low incomes. To support this proposal consideration should be given to how low paid families can be supposed whilst in work to gain new skills to enable them to progress up the career ladder into well paid positions. • Skills for Work - whilst formal skills attainment is critical factor in moving individuals from economic inactivity towards employment, there is a need to look at the development of softer employability skills. These combine basic attitudes and abilities that are essential to work, as well as generic skills that contribute to productivity and success. Self-Employment support proposed, should align to existing support provision currently provided through local councils. • Long term Education & Awareness, Work is Good for You - consideration needs to be given to promoting alternative employment pathways such as through self-employment for those individuals for which this may be the most viable entry into the labour market. We also welcome the inclusion of the media outlets as a key partner in delivery.
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<p>Taking into account the scale of deprivation, economic inactivity and poverty across Belfast, the Council would welcome the opportunity to co-deliver and co-design the plan in relation to its delivery across Belfast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Employability and Skills - The Council would highlight the strong linkages and dependencies with Outcome 1 and the associated commitment to develop with councils a ‘Local Works’ approach to improving employability. The Council would welcome this approach and would wish to work alongside the Executive and other partners to ensure that such an approach is flexible enough to take account of local circumstances, priority target audiences and adequately resourced to have affect and be sustainable. <p>The Council is already working with central government, education institutions and employers to develop an Employability and Skills Pathway (i.e. Belfast Works) which seeks to support people into employment and better match skills to emerging industry needs. The Council believes that this approach is both scalable and transferrable and would welcome an opportunity to work in partnership with the Executive to co-design the policy framework for improving skills and employability and to explore the potential for incorporating Belfast’s Skills & Employability Strategy within a regional framework.</p> <p>A shared understanding of how to target those furthest from the labour market would allow the Executive and the city to work together to engage neighbourhood-level providers to deliver employment programmes within a formal outcomes-led rather than process driven commissioning process. Joint work could be carried out to explore how existing employment and skills programmes could be streamlined at the local level as well as the potential for a city-regional apprenticeships scheme.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for employability support – the Council would wish to explore the potential for greater devolution of funding to support local employment and skills development including any potential offered by the Apprentice Levy. Making existing funding more effective is essential if the Executive is to meet its ambitious skills and growth targets, and is important for improving the life chances of all citizens. The outcomes based approach offers the opportunity for government to shape community-based services around people, identifying and dealing with their needs intensively in a holistic way with a single point of contact.
Other Comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer needs – it is recognised the delivery plan focuses on the supply of individuals into the labour market, however as referred to within the delivery plan, the supply of individuals needs to be aligned to employer needs and the availability of local employment opportunities. It is therefore important interventions to address ‘supply’ are informed by and reactive to employer demands. Note that the reference to Job Density Index is helpful but it reinforces the importance of taking a demand and supply approach to tackling these issues as Belfast, while a major hub of employment, also ranks high in terms of the level of resident economic inactivity. • Age Discrimination - The Council recently passed a notice of motion to call upon the Northern Ireland Executive Office to take immediate steps to extend Age Discrimination Legislation to include the provision of goods, services and facilities. The Council would welcome that consideration is given to this within the PfG document.

DRAFT

Outcome(s): 4. We enjoy long, healthy, active lives

Delivery Plan: Indicator 2 (Gap between highest and lowest deprivation quintile in healthy life expectancy at birth) 3 (Healthy life expectancy at birth), 4 (Preventable mortality), 5 (% of people who are satisfied with health and social care), 6 (% population with GHQ12 scores ≥ 4 [signifying possible mental health problem]), 7 (% babies born at low birth weight) - (BCC ref 12, 16 and 17)

PfG SRO: Dr Anne Kilgallen, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Public Health, Department of Health
Chris Matthews, Director of Mental Health, Disability & Older People, Department of Health
Professor Charlotte McArdle, Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health
ops@health-ni.gov.uk



The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	<p>The Council supports the proposals to work with people to empower them to live healthier lives, improve service provision in support of better health outcomes, and work collaboratively to support positive health impacts from social programmes. We also welcome the focus given to supporting citizens to lead long, healthy and active lives through: prevention and early intervention; improving access to health and social care services; tackling health inequalities; and, delivering better outcomes from the Executive’s investment in health and social care.</p> <p>The Council has a key role to play in supporting this, providing a range of age-targeted programmes which are aligned to the delivery of this outcome including, for example, Leisure, Health, Parks and Open Spaces, Educational Outreach and Community Services and support.</p>
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council supports the proposals to work with people to empower them to live healthier lives, improve service provision in support of better health outcomes, and work collaboratively to support positive health impacts from social programmes. However the Council would like to see commitment to creating an Age Friendly Northern Ireland within the PFG, and inclusion of an associated indicator relating to older people within the applicable delivery plan(s). This is also linked to outcome 8. Again the Council would wish to work alongside central government and other public agencies to develop a whole system approach to supporting healthy living and wellbeing.
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce life inequalities – The Council recognise the importance of taking inter-sectoral approach to addressing the root causes of health and life inequalities within Belfast and the wider region. The Belfast Strategic Partnership was established to address the life inequalities that impact on Belfast, developing effective plans and interventions to help all residents. Supported by the Belfast Health Development Unit which is made up of staff from Belfast City Council, the Public Health Agency and the Belfast Health and Social Services Trust. The BSP has developed a ‘Framework for Action on life inequalities’ which includes joint inter-agency work on mental health, alcohol and drug related health issues, life-long learning and early years/early years interventions. They are also seeking to bring forward interventions and support in cross-cutting issues such as Addressing health inequalities – in the context of the community plan for the city (Belfast Agenda) we will work with our partners including the Belfast Strategic Partnership to develop an integrated programme to address health inequalities, including enhancing mental wellbeing and reducing social inclusion. This will seek to build upon and maximise the impact of the regional ‘Making Life Better Strategy’ within Belfast addressing many aspects of physical health (physical activity, active travel), and mental wellbeing (particularly issues of social cohesion, community vulnerability and isolation). We will also seek to maximise the health impact of the Council’s £105million leisure transformation programme. <p>In May 2016, a cross-party delegation from council meet with the Head of Fuel Poverty & Private Grants Team within DfC (Martin McDermott) to explore some of the key concerns relating to fuel poverty, some of which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Aging - Belfast was the first city in Northern Ireland to join the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities. An age-friendly city is one in which organisations work together to make sure the quality of life for people is enhanced as they age. <p>We are also part of the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) which has been working for the last 18 months, consulting with over 700 older people. Specific concerns were highlighted around maintenance of pavements, public toilets and outdoor seating and home heating.</p> <p>HASP, which is part of the Belfast Strategic Partnership, has developed an ‘Age-friendly plan 2-14-17’ to address these issues. These include, for example running an arts festival for older people; continuing with the Older Volunteer Awards; working with housing providers to communicate housing options; developing several age-friendly outdoor spaces; and developing an Age-friendly Belfast standard for businesses, and services to strive towards.</p> <p>An intergenerational toolkit has been produced a guide and toolkit which is seeks to bring younger and older generations together and helping to support better engagement with younger and older people, promote participation and sense of belonging.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Belfast - promoting healthy living and physical activity through targeted health and wellbeing programmes and utilising our assets (i.e. parks) and facilities (e.g. leisure centres, community centres). Working with the Healthy Aging Strategic Partnership, the Council is also committed to develop and deliver an 'active aging programme which informs future partner service design and planning. • Older People / Age Friendly NI– Most of our residents are living longer, healthier lives. People over 60 already make-up one fifth of our population and this is forecast to increase dramatically to over one third by 2050. Giving the changing demographics with an aging population with diverse needs, we believe that older people are of huge importance and should share in the progress towards each of the PfG outcomes along with other groups in our society. The Council believes that the PfG should make explicit reference to respecting and protecting the wellbeing of older people. <p>The Council notes that under Outcome 5 (fulfilling potential) there is a commitment to implementing the active aging strategy and the fact that specific delivery plans give focus to older people and creating an Age Friendly NI. The Council would seek clarification, perhaps within the delivery plans, as to how the Department will lead and drive the delivery of the active aging strategy including working collaboratively with local government, Trusts, Public Health Authority and others to create an Age Friendly NI.</p>
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<p>See comments above.</p>
<p>Other Comments:</p>	



Outcome(s): [5. An innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their potential](#)

Delivery Plan: Indicator 27 **Engaging in arts** (BCC ref 19)

PfG SRO: Ian Maye, Deputy Secretary, Community Cohesion Group, Department for Communities
communications@communities-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

Feedback



<p>Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?</p>	<p>The Council would highlight the following additional issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of funding to arts and cultural organisations in recent years - Issues around lack of public funding to help sustain important cultural assets
<p>Q2. What additional issues are there?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If, as we accept, engagement with culture has a positive impact on individuals, communities and the population as a whole, it is likely that repeat engagement will have a greater impact and lead to a more sustained and sustainable culture of engagement. However, research from the Continuous Household Survey and by Audiences NI indicates that the majority of people are infrequent arts consumers. This is referred to briefly in the delivery plan “[We] will seek to ensure that cultural engagement is deepened”. We would welcome further development of projects and measures that increase the frequency of cultural engagement. • While the strong performance of film is to be congratulated, it should also be noted that this includes popular film. While we accept that it is difficult to develop more nuanced data taking in to account different film genres, we would welcome additional analysis of the data and targets for engagement excluding film. • We would also welcome targets based on separate analysis of arts participation and attendance. • The Continuous Household Survey contains evidence of differential impact among children from different demographic groups. We would welcome further analysis and target-setting based on this evidence. • There is limited research into differential cultural engagement based on sexuality, dependency and ethnicity. We would welcome further research in these areas. • It is important that we recognise that cultural engagement is already very high, and so we need to maintain engagement with existing audiences. In particular, there is a correlation between arts consumption as a child and likelihood of continuing to engage with the arts in to old age. Therefore, engagement with children is safeguarding future cultural audiences and reducing the impact of age on engagement. • The delivery plan references seeking to “ensure that cultural engagement is [...] enriched”. We would welcome further recognition of the importance of quality, if only that intrinsically high-quality arts are more likely to have a greater instrumental impact, for example, in terms of change in confidence, health and repeat engagement. • Overall, benchmarking performance against other comparable areas and further analysis of existing research on barriers to arts engagement would provide better context to the analysis of issues and proposed actions.
<p>Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unclear how an overarching strategy will impact on or enhance the delivery plan. • We would welcome more outline actions beyond 2016/17. • Overall, it is unclear how a number of proposed actions will contribute to turning the curve. • While raising awareness of and ambitions for creative careers is welcome and would support the council’s Strengthening the sector action plan, it is unclear how this will impact on the indicator. In addition, it should also be noted that without further core support for organisations, it is likely that young people will need to travel to other parts of the UK or Ireland to find rewarding and secure creative jobs. • It is unclear why the music sector has been prioritised in the action plan above other arts forms which also have a substantial impact on young people. • While we are unsure what is meant by qualitative indicators, we welcome the intent to develop methodologies to measure the impact of the arts. We would draw your attention to the council’s Art affects, a research report co-designed by the arts sector which identifies over 40 arts outcomes and contains a population-level evidence collection framework and measurement toolkit for individual arts organisations. • We would caution against proposals to partner with individual culture and arts organisations at this stage of planning. There is a wealth of quality organisations in Belfast who will be able to contribute to delivery. • We welcome further capital investment in cultural buildings.
<p>Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cultural sector has been subject to a number of cuts and requires an increase in funding to enable it to sustain even current levels of performance. • We would draw your attention to Belfast City Council’s Cultural Framework for Belfast and associated action plan: www.belfastcity.gov.uk/tourism-venues/culture/culture-about.aspx. We would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with DfC and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in its delivery. • Given that PFG recognises that cultural engagement is intrinsic to quality of life, we would welcome seeing cultural actions embedded in other delivery plans where arts and culture has a recognised instrumental impact on personal, community and population wellbeing, e.g. outcomes 1, 3, 4, 9, 10, 12 and 14. • Need to recognise the role of local government in supporting culture and arts activity and providing support
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to areas where local councils have been identified as a partner, Belfast City Council would wish to be involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Further data development, including qualitative research, indicator development and research in to barriers to participation ○ Any large-scale collaborative process and/or plans to become the NI Creative capital of Europe given that the majority of arts organisations are based within Belfast



<p>Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Any career development initiatives (subject to suitability) o Heritage skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural & Arts participation - The Council note that research from the Continuous Household Survey and by Audiences NI suggests that the majority of people here are infrequent arts consumers. We would like to see further development of projects and measures that increase the frequency of cultural engagement. <p>The Council would wish to work alongside central government and other partners to deliver an integrated cultural and arts strategy which seeks to enhance the city’s distinctive culture, encourage and enable access to cultural and arts activities, providing opportunities for participation in activities, events and festivals.</p>
<p>Other Comments:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges in addressing a sense of ‘passive listening and engagement’

DRAFT

Outcome(s): 5. We are an **innovative, creative society** where people can fulfil their potential

Delivery Plan: Indicators 19 (% population living in absolute and relative poverty [before housing costs]), 28 (Self-efficacy) - (BCC ref 14)

PfG SRO: Dr Denis McMahon, Deputy Secretary, Social Inclusion Group, DfC
communications@communities-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.



<p>Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?</p>	<p>The Delivery Plan includes interventions relating to skills, digital literacy and inclusion etc. In relation to these BCC would welcome consideration to be given to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability/ Specific Skills development – attracting young people/unemployed into IT Industry using a credited course avenue rather than a university route. There are local companies willing to do this. • With so much investment going into making Belfast a Smart City there still needs to be investment in making our citizens smart i.e. getting people online and helping individuals reach their full innovation potential. It is not enough to invest in technology, we need to also invest at a local level in people meaning providing appropriate training for all ages and access to new technology so that they can prosper and grow. • Communities in Belfast are not making the most of technology and moving with the digital age - this needs to be explored in terms of open community platforms and better opportunities for democracy. This also means that our community workers need to learn to embrace and learn new technology skills to promote this and use them to understand how to find democratic solutions to complex community issues.
<p>Q2. What additional issues are there?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When counting digital participants, it is important to track their development and to acknowledge that one digital awareness session does not impart the skills needed to continue on with digital learning. • ‘Digital Learning in Schools’ would need to consist of a diverse range of digital skills in order to open future employment pathways for young people. Also digital learning at a community level for young people should be explored through Saturday Clubs and after schools for young people living in poverty rather than solely classroom based learning.
<p>Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCC’s Super Connected Communities Outreach Project is proving very popular and has enabled wider scope in the community through wifi enabled folds, sheltered housing, church groups and various clubs. It has also allowed BCC to facilitate groups that don’t normally engage in council led community projects. From this experience it would suggest do not solely concentrate on a school programme, but on any community setting using an adaptable digital programme.
<p>Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As more services are due to move online, particularly benefits, there still remains many who are still not online. There needs to be a fresh campaign to explain to people how this will affect them and why they need to get trained online and know where to access this facility.
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce poverty and social Inequalities – There is a need to adopt a cross-government and cross-sectoral approach to addressing poverty and social inequalities help alleviate many of the social pressures which exist across region and particularly within Belfast as an urban area. The Council would wish to work alongside the Executive, Department for Communities and other stakeholders in bringing forward the delivery plans attached to this PfG Outcome as well as the new Social Strategy which is to emerge. Addressing fuel poverty is a key area of concern for the council and elected Members; who have previously highlighted the need for a more targeted and sustainable approach to the development and delivery of support schemes such as (or example, the Affordable Warmth Scheme funded by the Department for Communities and administered by local government, the bolder replacement scheme administered by the NIHE); developing preventative measures and financial assistance. • Housing Provision – Housing is a key issue in creating sustainable communities. Affordable and safe housing is fundamental to the quality of life of our residents. In 2015, there were over 6,900 people stress in the city. The Council welcomes the commitment given to helping people get access to suitable housing and would highlight the role of local government in supporting this process through its planning functions, the zoning of land for housing and different types of tenure through the Local Development Plan process. The Council is committed to working with central government, the NIHE and other partners to maximise the benefits of housing investment in the city, increasing the tenure mix, growing the population of the city and city centre and helping create sustainable, safe and cohesive communities. • Digital Connectivity –important for driving economic growth, competitiveness and supporting the development of the knowledge based /technology based start-ups. There is currently a mismatch between the data protection policies and speed of action within the public sector and the needs of private sector companies (i.e. the innovators and solution providers) which constrains somewhat potential collaborative initiatives. In relation to innovative public sector procurement and opportunities for supporting Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) type programmes and innovation, it will be important that government seeks to removes unnecessary barriers. <p>The Council’s Super-Connected Cities project has proved popular and is an example of how focus intervention and investment can provide necessary digital infrastructure and enabling online access for businesses, communities and citizens across the city. The BCC Super Connected Communities project can be used as a springboard, as its success is largely owed to co-design and co-delivery. Buy-in has been secured from other public and private organisations such as DoF, other BCC departments, the IT industry and the traditional community sector. These partnerships demonstrate a willingness to work together to accomplish more, build collective data and create digital platforms as a channel to achieve a better way of doing business with our citizens. Such alternative programmes which invest in making are citizens digitally literate should be explored.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace IV – There is a delivery plan in place for this proposed pilot project focusing on fostering 21st century skills in an open society through easy access to technology and mentorship in shared spaces for the city’s young people. Through the exploration of free open and inclusive technology, the aim of this project is to future proof young people by encouraging them to build positive relations and become adaptable, thoughtful, open-minded adults.
Other Comments:	

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Outcome(s): 5. We are an innovative, **creative** society, where people can fulfil their potential, 13. We connect people and opportunities through our **infrastructure**
11. We have high quality public services

Delivery Plan: Indicator 24 (Proportion of premises with **access to broadband services** at speeds at or above 30Mbps) (BCC ref 18)
Indicator 46 (Usage of **online channels** to access public services (BCC ref 31)

PfG SRO: June Ingram, Director, Energy, Telecoms, Minerals and Petroleum Division, DfE
NI-Economic-Strategy@economy-ni.gov.uk
Paul Wickens, Chief Executive Officer, Enterprise Shared Services, DoF
ProgrammeforGovernment@finance-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.



Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<p>BCC would like to see this given priority within the PfG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Connectivity –important for driving economic growth, competitiveness and supporting the development of the knowledge based /technology based start-ups. There is currently a mismatch between the data protection policies and speed of action within the public sector and the needs of private sector companies (i.e. the innovators and solution providers) which constrains somewhat potential collaborative initiatives. In relation to innovative public sector procurement and opportunities for supporting Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) type programmes and innovation, it will be important that government seeks to removes unnecessary barriers. <p>The Council’s Super-Connected Cities project has proved popular and is an example of how focus intervention and investment can provide necessary digital infrastructure and enabling online access for businesses, communities and citizens across the city. The BCC Super Connected Communities project can be used as a springboard, as its success is largely owed to co-design and co-delivery. Buy-in has been secured from other public and private organisations such as DoF, other BCC departments, the IT industry and the traditional community sector. These partnerships demonstrate a willingness to work together to accomplish more, build collective data and create digital platforms as a channel to achieve a better way of doing business with our citizens. Such alternative programmes which invest in making are citizens digitally literate should be explored.</p>
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	
Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?	<p>Within the Belfast Agenda (Community Plan for Belfast), the Council notes that digital connectivity is improving; nearly 100% of households in Belfast have access to optical fibre broadband. The city is rolling out free City WiFi. Belfast is part of a project providing the fastest connection from North America to Europe. However the city also needs a number of new ways of measuring the impact of our focus on city development priorities. BCC endeavours that partners will work together to create these new measures including ‘Digital connectivity’.</p>

Outcome(s): 6. We have more people working in **better jobs**

Delivery Plan: Indicator 14 **Population of the work force in employment** (BCC ref 20)

PfG SRO: Derek Baker, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Policy Group, DfE
NI-Economic-Strategy@economy-ni.gov.uk

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Feedback



<p>Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – the Council believe the main issues to be addressed are identified and the Council welcome the focus on the three distinct client groups: those entering the workforce; those already in the workforce and those furthest removed from work. The Council’s Belfast Agenda under the Working & Learning pillar identifies the importance of addressing education underachievement and the need to align the supply and demand of skills within the city, through an inclusive growth approach. • From a community development perspective we welcome the identification of the Department for Communities as a key partner in relation to the Social Inclusion strategy and funding. However, there needs to be more explicit reference to other relevant strategies/frameworks including the Urban Regeneration and Community Development Strategy and the Community Support Programme under DfC’s role on page 16 of the Delivery Plan. • Additionally, there doesn’t appear to be reference made to TEO and the Social Investment Fund in the delivery plan pages (16-18) or the range of other Departmental led strategies which support the sector.
<p>Q2. What additional issues are there?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delivery plan focuses primarily upon formal skill developments, however it should be recognised that whilst these are fundamentally important employers also place importance on softer employability skills and attitudes to work. • Developing entrepreneurship skills hasn’t been addressed within the delivery plan. To tackle economic inactivity levels and low levels of entrepreneurship consideration should be given to developing enterprise still through the education system. • Consideration should also be given to supporting micro and small businesses to upskill their existing workforce, this has a staff resource and financial implication which has much greater impact for smaller organisations. The same principle would apply to community and voluntary sector organisations. • The Delivery Plan reflects the responsibilities across Government and the need to work in collaboration with industry, education and academia, in ensuring that there is a pipeline of skilled people able to contribute to the economy. However, given the complexity of addressing this issue, within the Northern Ireland economy local Councils and the third sector should be recognised as having a valuable contribution to make in this process. • There is a need to reference the URCD Framework. This Policy Framework aims to ensure that the Executive Depts investment in urban regeneration and community development genuinely adds value, tackles inequality and helps everyone to contribute to, and share in, economic prosperity. Additionally, there is no reference in the DfC section to the Community Support Programme this should be referenced also. • In terms of TEO and Social Investment Fund, there is a need to identify this more explicitly in the delivery plan. SIF was set up to deliver social change. It aims to make life better for people living in targeted areas by reducing poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration but it doesn’t seem to be referenced in either the key partner section or the proposed actions section.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for employability support – the Council would wish to explore the potential for greater devolution of funding to support local employment and skills development including any potential offered by the Apprentice Levy. Making existing funding more effective is essential if the Executive is to meet its ambitious skills and growth targets, and is important for improving the life chances of all citizens. The outcomes based approach offers the opportunity for government to shape community-based services around people, identifying and dealing with their needs intensively in a holistic way with a single point of contact.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age Discrimination - The Council recently passed a notice of motion to call upon the Northern Ireland Executive Office to take immediate steps to extend Age Discrimination Legislation to include the provision of goods, services and facilities. The Council would welcome that consideration is given to this within the PFG document.
<p>Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?</p>	<p>Whilst the majority of actions are appropriate, given the concentration of economic inactivity and unemployment, the Council would welcome the opportunity to co-deliver and co-design the plan in relation to its delivery across Belfast.</p> <p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Employability and Skills - The Council would highlight the strong linkages and dependencies with Outcome 1 and the associated commitment to develop with councils a ‘Local Works’ approach to improving employability. The Council would welcome this approach and would wish to work alongside the Executive and other partners to ensure that such an approach is flexible enough to take account of local circumstances, priority target audiences and adequately resourced to have affect and be sustainable.



The Council is already working with central government, education institutions and employers to develop an **Employability and Skills Pathway (i.e. Belfast Works)** which seeks to support people into employment and better match skills to emerging industry needs. The Council believes that this approach is both scalable and transferrable and would welcome an opportunity to work in partnership with the Executive to co-design the policy framework for improving skills and employability and to explore the potential for incorporating Belfast’s Skills & Employability Strategy within a regional framework.

A shared understanding of how to target those furthest from the labour market would allow the Executive and the city to work together to engage neighbourhood-level providers to deliver employment programmes within a formal outcomes-led rather than process driven commissioning process. Joint work could be carried out to explore how existing employment and skills programmes could be streamlined at the local level as well as the potential for a city-regional apprenticeships scheme.

- **Local Councils through the Community Planning process are a key partner** in local economies, they should be recognised as a key partner.
- **Economic/Social Inclusion** - Implement sector specific initiatives to help the economically inactive onto the skills ladder: Council are currently working in this areas through a pilot project The Hospitality Employment Academy specifically targeting the long term unemployed to employment opportunities in the hospitality sector. This initiative was developed on the basis of local Council are knowledge of development projects highlighting the expected growth within this sector resulting from a number of new hotel developments. Other outreach and engagement examples include Active Communities and Sport Changes Lives.
- **Skills Collaboration** - Whilst it is appreciated the need for a regional approach to skills provision consideration must also be given to local area focus considering the geographical hubs of sectoral activity (hubs), consideration of the demographic focus of local skills and associated challenges. At a low level a rich data set will also exist of development/investment opportunities expected to create employment within the city. It would therefore be suggested that the Skills Barometer and Skills Forum should have a regional and council area or city focus.
- **Upskilling** - Consideration should be given to supporting micro and smaller organisations, including the community and voluntary sector to upskill their existing workforce recognising the financial and staff resource implication of investing in staff development is more acutely felt by these organisations.
- **Invest NI** - Recognising the need to address economically inactivity and support individuals back into employment consideration should be given to not only Invest NI priority sectors but also to those providing accessible entry points for entry level employment such as hospitality, retail, wider tourism, health and social care sectors.

Community Development

Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?

As highlighted previously the delivery plan should incorporate skills attainment in the following areas:

- Employability skills
- Enterprise/entrepreneurship skills
- **Employer needs** – it is recognised the delivery plan focuses on the supply of individuals into the labour market, however as referred to within the delivery plan, the supply of individuals needs to be aligned to employer needs and the availability of local employment opportunities. It is therefore important interventions to address ‘supply’ are informed by and reactive to employer demands.
- Under the proposals section there is reference to The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme **working with the hardest to reach individuals**; however, it is important to reference the **key role of Councils and their Community Planning structures** who will involve other organisations that could play a role in identifying hard to reach individuals.
- Additionally, in order to **break the cycle of deprivation** and deliver real and **sustainable changes** for communities, there is a need for an action which will concentrate on reworking the existing structures of funding i.e. through Neighbourhood Renewal, the Community Support Programme and the Social Investment fund and others to ensure there is alignment with the PfG and its outcomes.
- BCC would welcome **linkages with existing youth forums** to ensure young people are engaged and have a voice: for example as part of their campaigns work, BCC’s Youth Forum has been active around the issue of poverty in Belfast. At the start of 2016 while researching the issue, our Forum noted that young people’s voices were missing in much of the research, debates and policies relating to poverty and decided that they should work to change this. To this end they decided to create their own youth-led piece of social action research in which they would gather the views of young people in Belfast on this issue. In particular they wanted to find out what young people living in Belfast think about the following:
 - How they view poverty in the city;
 - What they think it means to be living in poverty;
 - How they think poverty impacts children and young people, families and communities; and
 - What actions they think government could take to end poverty.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The youth forum designed a focus group with the help of the National Children’s Bureau and delivered these to young people across Belfast from April-June 2016. Once all of the data has been analysed our young people will create a report with key actions for Belfast City Council to take forward as part of the work to eradicate poverty in Belfast. Our Forum hopes to have their report ready for Feb 2017.
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<p>The Council would welcome the opportunity to work with the Department across the delivery plan, a number of areas in particular for engagement would include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic Social Inclusion actions specifically the sectoral specific initiatives and the pilot projects to reduce economically inactivity levels. In Belfast currently 31% of the working population are classified as economically inactivity, the scale of the challenge in this area highlights the importance of addressing this issue in Belfast. - Invest NI, facilitate the development of small and medium sizes enterprises through online skills programmes and employer engagement activities. The Council currently works with a range of micro and small businesses across the city, as well as working with a range of larger employers, opportunities exist to work through existing mechanisms to engage and support the development SME’s. - Upskilling. The Council currently works with a range of micro and small businesses across the city, opportunities exist to work through existing mechanisms to engage with small businesses to upskill their existing workforce.
<p>Other Comments:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lessons from Neighbourhood Renewal Programme will be critical in progressing the action to work with some of the hardest to reach individuals as this requires a combined thematic and geographical approach to ensure that there is flexibility to focus activity on individuals, families and groups rather than simply on an area basis. This also reinforces the critical role that the thirds sector and local Councils can play in working with the Department to tackle these issues in a holistic way. The refresh of the Skills Barometer is welcomed as a relevant evidence base on which to develop policy; however, the Council would suggest that there is value in working with the Department to refine this further to produce a more focused Skills Barometer study on the Belfast City-Region area given its role as the gateway and commercial hub for Northern Ireland. This would enable the region to develop economic specialisms and hubs which will drive the region’s distinctive competitive advantage in a sustainable way.

DRAFT

Outcome(s): 6. We have more people working in **better jobs**

Delivery Plan: Indicator 41 **Local Graduates and Skills** (BCC ref 21)

PfG SRO: Derek Baker, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Policy Group, DfE
NI-Economic-Strategy@economy-ni.gov.uk



The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

Feedback

Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?

- The indicator attached to this delivery plan seeks to measure the proportion of local graduates in professional or management occupations or in further study six months after graduation. This places a measurement on graduate employment at one fixed period of time, this doesn't allow for consideration of fixed term employment and could provide a skewed position of employment.
- It would be suggested the research trigger points should be extended to include a 6 month, 1 year and 2 year time period for research.

Q2. What additional issues are there?

With regards to the main performance indicator, the Council would recommend that consideration be given to making two changes:

- 1) Only employment in jobs in SOC groups 1 and 2 should be counted (SOC 3 is too vague and low level to be considered management or professional).
- 2) If we include those remaining in higher education, it should only be for STEM subjects.

It is understood that this might be an indicator to allow international benchmarks and so the above changes may not be possible. If so, the indicator in the PfG should be renamed to minimise confusion. For example "Proportion of local graduates from local institutions in professional, management or intermediate occupations or in further study (in any subject) six months after graduation." Again, if it cannot be changed, during monitoring, efforts should be made to report the proportion of those remaining in higher education who are in STEM subjects. Our aim is to ensure that problems such as students using continued education to avoid a subdued job market, are not hidden within the indicator.

Consideration should also be given to:

- the understanding of 'better' jobs, as graduates may be employed in professional or management occupations but their salary levels may not reflect this;
- Integrating NI students who have returned to live in the region following study at a non-local institution;
- The alignment of employment levels against graduate subject areas.

Need to address the issue that we export 30% of our best talent each year, many of whom don't come back.

Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?

Yes - though the plan to introduce post graduate loans is not immediately clear as to how it supports outcome 6.

Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?

- Greater linkages should be contained within the actions to link FE/HE provision to labour market demands and to potentially fast tracking some of the proposed actions such as the post graduate tuition fee to areas of employment where skills gaps/labour shortages exist.
- Enabling and supporting graduate enterprise skills should be included as an action under this delivery plan, to support the creation of new business start-ups but also to equip new graduates with enterprise and innovation skills that can be equally applied as an employee. The Council is actively working with Ulster University, Queens University and Belfast Metropolitan College in its delivery of the Belfast Enterprise Academy, this initiative supports graduates to start a new business, very successfully and is award winning.
- Research projects to determine if graduates are employed should incorporate the employment destination in terms of the sector of employment, the size of organisation they are employed in and the nature of the employment (i.e. fixed term/permanent, F/PT).
- Belfast City Council welcome the integration of international student mobility, however consideration should also be given as to how the city and region can encourage graduates to come back to Northern Ireland as part of a graduate attraction and retention plan.



Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?

- BCC’s main role in this is helping to create the economic conditions that produce a demand for graduate level jobs. This will be covered in BCC’s response to other PfG Action Plans. Additionally, BCC already has several programmes in place to support students in developing wider ‘life skills’. BCC contributes to this through work-placement opportunities, occasional research opportunities and programmes such as the Belfast Enterprise Academy. BCC’s International Framework also supports international experience opportunities for students in North America, China and India. BCC would be keen to understand more about the proposed HEAR scheme, the current IWTS and BtES; the proposed Work Experience Database and how BCC may support these.

Other Comments:

- It is suggested the following key partners should be included as part of this delivery plan:
- Belfast City Council (Local Council’s)
 - Private sector employers

DRAFT

Outcome(s): 7. We have a **safe community** where we respect the law, and each other

Delivery Plan: Indicator 1 (Prevalence rate [% of the population who were victims of any NI Crime Survey crime]) - (BCC ref 22)

PfG SRO: David Lavery, Director, Access to Justice, DoJ

pfgoutcome7@justice-ni.x.gsi.gov.uk



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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	Yes
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links between offending/risk of offending and underlying drug/alcohol issues. • Important this outcome links with health for improved focus on addressing drug/alcohol abuse and providing appropriate/timely interventions
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	Yes
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	No - aside from importance of improved link with health re drugs/alcohol
Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place-based approaches • Early intervention • Reviews of legislation

Outcome(s): 7. We have a **safe community** where we respect the law, and each other

Delivery Plan: Indicator 39 (Reoffending rate) - (BCC ref 25)

PfG SRO: David Lavery, Director, Access to Justice, DoJ

pfgoutcome7@justice-ni.x.gsi.gov.uk



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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	Yes
Q2. What additional issues are there?	None
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	Yes
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	No
Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the Council believe that the broad issues have been captured in relation to anti-social behaviour and crime; further consideration and focus needs to be given to the links between offending/ risk of offending and underlying drugs and alcohol issues. There is also a close alignment to Outcome 4 on this matter (health). The Council would highlight the need to develop a welfare and ‘whole system approach’ to managing young offending (and the risk of offending) which seeks to address the root causes (e.g. substance abuse, addressing education and employment inequalities etc) rather than taking remedial action (links outcomes 1 and 5).
Other Comments:	N/A

Outcome(s): 7. We have a **safe community** where we respect the law, and each other, 9. We are a **shared society** that respects diversity, 10. We are a confident, welcoming, **outward-looking** society

Delivery Plan: Indicators 26 (A Respect Index), 31 (% who think leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres in their areas are “shared and open” to both Protestant and Catholics), and



35 (% the population who believe their cultural identity is respected by society) - (BCC ref 23)

PfG SRO: Dr Mark Browne, Director for Strategic Policy, Equality and Good Relations, TEO

pfgrespect@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear recognition of good relations/ promotion of shared space and the complexity of the reconciliation process within the delivery Plan. - Clear alignment with the current Good Relations Indicators and consideration of extensive body of research and practice within Belfast and NI. - Commitment to developing a Respect Index and potentially a Reconciliation Index to augment these indicators. - Specific reference to key issues such as respect for cultural identity; interfaces; minority ethnic considerations; segregation in education and housing, dealing with paramilitarism and addressing the legacy of the past are specifically referenced within the delivery plan and associated actions. - Commitment to supporting the work of the Commission on Flags, identity, Culture and Tradition is also noted.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<p>Addressing issues impacting on the sense of safety and creating community confidence happens at a local level. The Council and the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships have a key role to play in delivering these outcomes including supporting placed-based approaches and early intervention programmes which are preventative rather than remedial in nature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Space – The Council is committed to working with the Shared City Partnership to deliver an integrated plan to improve good relations and developing a sustainable, transferable and scalable approach to the management of shared space. We welcome the PfG commitment to bringing forward flagship transformational programmes to increase shared space and create multi-use places in local neighborhoods. We would be keen to work alongside the Executive to maximise potential opportunities for the city and explore potential synergies with other emerging physical investment schemes. <p>While appreciating the need for clarity and the practical constraints associated with any methodological approach to the measurement of attitudinal change, Council would consider that the concept of shared space needs to be broadened beyond the current limited focus on leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres. There is potential for this to be widened to include other spaces such as city centre, museums and cultural venues etc. Similarly Council considers that the concept of shared space should not be solely viewed from the perspective of the two traditional communities in the city. Further consideration required on allocation of resources for promotion of shared space and creation of new shared spaces would be beneficial.</p> <p>The Council has developed a bid for resources under the PEACE IV programme which includes a specific shared space theme. We would seek to develop a transferable approach to the identification, design, programming and management of shared space with a focus on improving community relations, physical and social regeneration and ensuring the sustainability of local neighbourhoods. We would welcome the opportunity to share this work and to develop an action plan to support a more ambitious agenda for shared space in NI.</p> <p>The Council also intends to invest, under the PEACE Plan, in developing resilient networks for meaningful purposeful and sustainable engagement between individuals and communities as well as facilitating and supporting effective leadership at all levels and within all sectors of the city. This will seek to build the capacity of disengaged and marginalised communities to participate in shared space programming and enable their increased involvement in peace and reconciliation activities within wider society. In addition we will seek to develop increased skills and capacity within different sectors to facilitate increased collaboration and partnership working on developing Good Relations and shared space outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further consideration of the proposals to develop and review existing legal and statutory duties for Section 75 groups for example a discussion on the relationship and balance of current provisions of S.75(1) and S.75(2).



Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	The proposed actions appear relevant but further detail on implementation would be beneficial.
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is scope for specific actions which recognise the importance of using the commemoration of significant events in our shared history impacting upon good relations as a mechanism to bring people together in shared appreciation of the past and respect for differing perspectives. There are many examples of positive outcomes achieved through this type of initiative, particularly through the Decade of Centenaries activities. In November Council held a conference reflecting on the achievements and lessons from the success of good relations events marking the events of 1916 in partnership with the Community Relations Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund. • An action to improve overall communications and alignment of various funding streams related to the TBUC Strategy with a view to maximising the good relations outcomes across all relevant funding programmes.
Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?	<p>Council notes the proposal to develop the Respect Index and potential to develop a Reconciliation Index to augment current Good Relations Indicators and we would be keen to be involved in developing and piloting this approach. We are currently developing an approach to measurement of attitudinal change in programme participants towards good relations and shared space outcomes in line with the new Good Relations Indicators and would welcome the opportunity for continued collaboration with partners in central government.</p> <p>The Council wishes to continue to work with central government and other key stakeholders in delivering on the TBUC Strategy particularly the District Council Good Relations Programme, summer camps and intervention.</p> <p>Shared Space: Council has developed a bid for resources under the PEACE IV Programme. This includes a specific Shared Space theme though which we seek to develop a transferable approach to the identification, design, programming and management of shared space in the City with a focus on improving community relations, physical and social regeneration and ensuring the sustainability of local neighbourhoods and the city as a whole. Through this work Council will work with partners to promote positive attitudes towards shared public space, help address post conflict issues, improve connectivity in the city and build on the city’s wider economic potential. Activity will focus on engagement with local communities on the concepts of shared space and explore, using a variety of methods, how the concept of shared space could be practically applied in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community relations. • Physical and social regeneration activities. • Ensuring a sustainable and liveable city. <p>In this context Council would welcome the opportunity to participate in the development of an action plan to support a more ambitious agenda for shared space.</p>
Other Comments:	

Outcome(s): **8. We care for others** and we help those in need, **13. We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure**



Delivery Plan: Indicators 8 (gap between the number of houses we need and the number of houses we have), 48 (Number of households in housing stress) - (BCC ref 29)

PfG SRO: Andrew Hamilton, Deputy Secretary, Community Regeneration and Housing, DfC

communications@communities-ni.gov.uk

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

PfG

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Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	<p>The Council endorses plans to help and care for the most vulnerable in our society, ensuring provision is adequate to meet their needs and where appropriate, giving people the opportunity and means to help themselves. We welcome the proposed actions including supporting people with disabilities to live more independent lives, reducing the inequalities faced by people with disabilities, helping people get access to suitable housing, ensuring housing is of a suitable standard, and assisting those living with the most difficult conditions.</p>
Q2. What additional issues are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Housing Provision – Housing is a key issue in creating sustainable communities. Affordable and safe housing is fundamental to the quality of life of our residents. In 2015, there were over 6,900 people stress in the city. The Council welcomes the commitment given to helping people get access to suitable housing and would highlight the role of local government in supporting this process through its planning functions, the zoning of land for housing and different types of tenure through the Local Development Plan process.</p> <p>The Council is committed to working with central government, the NIHE and other partners to maximise the benefits of housing investment in the city, increasing the tenure mix, growing the population of the city and city centre and helping create sustainable, safe and cohesive communities.</p> <p><u>Housing Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) to reflect the new boundaries following Local Government Reform has updated housing Supply (p2) – The Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs) contained within the Regional Development Strategy and referenced in the delivery plan. The revised figures suggest a supply of housing across the region of 5,630 units per year, rather than the 6,812 units per year referenced to in the paper.</p> <p>The latter figure quoted within the Delivery Plan may be a more accurate reflection of the need based on updated population projections (2014-based rather than 2012-based). If this is the case, DfI should publish revised HGIs to provide a more accurate indication of need to be reflected in Local Development Plans (LDPs).</p> <p>Social / Affordable Housing – Local councils will have a role to play in relation to the provision of additional social housing, through the zoning of sufficient land for housing as part of the LDP. The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) sets out the regional policy context to which LDPs should align. It moves away from considering ‘social’ housing in isolation, instead preferring to consider ‘affordable’ housing as a whole. Whilst including housing provided by housing associations or the Housing Executive, affordable housing would also include other forms of affordable housing, such as co-ownership, etc.</p> <p>It would therefore be prudent for the delivery plan to consider the ‘affordability’ of housing as a key indicator of housing supply, as well as the number of affordable houses being built. This would also support the monitoring of housing supply at a local level. In addition, local councils will have a role through the local planning functions in ensuring new social and affordable houses are supplied. This is referenced in Section 5 on p10-11, but should also be considered in relation to Section 1 (p7)</p> <p>Release of Public Sector Land (p7) – The aim to release more public sector land for housing development is positive and timely, but it may be useful to include a realistic target within the delivery plan, such as the amount of land to be released or the number of new houses provided on surplus public sector land. Local councils will also have a key role to play in relation to this through the zoning of land within LDPs and through the use of their own land estates.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing for Older People (p8) – Local councils can also have an important role to play in facilitating the supply of housing for older people and in providing accessible homes through the planning functions. The planning system, particularly the LDP function, can help to address this aim by ensuring that new housing is built in a way that is adaptable to changing needs through a person’s lifetime. In England, a Lifetime Homes standard is often used to achieve this objective. The LDP will also have a key role in facilitating the provision of housing of the right sizes and types to meet future population needs. • Timescales for Planning Approvals (p8) – The key word within this paragraph is ‘perceived’, highlighting that the delays in securing planning consents are more a perception than a reality in many cases. In Belfast, the Council is already pro-actively working with the development industry to help improve the efficiency of the planning system when considering planning applications. • Empty Homes (p9) – The inclusion of the aim within Section 2 is welcome, particularly the importance of bringing underutilised or vacant commercial space within the City Centre back into use to help meet housing need. The council can have an important role to play in relation to this through our planning functions. • Shared Housing (p10) – It might be worth reviewing the terminology used within Section 4. From a planning perspective this is referring to ‘balanced communities’ or ‘shared communities’, in which segregation is reduced by having a mix of community backgrounds within a given area or location. The term ‘shared housing’ would tend to refer more to housing that is shared by multiple people, such as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) or more specialised forms of shared accommodation. This does not necessarily mean a mix of community backgrounds. Clearly local councils have an important role to play in relation to both aspects of a shared society through LDPs. • Private Rented Sector (p12) – Whilst the references to the Private Rented Sector are welcome, the role and regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) is also of paramount importance, particularly within the Belfast context. Whilst a form of private rented accommodation, HMOs have a number of distinctive characteristics that need to be considered in detail and are subject to a separate use class in planning terms and a separate registration/licensing regime. The Licensing of HMOs is also due to be devolved to local councils within the current Government cycle. • Delivery Partner (p16) – The District Councils are clearly an important Delivery Partner within this Delivery Plan. However, whilst the summary of their role accurately captures the Council’s planning function, the Council would also have a range of other functions of relevance, such as building control and environmental health. These should also be referenced as relevant within the Delivery Plan.
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 48, which relates to the ‘gap between the number of houses we need and the number of houses we have’, does not appear in the draft Programme for Government. However, ‘Total Housing Stock’ does seem to be a sensible indicator for this aspect of the Programme and should be referenced in relation to Outcome 8. • Looking at the total number of houses built in will not help determine whether the supply of housing is ‘suitable’. The evaluation would also need to look at how well the supply of housing matches projected needs in terms of location, house sizes, types and tenures, etc.
Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?	
Other Comments:	



The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

Feedback

Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?

Belfast City Council would highlight the following issues and actions which should be considered in the delivery plan.

Q2. What additional issues are there?

- The majority of the plan is concerned with attracting foreign investment and increasing international trade however there do not appear to be any direct indicators for this in the plan. This means that monitoring information will be vague as a consequence.
- The second pillar of promoting NI internationally is well documented as tourism but the Council would recommend that business tourism needs emphasised here given that now Belfast has the infrastructural improvements well underway with 11 new hotel developments and the new Belfast Waterfront conference and exhibition centre. A third and important pillar of promoting NI internationally is to attract foreign students and the associated income this brings to our economy as well as attracting partners and customers for international research through the 2 universities.
- The Council would recommend that consideration be given to including the Belfast Harbour, a key anchor institution and gateway, as a key partner.
- The Council would like to see more information as to how the target/predictions have been calculated, and whether the knock on implications such as the resulting need for additional hotel capacity has been considered.
- The Council is committed to expanding international relations and developing our international tourism through our International Relations Framework and Tourism Strategies. Currently our key geographic focus is on Europe, North America, Dublin, China and India. The delivery plan references the Middle East, which is not currently pursued by Council. Partners such as INI have pulled out of India, however the British Council and the NI Consul General for India are encouraging NI stakeholders to reconsider this huge market although experience tells that it is slow burn market.
- Consideration will need to be given to the approach to the Dublin relationship in light of Brexit. It is critical that the economic potential of the Belfast - Dublin is explored in terms of boosting tourism promotion, transport connections and trade.
- The implications of United Airlines pulling out of Belfast will have a direct impact on action point 6 and greater emphasis on an alternative (whether that be via Dublin or a new airline out of Belfast) should be included as a key issue.
- The role of Belfast as a capital city and regional driver needs to be emphasised. Businesses recognise the city as do students and tourists more than anywhere else and it provides port of entry and a gateway to the region. As the region's capital city, major population centre and the hub for business and employment, Belfast is critical to Northern Ireland's economic future.
- Local Government / Belfast City Council has a number of sister city partners (North America / China) and other international connections (New York, San Francisco, Austin). These agreements are a key factor given the importance of city government to city government relationships and civic leadership role that councils can play to open doors to other stakeholders which has been proven time and again. These linkages can provide a unique platform to promote tourism, investment and collaboration in Belfast and we are already delivering on a number of the actions in this plan e.g. Collaboration with universities (Emerson College, Boston and Ulster University, Belfast).
- A need to integrate the tourism offer with retail and expansion of the night time economy which will also include consideration of the legislation on licencing laws, in light of city centre regeneration plans.
- In relation to events and festivals, there are a number of areas that could be addressed or Council work which could support Department activity:
 - Utilise the Council's investment in festivals and events to enhance the city as a place to live, study, visit and invest in. This will require a joined-up approach across agencies e.g. TNI, ACNI and Sport NI.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In attracting international events, that provide a global platform for NI, we need to be cognisant of our current liquor licensing and hospitality opening hours which are externally viewed as outdated and out-of-step with a modern international city. There is a need for an agreed position on the changes to liquor licensing and hospitality opening hours. - A more streamlined and co-ordinated approach across Departments is required to assist cities and the region in regarding to staging major international events and festivals. This will avoid potential delays in the process which may impact whether such projects are staged in NI.
<p>Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No – Given that the impact of Brexit remains uncertain and the new US President’s statements about lowering Corporation Tax, the impact of a reduction in Corporation Tax is unclear. These are significant issues which will influence the future economic performance and climate in NI. • The Council would like to see consideration of the impact of the increase in tourism spend predicted. For example, what increase in Hotel capacity will be required to support this growth? • There is a fleeting reference to the role and value of education and attracting foreign students and research partners. Both Universities and BMC in Belfast have set targets around all of this which will impact the Ni economy as a whole and the Council feel that these measures should be highlighted. <p>Proposal 6 - Maximise the benefit of existing direct air access and grow direct air access with key overseas markets in collaboration with NI Airports and Airlines through initiatives such as the ‘Enhanced Cooperative Marketing Fund’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the news that the only direct flight to the USA is withdrawing from Belfast, priority should be given, to how best to provide an alternative e.g. working with Dublin Airport to provide incentives / attracting a new airline to Belfast. This is critical to supporting international connectivity and access. <p>Proposal 8 - Invest in experiences and products that will give external visitors new reasons to holiday and stay longer in Northern Ireland through a new Tourism Growth Fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy has been adopted by DfC as the policy framework for the city centre and local government has a role to play in integrating retail offer, night time economy of city centre into the overall tourism offer. <p>Proposal 14 - Harness the power of the NI diaspora to develop and grow the support of people with a connection to Northern Ireland by birth, family, education or business, in order to deliver economic impact to NI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the diaspora have played a key role in export missions such as the Belfast Tech Mission, a more formal relationship needs to be developed with NI Connections to ensure linkages are being utilised to their full capacity all international markets e.g. SXSW Austin, Texas. The diaspora can play a key role in promoting and supporting business and tourism messaging, however this is done so on an ad hoc basis with no real formal plan or strategy.
<p>Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?</p>	<p>Additional proposed actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There would be value in Government agencies and Councils working together to determine event and festival priorities. - There is a need for an agreed position on the changes to liquor licensing and hospitality opening hours to promote the region globally in term of tourism and events. - A more streamlined and co-ordinated approach across Departments is required to assist cities and the region in regarding to staging major international events and festivals. This will avoid potential delays in the process which may impact whether such projects are staged in NI. For example, agreement in terms of managing roads and public event spaces such as a single point of contact within via TNI - A commitment to support a second major tourist attraction in Belfast would be welcome. - Reference to the targets and strategies of the 3 education players. - Recognisant of the untapped potential of the Chinese tourism market with 100 million Chinese travelling each year. - Prioritising of funding and resources, by Government agencies and Council, to enable events and festivals to deliver tangible outputs. - It would be of benefit to look at how the action plan can integrate more fully with the conference and exhibition schedule within the City. How best can we showcase our key business sectors to conference and exhibition delegates?
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council note that a lot of the plan involves work which will help deliver existing strategies. • The Council is already engaged with Tourism NI on the NI Tourism Strategy work and InvestNI’s international work. The Council is also engaged with both universities and Belfast Met (exchanging strategies and agree KPIS etc). There could perhaps be an increased acknowledgement of working with Belfast as the key gateway to NI for both Tourism and business investment. BCC’s Tourism Strategy, Cultural Framework, International Framework and City Centre Regeneration Plan are all relevant to the work in this action plan.



co-design / co-deliver?

- There is an action to utilise NI's Brand. BCC's Place Positioning work will be relevant to the NI Brand work. Students tend to choose cities before they choose universities, The PP work of BCC will be very important in promoting NI overseas for business and tourism and investment – port of entry/ gateway etc. The role of cities will play a prominent role in attracting businesses, tourism and students, this should be referenced and BCC would be keen to engage on this issues.
- BCC is best placed to lead on some sectoral developments where critical mass of companies/research is e.g. cyber security, business tourism, creative industries, green technologies.
- Development of an events/festivals strategy that aligns to Government priorities and vice versa.

Proposal 2 - Utilise the Northern Ireland brand to deliver a consistent message to all international audiences (government to government, business to business and business to consumer) through a co-ordinated plan, consistently delivered by all stakeholders.

- BCC participate in many international events, networks and partnerships alongside Belfast based SMEs. As part of these initiatives, the Council actively promote Belfast / Northern Ireland as place to visit, live, work and invest. Innovative collateral to showcase the City would strengthen this message.

Proposal 4 - Support our priority sectors to raise awareness of their capability, establish key partnerships and secure new business in key international markets;

- As above, Belfast City Council are active in numerous international events and networks. The Creative Digital Sector is key for Belfast and this sector has been and still is key in terms of raising the profile of the City and Region globally whether this be through participation at events such as SXSW or hosting creative industry focussed inward visits with our sister cities in Boston and Nashville.

Proposal 7 & 8 - Deliver events of scale (e.g. the 2017 Irish Open, 2019 Open Championship and the 2023 Rugby World Cup) and continue to bid for global events & Invest in experiences and products that will give external visitors new reasons to holiday and stay longer in Northern Ireland through a new Tourism Growth Fund.

- Local Government has a role to play in integrating retail offer, night time economy of city centre into the overall tourism offer.

Proposal 14 - Harness the power of the NI diaspora to develop and grow the support of people with a connection to Northern Ireland by birth, family, education or business, in order to deliver economic impact to NI.

- Belfast City Council to develop a more formal relationship / connection with the Diaspora in terms of supporting and promoting our international business activity. BCC to work closely with NI Connections as part of our international business calendar / programme.

Other Comments:

- The plan appears to be compromised by having to fit into the Executive's approach to OBA. This plan is really two plans with only two small areas of overlap (business tourism and international perception). Only one of the two areas is adequately reflected in the main indicators (visitor spend). The other indicator (national brand index) is relevant to both but is an enabler of them, not an important outcome on its own. It would seem far more sensible to split this action plan into two parts: one for tourism and one for attracting business and investment. The latter should have its own indicator. NB FDI is apparently covered elsewhere in Delivery Plan 4. If so, it could arguably be dropped from this plan, which could then focus on tourism.
- Belfast City Council is not listed as a key delivery partner within the PfG delivery plan – although local government is listed in some of proposals. The Council should be included as a delivery partner as tourism currently attracts almost 9.5 million visitors to Belfast each year and contributes over £430 million to the local economy. This would help further main improvements identified in our Belfast Integrated Tourism Strategy 2015-2020 and will help us double the value of tourism to £870 million per year by 2020.
- There appears to be a discord between the two indicators detailed (external visitors and national brand) and the delivery plan activity (attracting investment and FDI).
- While the comparative benchmark data will be useful (pt 7.9), it may be beneficial to examine countries or regions considered to be competitors or of a similar size.

Outcome(s): 13. We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure

Delivery Plan: Indicators 23, 25 and 47 (NI water) - (BCC ref 6)



PfG SRO: John McGrath, Department for Infrastructure (indicators 23, 25)

Fiona McCandless, Department of Infrastructure (indicator 47)

[INSERT](#)

The following comments relate specifically to the delivery plan, and will be emailed directly to the named senior owner. The Council have aimed to provide views on the suitability and likely effectiveness of the proposed actions as well as the planned partnering arrangements. BCC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in co-design and delivery of place-based interventions and programmes linked to this delivery plan.

Feedback	
Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to meet today with the Committee for Infrastructure. It is our desire to work in partnership with central and local government as well as the private and third sectors to create a resilient, sustainable and inclusive city-region. The Council strongly believes that if Belfast and Northern Ireland is to make a further step change and compete on a global scale there is a need for targeted investment in the physical, economic and social infrastructure of the city-region. Having modern infrastructure in place will enable and support economic growth and ensure that the city-region remains competitive in terms of being an attractive place to live, work and invest. It is also important in terms of supporting future development and plans for growth. Understanding Northern Ireland’s priority infrastructure needs, and planning to address these on an affordable and property sequenced basis, should be at the heart of the PfG and new Investment Strategy We wish to work in partnership with central and local government as well as the private sector to ensure that critical infrastructure schemes are identified, prioritised and importantly finance to ensure delivery.
Q2. What additional issues are there?	
Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated case around these?	<p>The Council would highlight the following infrastructure projects and asked that they be considered in the context of the delivery plan and the investment strategy still to emerge.</p> <p>(i) Infrastructure Plan for the City-Region - the Council would wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive, the Department for Infrastructure and other government to develop an Infrastructure Plan for the city-region and connections with other economic corridors. This will seek to identify the key infrastructure priorities and will complement any regional infrastructure plan which may be brought forward.</p> <p>(ii) Financing Infrastructure Investment – the Council would wish to wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive, Department for Infrastructure and Department to explore and identify potential new financial mechanisms and vehicles which could be utilised to deliver critical city infrastructure projects and support economic growth and job creation across the region (e.g. joint ventures with private sector, European Investment Bank investment, asset backed vehicles, land value capture, financial transactions capital, social impact bonds, earn-back incentive schemes).</p> <p>The DoF and Executive are proactively looking at the practicalities and merits of other funding vehicles - in the context of the emerging new Programme for Government, NI Investment Strategy and the deliverability of Executive priorities. Initial discussions have already taken place with DoF officials who are keen to work with council, the Strategic Investment Board and other partners to co-commission a specific piece of work around innovative financing models. This will seek to identify options and examine their merits and practicalities of implementation.</p> <p>It is important to recognise the financial tools available to the council, including, for example, ability to borrow to invest in capital schemes, ability to access other funds, and the ability to enter into Joint Ventures with the private sector to unlock major investment and development opportunities.</p> <p>The Council would also wish to explore with DFI, DoF, the NI Executive, other Departments and the Strategic Investment Board the potential to utilise government assets to incentivise investment and unlock major development and infrastructure schemes. We would also wish to explore more commercial alternatives to bringing forward and financing important such schemes. This is linked to the earlier discussions on the agenda regarding the possible creation of an ‘Infrastructure Plan for the City’.</p>



(iii) **City Infrastructure Priorities** – to meet the infrastructure needs of the city, the Council would wish to work with the Executive and Department for Infrastructure and other partners, including the private sector, to bring forward the following schemes:

- **York Street Interchange** – the Council welcomes the recent announcement by the Infrastructure Minister that this important scheme will be taken forward but are concerned about the current uncertainty around financing. Given the significance of this scheme to supporting the regional economy and improving connectivity between Belfast (and Port) to the rest of the region, the Council believes that this £160million scheme should be explicitly referenced within the Programme for Government and prioritised within the emerging NI Investment Strategy.

It is recognised that the York Street Interchange proposal will alleviate a significant bottleneck at the M2/Westlink junction which adversely impacts on city centre traffic volumes and congestion on a daily basis. The Council believes that this scheme is critical in supporting regional economic growth and competitiveness, accommodating 1000,000 vehicles each day, mostly commuters to and from Belfast as well as connecting freight /haulage transport through the port of Belfast to the strategic road network throughout the wider region.

- **Transport Infrastructure** – ensuring that the city and city-region has appropriate transportation infrastructure which supports and enables access, mobility and connectivity is a key priority. Effective infrastructure and transportation planning will be critical components of the Local Development Plan and the creation of a sustainable land-use strategy for the city and city-region.

Within the Belfast Agenda, we are committed to developing an integrated city transport plan which will seek to maximise the opportunities presented by the £150million investment in the Belfast Transport Hub and Rapid Transit System. It will also seek to address under-use of public transport, particularly in relation to commuter patters and work to promote active travel.

The Council would wish to work closely with the Executive and Department for Infrastructure to bring this forward and ensure alignment with regional priorities which may emerge in the Investment Strategy and revised Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan. It will be important that we establish shared transport objectives and priorities.

- **City Centre Transport and Parking** – Again, we would wish to work with the Executive and DfI in bringing forward a Car Parking Strategy for the city which will include a comprehensive solution to addressing city centre transportation and parking related pressures.
- The delivery of the **Belfast Rapid Transit Phase I** in the West and East of the city and developing proposals for **Phase II for the North and South of the city**.
- **Enhancing the cycle network** – develop strategy for cycling, securing necessary funding and ensuring that cycling is a consideration within planning processes.
- **Living with Water Programme** – ensuring that the drainage infrastructure within Belfast is fit-for-purpose and alleviates potential risks around flooding and pollution. The ‘Living with Water Programme’ has identified that Belfast has the worst drainage infrastructure in Northern Ireland and a failing to act could result in significant consequences including e.g. financial impact, reputational damage, impeding housing and business growth and adversely impacting on construction. Estimates to deliver the necessary infrastructure are around £750m for Belfast alone.
- **An energy security programme** – The Council would wish to work alongside the NI Executive, other city partners and utility providers to develop a city-region energy programme. We will work with partners to better manage energy usage across the city’s public estate and support better acquisition, management and finance of energy. We will build opportunities with partners, including the private sector and local communities, to encourage investment and deployment of renewable sources in order to make the city more attractive to investors and to tackle fuel poverty.
- **Housing Provision** – Again the Council would highlight the fact that housing is a key issue in creating sustainable communities. Affordable and safe housing is fundamental to the quality of life of our residents. In 2015, there were over 6,900 people stress in the city. The Council welcomes the commitment given to helping people get access to suitable housing and would highlight the role of local government in supporting this process through its planning functions, the zoning of land for housing and different types of tenure through the **Local Development Plan process**.

The Council is committed to working with central government, the NIHE and other partners to maximise the benefits of housing investment in the city, increasing the tenure mix, growing the population of the city and city centre and helping create sustainable, safe and cohesive communities.

- **Digital infrastructure** – important for driving economic growth and competitiveness and enhancing international connectivity and proposition as an investment location. Also supports the development of the knowledge based and technology start-ups. The region also has a strong record of staying at the forefront of communications technology. It became the first region in Europe to achieve 100 per cent broadband coverage and one of the first to operate and experience high speed, next generation services with a new 40-gigabyte per second



	<p>transatlantic and terrestrial telecommunications link between Northern Ireland, North America and Europe. This is providing secure, reliable service and delivering prices up to 20 per cent below market rates in London, Dublin, Manchester and Glasgow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape – Investment in high-quality streetscape which creates a sense of place, improves the attractiveness and animation of localities and helps attract tourism and inward investment, including the potential future use of developer contributions to fund this.
<p>Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would wish to work with the Executive, government departments and other partners on the specific proposals set out above.
<p>Other Comments:</p>	<p>Sustainable Water - A long Term Water Strategy for NI (2015-2040) : Draft Strategy Implementation Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would note that at time of responding to this delivery plan, we are also consideration and responding Note that at the time of consultation, BCC are also providing feedback in relation to the 'Sustainable Water – A Long-Term Water Strategy for NI (2015-2040) – Draft Strategy Implementation Plan' - Drinking water supply and demand - Flood risk management and drainage - Environmental protection and improvement - Water and sewerage services. <p>In particular BCC are commenting on roles suggested for local government within the implementation plan and would welcome consideration to be given within the applicable PfG Delivery Plans. For example it is Council's understanding that, under the Living with Water Programme, discussions have taken place regarding the use of Council's parks and open spaces to support the delivery of sustainable flood resilient development. It is essential that the appropriate officers, both operational and planning are involved in future discussions with DfI, if Council are to support this aim, given that any actions implemented will have a significant impact on the use of Councils parks and open spaces and again any potential impacts of a capital or revenue nature that may require further discussion</p>

Outcome(s): **14.** We give our **children and young people** the best start in life

Delivery Plan: Indicators 15 (% children at appropriate stage of development in their immediate pre-school year) - (BCC ref **32**)

PfG SRO: Cathy Galway, Acting Director of Youth, Early Years & Childcare, DoE
PfGconsultation@education-ni.gov.uk

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Feedback

Q1. Are the key issues which need to be addressed identified?

BCC welcomes the focus on early intervention and the proposal to strengthen relationships and partnership working to integrate health, education and community assets to meet the needs of children.

- BCC delivers a range of age-targeted programmes to support this outcome through our provision for example in Leisure, Health, Parks and Open Spaces, Educational Outreach and Community Services.
- These services deliver a **variety of interventions** designed to promote active and healthy lifestyles for the **breadth of age-groups**.
- In addition, Council administers a significant **grant aid programme** to support local community and voluntary organisations to deliver initiatives which will advance this outcome in their local communities.
- Council also has a dedicated Children and Young People’s Unit which has a remit not only to deliver direct services to children and young people via the Play Service, but also to champion their needs and enable them to have a voice in the city via the Belfast City Council Youth Forum.
- Through the delivery of our **Play Service programmes**, BCC contributes to improving outcomes for children supporting their physical, social and emotional development from **age 5 to 11 years**. Through the delivery of outreach play services to voluntary and community parent and toddler groups the Play service aims to promote positive and consistent messages and support for parents regarding the importance of play. Our ethos is that freely chosen play is of fundamental importance to a child’s development and Council welcomes this recognition in the PFG.

Council would welcome the **opportunity** to work more closely in **partnership** with other key stakeholders to ensure that our services are **targeting those children who are in greatest need**.

BCC has adopted an outcomes framework for our work with children and young people which is aligned to the outcomes for the Programme for Government. Council is making a commitment as part of the Belfast Agenda to enable children and young people to play their part in shaping their city and communities, and aims to contribute to children being healthy, happy and achieving at each stage of life. We also aim to support children to feel safe in their community and encourage them to reach their full potential.

- The focus of the PFG is very much on **early year’s provision** and BCC would **welcome a greater recognition of the importance of early intervention for all children up to the age of 18 years**. It is recognised that there are **a number of points in a child’s life** particularly when transitioning to post-primary education or experiencing adversity where they are at greater risk of becoming involved in risk-taking behaviours or where they are more susceptible to poor mental health or experiencing poor educational attainment. BCC recognises the importance of engaging young people in meaningful and constructive activities and creating opportunities for them to make a contribution to civic life and gain valuable employability skills. Our Belfast City Council Youth Forum provides opportunities for young people to do this. Council has adopted the Ask First principles of participation as advocated by the Participation Network (CINI) to ensure that we consult effectively with children and young people.

BCC is **committed to working with a range of city and regional partners** to safeguard everyone, address child poverty and ensure effective family services are available at each stage of a child or young person’s life. We will encourage our children and young people to have the best start in life by providing 1000’s of free, accessible play opportunities across the city through our outreach and After-schools provision, organising activities and events in our parks, delivering summer schemes, community centre programmes, city events and festivals. We will support our Belfast Youth Forum members to be the city’s young advocates and provide high quality safe open spaces in parks and play areas for our children and young people.

Q2. What additional issues are there?

Article 31 of the UNCRC formally enshrines the **child’s right to play** and the right to engage in other recreational activities including participation in cultural activities and the arts. It states:

1. State Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. State Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational leisure activity.

BCC would welcome greater recognition of this right within the PFG and the inclusion of outcome measures to assess how departments and agencies are meeting this.



Q3 Are the proposed actions suitable?	Yes - the proposed actions are suitable and BCC particularly welcomes the introduction of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ: SE) as a baseline for measuring developmental outcomes for young children.
Q4 Are there any additional actions we wish to raise? And associated costs around these?	<p>Within the intervention to ensure that every child, whose parents want it can access a funded place in the Pre-school Education Programme in their immediate pre-school year, it would be helpful if a commitment could be given to ensuring that each child attending this provision has access to freely chosen play opportunities.</p> <p>The Programme for Government should consider adopting the Ask First model for consultation with children and young people to ensure that their voices are heard and feedback is given as to how their responses have been acted upon.</p>
Q5. What areas /actions does Council wish to co-design / co-deliver?	<p>BCC would be keen to work in partnership with the Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast Childcare Partnership and Community and Voluntary organisations to design and deliver play programmes for parents and pre-school children. Council would also welcome opportunities to engage with hard to reach / at risk families / parents perhaps via the Family Nurse Partnership to introduce play opportunities and contribute to supporting parents as the first educators of children.</p> <p>Council would welcome opportunities to work more collaboratively and co-design interventions with local grant-aided groups which are aimed at giving children the best start in life.</p>
Other Comments:	None

DRAFT

NILGA Response to Draft Programme for Government (PfG) Consultation

“The 2016 – 2018 phase of the Programme for Government should herald a new era of joined up government in Northern Ireland. There is an opportunity to rewire our public services, grow productive, value added jobs, decrease the reliance on the public sector, sustain the environment and enhance all communities across NI. The 11 councils - if the draft PfG is to be credible and deliver success, regardless of measure – need to be trusted, resourced and constitutionally strengthened. NILGA will not waver from fulfilment of this essential, democratic outcome as local government’s representative body.”

30th November 2016

The following paper is NILGA’s second level formal response to the consultations on the draft Programme for Government Framework 2016-21. It is directly aligned to the Associations initial and many councils, agreed responses to the Draft Programme for Government Framework in July 2016.

This response has been compiled as a result of extensive consultation across the local government sector and should be read in direct conjunction with the sector’s Programme for **Local** Government (enclosed). It follows substantial engagement and work with Councils, NILGA Office Bearers & Executive, SOLACE, Elected Members both councillors and MLAs, the Strategic Investment Board, the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership and Climate Northern Ireland, together with council professional officer groups and representative bodies including LGA (England), AILG (Ireland) CoSLA (Scotland) WLGA (Wales), Colleges NI, FSBNI and Hospitality Ulster.

For further information or to discuss any of the issues highlighted, please contact Derek McCallan Smyth at the NILGA Offices: Email: d.mccallan@nilga.org Tel: 028 9079 8972

**Derek McCallan
Chief Executive**

30th November 2016

1. INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

1.1 The draft Programme for Government 2016-2021 (PfG) is presented at a time of both great opportunity and huge challenge for Northern Ireland. The new NI Assembly and the new enlarged councils together provide an environment which could enable radical change to the way we work, to break through silos, and to create a citizen centred, efficient, collaborative society that the citizens we serve will understand and readily support. We encourage the NI Executive and all parties to continue to be bold and innovative in their approach, and welcome the draft PfG as the fundamental step in a much longer term strategic planning exercise.

1.2 NILGA broadly welcomes the iterative approach that the NI Executive is taking to the development of this overarching work, strategies and action plans that will eventually become the 2016 – 2021 Programme for Government.

1.3 The consultation acknowledges the need for a sea-change in how government – both central and local – delivers in partnership for our society. NILGA welcomes the move to a more outcome-based approach, involving other sectors as key delivery partners.

1.4 NILGA agrees that to ensure this new approach is successful, time will be required. But so will demonstrable evidence, across all 14 Outcomes, from 2017, of delivery. Like all councils, NILGA looks forward to working in partnership with the NI Executive to build robust and shared engagement, delivery and accountability and performance mechanisms, together with a shared and open approach to data collection and use.

2. Draft PfG: NILGA Key Commentary for Councils and The Executive Office (TEO)

2.1 **Outcomes Based Communication:** NILGA welcomes the political and senior officer engagement that has occurred in the run up to the draft PfG. While welcoming this, and the “ethos” of Outcomes Based Government, it cautions against the repeat of a number of diametrically opposed actions which create the perception and have the impact of reinforcing centralist silos. These include the absence of Regeneration powers, the (at the time of writing) proposed (arguably imposed) transfer of function of Prohibition or Restriction of Use of Public Roads for special events, and 8 weeks or less consultation periods on matters of major importance to councils and communities. Direct comparisons with neighbouring jurisdictions unequivocally confirm that Northern Ireland has still not ideologically “turned the curve” – to use draft PfG terminology - towards local government and local decision taking. That change will require deinstitutionalisation and devolution beyond Stormont, not just an Outcomes Based Approach to a Programme for Government.

2.2 **Incremental Approach:** NILGA, as local government’s representative body, asserts that it would be inappropriate to over analyse or prioritise the 48 indicators and the emerging Delivery Plans since, particularly in the latter case, these must be substantiated with partners, over time, and at this stage all are formative and some have not yet even appeared.

2.3 **Graphical Overview:** NILGA draws attention to **Appendix 1 of its response**, which graphically illustrates the dynamic involvement of councils *now* (per draft PfG direct reference to councils) and *potentially* (through for example, Community Plan delivery and through emergence of as yet unseen Delivery Plans). Appendix 1 demonstrates that the 11 councils in Northern Ireland are **absolutely crucial** in the effective development of the PfG. It is therefore imperative that they are **materially involved as co-designers**, not just as Delivery Partners, in 2017 and beyond.

2.4 **Less is more:** NILGA broadly welcomes the **clustering** of these indicators, the modifications to six indicators including having a Better Jobs Index and the inclusion of the additional six indicators, all resultant from the Framework consultation. NILGA is grateful that many proposals contained in the Framework response have been reflected in the current consultation and refers TEO to Appendix 3 for further suggested inclusions.

2.5 **Fully Align PfG to Community Plans:** The Association welcomes the direct reference in the Draft (page 6) to councils' community plans: *We are encouraged by the considerable interest in particular of local government in aligning community planning with the goals we described in the draft PfG framework.*

2.6 **Commit to Community Plans, Co Design and Co Deliver:**

(i) NILGA calls on TEO from April 2017 to apply a power to enable the **direct delivery of community planning actions and enable pooling of elements of budgets by departments, public bodies and councils**, to facilitate the implementation of community plans and the achievement of agreed outcomes. This is entirely in keeping with the PfG's ethos of partnership, but – as in neighbouring jurisdictions which have local, Single Outcome Agreements at council level – this will demonstrate **partnership in practice**.

(ii) NILGA calls on TEO to ensure that Departments, Committees, Councils and relevant Agencies agree – not centrally create and enforce – appropriate **Performance, Measurement and Accountability measures**. Councils seek proportionate (to their responsibilities and spend) and workable Performance Indicator Frameworks and legislation, together with practical yet accountable audit arrangements for their own services and statutory roles AND for those which materially involve a multiplicity of partners, such as in Community Planning. As such, **Community Planning Performance Indicators should clearly measure all partners, with such measurement being SMART**. Precedent in neighbouring jurisdictions will assist the implementation of such a framework. It is imperative that such arrangements are appropriate otherwise determining whether or not interventions are getting results will be completely compromised. In our view, the most exciting opportunity outcomes based government presents is prioritisation of the impact (effect) of what you are doing above the process (effort) of doing it. Therefore, we need to ensure that we can accurately evaluate when results are not being achieved so that the necessary change is forced to happen.

(iii) NILGA requests that **TEO applies strong measures – including statutory provisions** – to be put in place to ensure **written, statutory, clearly resourced and effectively measured NI Executive and Departmental commitments** to the 11 Community Plans.

2.7 Make the PfG Local and Real: NILGA urges the NI Executive to work with councils and with the Association itself as key Delivery Plan designers and partners. It is vitally important that the NI Executive **fully aligns** the significant roles that councils and local communities have in the future success of Northern Ireland, including Community Plans and the specific ‘asks’ in Appendix 1, **NILGA’s Programme for Local Government (attached)**. Collectively, these will be necessary for the PfG to materially succeed.

2.8 Apply Subsidiarity – the PfG should – enabled by TEO’s Scrutiny Committee in the first instance – apply the principle that a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed at a more local level. This will help to “normalise” Northern Ireland, strengthening democracy and trust in so doing.

2.9 Address Cross-Cutting Issues:

(i) NILGA notes and broadly supports the (evolving) content and performance benchmarks for the (emerging) Delivery Plans for each outcome. There is some risk that old processes will be replaced by new ones, and that this will be seen by some in authority as an achievement.

(ii) With a very mechanistic “pyramidal” work plan coming to fruition, there is real danger of **measurement for measurement’s sake and the creation of new silos**. This is NOT the manner in which important cross-cutting issues can be usefully considered, and requests that TEO defines new protocols to determine greater budget, resource and related flexibility within the NI Executive’s new departments applying **formal fiscal devolution to councils themselves**. NILGA’s work with sister LGAs and regional government in Scotland and Wales can be of assistance in this regard. We reiterate that this is not just programmatic; it will need to be ideological.

2.10 Waste not Want Not: An important illustration of the need for such lithe government is the (i) **circular economy**, which is now referenced specifically in the draft PfG beyond the information given on indicator 36 which deals with household recycling. Other notable examples are (ii) **community resilience** and (iii) **climate change**, which are not sufficiently stressed in the draft PfG document. NILGA refers TEO to and re-iterates its Framework Response for further recommendations on this (*reference: NILGA’s Draft PfG 2016 – 2021 Framework Response, sections 2.2.1 – 2.2.3 pages 3 & 4*).

2.11 Partner of Equals: NILGA therefore requests that local government is fully involved in development of cluster and cross cutting work associated with this draft PfG – as a partner of equals, **with the 9 Departments. This must happen in addition to being invited to** engagement exercises, road shows, implementation events and similar.

2.12 One Public Service, One Public Purse:

(i) NILGA supports the emergence of high level **strategic and operational engagement** between Council Chief Executives and other Senior Officers of Councils, with Permanent Secretaries and other senior Civil Servants. Such meetings should be one means by which 2.11 (above) is realised.

(ii) NILGA requests that the TEO, with SOLACE, develops further engagement with strategic personnel in councils and all SROs, to enable integration, joint design of measurement and performance indicators as well as appropriate, proportionate, audit requirements as befits the draft PFG, the Outcomes Based Approach **and** the present (approximate) **94% - 6%** split between central and local government spend.

(iii) NILGA also asserts that Policy Level recommendations in regard to 2.12 (i) and (ii) should be materially considered at the **Political Partnership Panel from February 2017** and that this is reflected in an **adapted Scrutiny and Work Plan** for the Panel, to ensure joint political oversight, and effective communication and ownership ultimately by both the NI Executive and the 11 sovereign councils.

2.13 **Clarity of the Role of Government at all levels:** NILGA requests TEO, through its Junior Ministers and its Scrutiny Committee, to develop proposals with NILGA for an **All Party Group on Local Government Development**, to ensure not only improved and contemporised roles, challenges and resources for local government within the PfG but, also, to ensure that the corollary occurs in Regional Government also. The underpinning drivers for this All Party Group would include the Programme for Local Government (Appendix 1 attached), the Programme for Government (once approved), ambitions creating budgets - not the other way around – independent (ex NI) , empirical evidence and the principle of subsidiarity. This must be considered as a distinct - yet complementary - initiative to the Partnership Panel. The realisation of this initiative would ultimately be linked to fulfilment of many Outcomes, but notably 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 13.

2.14 **Funding:** NILGA asserts that in relation to funding the PfG, notably as stressed on Page 14 of the Draft PfG, an annual resource budget is being developed due to wider political and fiscal uncertainty. As this is universally undesirable, NILGA believes fundamental changes will be needed to the budget “ownership” in the NI Executive, and re-asserts that (TEO) from April 2017 applies a power to enable the **direct delivery of community planning actions / pooling of elements of budgets by departments, public bodies and councils**, to facilitate the implementation of the PfG, community plans and the achievement of jointly agreed outcomes. This is entirely in keeping with the PFG’s ethos of partnership, but – as in neighbouring jurisdictions which have local, Single Outcome Agreements at council level – this will demonstrate **partnership in practice** amidst fiscal uncertainties.

2.15 Better Measurement:

(i) NILGA asserts that in relation to measurement the PfG should invest – potentially sourcing funding from (e.g.) Cabinet Office – to apply a version of Open Data technology, illustrated by Mapping GM (Greater Manchester) to map through citizen input a region’s infrastructure and to provide a NI-wide tool to understand social and infrastructure needs to support growth and development. This could be done in conjunction with councils in relation to Planning, but would be cross cutting, in regard to the

Transport Network, flood plains, emergency planning, health provision, broadband infrastructure, even tree preservation orders, and more. In this way, the Outcomes Based Approach would be underpinned by integrated regional and local data – contemporary evidence which can (i) map needs and (ii) map investment forecasting. This would be done in conjunction, also, with NISRA & OSNI, and evidence has shown that this ensures greater efficiencies and reduces what may be considered as ineffectual, time consuming Freedom of Information requests.

(ii) NILGA asserts that the final Programme for Government needs to form part of a new Performance Framework for Northern Ireland, similar to ‘Scotland Performs’ and we would strongly encourage the NI Executive to take this next step – materially involving councils, NILGA and the Partnership Panel. **An open, consistent, inclusive, integrated and accountable performance framework can only increase public understanding of and confidence in how Northern Ireland is governed.** There will be clear advantages for a framework of this nature to enable cross-referencing with council performance frameworks, tied into community plans, furthering shared accountability for delivery by all key partner sectors. A mechanism is required for ensuring programmes of work are successful and ideally, to begin to foster bottom-up delivery of real solutions designed in partnership with communities. An overarching, consistent **Regional Performance Framework, related Protocols and Codes of Conduct**, should be established during this Assembly Mandate as a matter of urgency, and should include local government, as part of the “normalisation” of the Public Service.

(iii) NILGA once more asserts (see also 2.5) that performance measurement, key performance indicators and resultant audits should be co-designed and wholly commensurate with the roles of each organisation in, e.g. Rural Partnerships which are housed in councils but not owned by them, and (mindful of their statutory footing), Community Planning / Policing and Community Safety Partnerships.

2.16 **Accountability & Governance:**

(i) Linked to the Draft PfG, a common framework should apply to the Code of Conduct for Councillors and MLAs, as Northern Ireland is at variance with neighbouring jurisdictions and as yet the revised Code of Conduct for Councillors has yet to be consulted upon – essentially rendering local government elected members to be working within a high risk, unproductive climate of uncertainty.

(ii) In consideration of the Framework document, and this Draft Programme for Government consultation, NILGA and many councils expressed concern relating to **how** the aspirational outcomes are to be achieved, and **who / what** will be measured. It was noted that all the outcomes aren’t ‘pure’ Outcome Based Accountability outcomes, and there was a lack of detail in relation as to how and why indicators were selected, as well as the measurement of delivery against these in the shorter to medium term. Fundamental to the effectiveness of Outcomes Based Accountability is that indicators are technically robust, simple to understand and give a high level picture of how those responsible for delivery are doing. Also, NILGA is keen along with councils and SOLACE to establish what involvement councils will have in reporting on their contribution towards Delivery Plans, as direct correlation will often be difficult for councils to demonstrate. We would again highlight the case that local place-based working through community planning will make the council contribution more easily identifiable.

(iii) NILGA and our member councils are keen to work with government to develop the process for implementation of the Draft PfG and seek to materially contribute to the drafting of the Delivery Plans and reporting arrangements, in governance terms linked to the Partnership Panel strategic Scrutiny & Work Plan as per 2.12 above.

(iv) **'Permission to make mistakes'**: It should be necessary for the outcomes and indicators emerging from the councils 11 community planning exercises to reflect those of the Programme for Government. As demonstrated in the early days of similar changes to the Scottish System, optimum design may not be achieved at the start.

2.17 Adapt & Review & Report:

(i) A review mechanism is built into community planning processes. It should be built into PfG processes too. NILGA would strongly recommend to the Executive that they consider developing direct alignment, no later than September – December 2018. This will enable an examination of whether the outcomes, indicators and actions are useful and 'right' for Northern Ireland. The Review should be timed to allow for sufficient progress to have been made and to enable identification of areas which aren't delivering the desired results. It is highly unlikely that we will get such a huge system change completely right first time – if the PfG, in its delivery, is to be as transformational as it purports - and local government is keen to work with the NI Executive and Departments to make any necessary 'tweaks' to the system as the need for these becomes apparent. We need to have a mutual understanding of what 'good' looks like, **so that local government's 11 councils are not required to focus on – nor measure - things they cannot nor should not deliver.**

(ii) NILGA also asserts that a clear **Results Against Targets** piece (of course designed to reflect the OBA approach) is published and distributed, drawn from the Review, during the first half of 2019, ensuring that citizens and ratepayers, not just politicians and public servants, can **gauge progress and participate in change.**

3. Wider Political & Fiscal Environment:

3.1 **Brexit** - NILGA asserts that to achieve key aspects of the Draft PfG, councils here and in other regions of UK are given assurances that any new constitutional settlement is guided by the principle that decisions should be taken at the level closest to the citizen and that councils in NI receive, post 2020, funding to deliver all previously EU supported programmes where there is a clear business, socio – economic impact and rural disadvantage case to do so.

3.2 **Autumn Statement**: Directly linked to all but especially Outcomes 1, 3, 5, 6 & 10, Indicators 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 25, 28, 30, 32, 33, 34 and 40, NILGA asserts that the decision on what to spend the additional £250 million produced for Northern Ireland resulting from the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on should materially involve councils, drawing on regional & sub regional strategic infrastructure development priorities and ensuring optimum local gain for communities right across NI.

3.3 New Burdens Principle: Regarding any aspect of the PfG which materially involves councils taking on further responsibilities, potentially to include in the immediate future road closures for special events and Electoral Offices transfers, NILGA asserts that the New Burdens principle should apply. This should be furthered through the Partnership Panel, during 2017, to avoid the inequitable processes and outcomes of past iterations of reform / programmes for government.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 NILGA is *broadly* satisfied with the 14 outcomes and 48 indicators identified in the Draft PfG and is of the view that they provide sufficient flexibility to enable adaptation & as soon as is practicable a complete alignment with councils Community Plans. We particularly welcome that the first three outcomes are designed to cover the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, environmental and social; and we look forward to working with the NI Executive, Departments and Parties to explore how Northern Ireland can contribute to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals to which the UK and Irish governments are committed.

4.2 We view community planning as 11 locally autonomous but regionally linked PfG foundations for delivery at grass roots community level, where greatest need, greatest deprivation, greatest disconnect often exists. 4.3 Given the statutory role of councils in facilitating community plans, we encourage TEO and government departments to ensure councils are invited right now to co-produce the necessary delivery programmes and performance arrangements emanating from this Draft, with the requisite resources devolved to councils or delivered in council areas by Departments, to ensure high quality public services at affordable costs.

4.4 We also ask TEO and specific Departments to note that, unlike Government Departments, many councils have sought that NILGA confirms that they do not have the fiscal resilience to absorb “transfers of functions” in kind or directly, with little capacity building or resources transferred with them.

4.5 NILGA notes that many outcomes will materially involve local government, whilst others do not, and in this context asserts that local government, because of its unique role and constitution, is a key partner to **achieve all** Outcomes, as *Appendix 2*, the Programme for **Local** Government (attached) illustrates.

4.6 A number of suggestions for alternative wording drawn from member councils and NILGA’s regional associates are offered in *Appendix 3*, to ensure the inclusion of issues which we believe warrant insertion in the priority outcomes for Northern Ireland.

4.7 The 2016 – 2018 phase of the Programme for Government heralds a new era of joined up government in Northern Ireland. There is an opportunity to rewire our public services, grow productive, value added jobs, decrease the reliance on the public sector, sustain the environment and enhance all communities across NI. The 11 councils - if the draft PfG is to be credible and deliver success regardless of measure – need to be trusted, resourced and constitutionally strengthened. NILGA remains fully committed to this strong, democratic outcome as local government’s representative body.

Disclaimer

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INDICATOR SROS				Local Gov Key Delivery Partner	Local Gov Defined Role	Local Gov Defined Role Delivery Plan Link
INDICATORS	NAME	DEPT				
1. Prevalence rate (% of the population who were victims of any Crime Survey crime)	David Lavery	DoJ		Defined	Develop concept of place based approach to tackling crime which promotes collective efficacy and builds upon work of PCSPs and the local community planning process	link
38. Average time taken to complete criminal cases	David Lavery	DoJ		Yes (CP)		
39. Reoffending rate	David Lavery	DoJ		Yes (CP)		
2. Gap between highest and lowest deprivation quintile in healthy life expectancy at birth	Dr Anne Kilgallen	DoH	Grouped	Defined	Co-design, policy direction, funding, service delivery. Community Planning.	link
3. Healthy life expectancy at birth	Dr Anne Kilgallen	DoH				
4. Preventable mortality	Dr Anne Kilgallen	DoH				
7. % of babies born at low birth weight	Dr Anne Kilgallen	DoH				
5. % people who are satisfied with health and social care	Charlotte McArdle	DoH		Yes (CP)		
6. % of population with GHQ12 scores ≥ 4 (signifying possible mental health problem)	Chris Matthews	DoH		Yes (CP)		
9. Number of adults receiving personal care at home or self directed support for personal care, as a % of the total number of adults needing care	Chris Matthews	DoH		Yes (CP)		
10. % care leavers who, aged 19, were in education, training or employment	Eilis McDaniel	DoH		Yes (CP)		
11. % school leavers achieving at Level 2 or above including English and Maths	Dr David Hughes	DE	Grouped	Yes (CP)		
12. Gap between % non-FSME school leavers and % FSME school leavers achieving at Level 2 or above including English and Maths	Dr David Hughes	DE				
13. % of schools found to be good or better	Dr David Hughes	DE				
15. % children who are at the appropriate stage of development in their immediate pre-school year	Cathy Galway	DE		Defined	Support /influence Access to services and resources Planning	Link
8. Number of households in housing stress	Andrew Hamilton	DfC	Grouped	Defined	Local planning authorities making decisions on the zoning of land for housing and on residential planning applications	Link
48. Gap between the number of houses we need, and the number of houses we have	Ian Snowden	DfC				

43. % change in energy security of supply margin	Chris Stewart	DfE				
23. Average journey time on key economic corridors	John McGrath	DfI	Grouped	Defined	Local development plans and development of greenways, car parking	Link
25. % all journeys which are made by walking/cycling/public transport	John McGrath	DfI				
47. Overall Performance Assessment (NI Water)	Fiona McCandless	DfI				
INDICATOR SROs						
INDICATORS	NAME	DEPT				
29. Greenhouse gas emissions	David Small	DAERA		Defined	Support for sustainable transport	Link
36. % household waste that is reused, recycled or composted	David Small	DAERA		Defined	Introduction of new, or improvements to,	Link
37. Annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentration at monitored urban roadside locations	David Small	DAERA		Defined	Assessment of air quality through the Local Air Quality Management scheme.- Drawing up Action Plans to deal with 6 air quality problems. Working with DfI to reduce road traffic and ease congestion in urban centres.- Incorporation of air quality concerns into Local Development Planning and Community Planning	Link
44. % water bodies at 'good' status	David Small	DAERA		Yes (in time)		No detail
45. Biodiversity	David Small	DAERA		Yes (in time)		No detail
26. A Respect Index	Mark Browne	TEO	Grouped	Defined	Lead partner for individual actions within the delivery plan. Responsible for local services and amenities, responsible for local land -use planning and community planning	Link
31. % who think leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres in their areas are "shared and open" to both Protestants and Catholics						
35. % the population who believe their cultural identity is respected by society						
30. Total spend by external visitors	G3	TEO	Grouped	Defined	Support the public and private sectors to attract international institutional investment in infrastructure and regeneration projects with a particular focus on the Middle East and China markets.	Link
40. Nation Brands Index						
46. Usage of online channels to access public services	Paul Wickens	DoF		Yes (in time)		

A PROGRAMME FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT 2016 – 2021 & BEYOND



Strangford Lough



Old Courthouse, Antrim



The Gobbins, Larne

**STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY,
SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES**

nilga
northern ireland
local government association

INTRODUCTION

As the new Programme for Government emerges, it's worth noting that 11 new councils with new powers came into being in April 2015.

These new councils are designed to deliver and challenge for better outcomes for local people - the hub of communities, a partner of equals in government, innovators.

In any contemporary, citizen centred democracy, councils are both a champion of local community needs and an astute forward planner – a key provider to those who need public services today, and a sustainable investment champion for the next generation, wherever we live, work, or visit.

NILGA, the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, wants the Programme for Government during this Assembly mandate to be co-designed and co-delivered by councils, in a manner which sees, over time, greater responsibilities and powers exercised by local government, together with the requisite resources transferred to and deployed by them, to provide world class, affordable services and representation.

This attached Programme for Local Government, driven by substantial, inclusive input from councils themselves and their many partners, provides the means to strengthen democracy and sustain our diverse communities in NI.



Context

Local authorities have a unique chance to work collectively as a sector to improve the governance, economy and quality of public services for our ratepayers and our citizens.

The new Programme for Government has set out the plans and priorities for Northern Ireland as a region for the 2016-2021 Assembly mandate. The Northern Ireland Executive should not ignore the significant role that councils and local communities can play in the future successes of Northern Ireland. Indeed, it is imperative that a strategic alignment is established and maintained between the Executive's Programme for Government and the 11 council Community Plans.



NILGA, in conjunction with the 11 new councils, was tasked with developing a Programme for Local Government 2016 – 2021, setting out why and how the two spheres of government can and should work together, with shared goals and a collective purpose – whilst ensuring that councils quite clearly retain their autonomy.

In September 2015, NILGA issued a consultation on proposals for a Programme for Local Government. A copy of the consultation document and the summary of responses can be accessed from the NILGA website.

Overall, responses to the consultation were very positive and supportive of NILGA's proposals, with the caveats that we take our time, get the evidence-base established and ensure that proper resources will transfer.

The following sections of this document summarise the agreed guiding principles and priorities for local government from 2016 – 2026 (two Assembly mandates).

Guiding Principles

The following Guiding Principles are put forward as the basis for developing a Programme for Local Government:

- **Collaborative working and joint accountability**
The relationship between regional and local government is based on mutual respect and partnership
- **Sustainable finance and investment**
Financial decisions are taken sub-regionally/ locally through a council-led community planning approach
- **Simplified regulation, audit and bureaucracy**
Greater accountability and integration, with more customer-aligned services
- **Community Planning**
Local needs/ identified priorities aligned with government targets
- **Public Sector Improvement**
Two-tier delivery platform for public sector services and their improvement
- **Protection of local democracy**
Political and administrative commitment to the principles of the Charter of Local Self-Government
- **Strengthening local democracy**
Uniting and profiling local government, putting local democracy at the heart of our future
- **Strong councils and councillors**
Both spheres of government to be equal and empowered
- **Hard work with clear intent**
To develop understanding and support for democracy

- **Outward-looking and Innovative**
Building on best practice, solution-focused and responsive, utilising new technology
- **Ensuring probity and good conduct**
Assessing, and when necessary campaigning to improve, the Northern Ireland **Code of Conduct** for Councillors, ensuring simple, effective and universal awareness of/ adherence to the Principles of Public Life underpinning the Code.





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DEVOLUTION OF POWERS

The additional powers that were transferred to local government through the local government reform are, on the whole, welcomed by local government on the basis that they reflect the role of local councils as place-shapers and local leaders within their communities. The presumption therefore should be towards moving more powers to local councils, along with appropriate resources.

NILGA recognises that there needs to be further engagement with the local government sector and other stakeholders to identify those responsibilities which would be of most impact to communities, if transferred.

Furthermore, local government requires a critical review of the functions and new powers transferred to date, particularly within the context of the resource allocation which accompanied them.

Immediate emphasis (2016/17) will be put on securing the transfer of regeneration powers.

In the next Assembly mandate (2016-2021) and beyond, NILGA, in conjunction with the 11 councils, will develop an evidence base (including associated costs) to debate and if appropriate build business cases to transfer the following powers from central to local government:

- **National, European and transnational programmes for investment in infrastructure**
- **Local roads and transport, including planning of local bus and ferry services and on-street car parking**
- **Maintenance of the public realm**
- **Economic development including co-ordinating skills development**
- **The built environment with an enhanced policy and influencing role on housing**
- **Libraries, arts, culture and sport**
- **Environmental services, including conservation of natural and built heritage**
- **Fishery harbours**
- **Other services carried out in partnership with or on behalf of departments and other bodies e.g. certain health promotion and protection functions**



Specific Asks

In the next Assembly mandate (2016 – 2021) and the following mandate (2021 – 2026) NILGA will work with local councils and other stakeholders to build business cases and (depending on the outcome of each business case) subsequently lobby for the following ‘specific asks’:

1. A **power to enable** effective **pooling of budgets** by departments, public bodies and councils to facilitate the implementation of community plans and the achievement of agreed outcomes.
2. To explore **greater fiscal flexibility for councils** – including seeking a commitment from all departments to engage with councils on a sector-wide basis as well as departmental level, using a “New Burdens” approach prior to making financial decisions that have an impact on council budgets.
3. To lobby the Northern Ireland Executive for a **transformation fund** for local government, similar to the transformation fund provided to the outgoing Northern Ireland Executive Departments and to the Health and Social Care Sector.
4. A new **Civil Contingencies Bill**, recognising the local co-ordination role of councils in emergency planning activity; and ring-fencing funding for emergency planning and climate adaptation measures.
5. Commitment from the Department of Finance to work with Treasury to **return ‘ring fenced’ Landfill Tax revenue directly to Northern Ireland councils** for investment in waste management infrastructure.
6. To devolve powers and funding for **skills and employment support** to councils, in partnership with higher education colleges to accompany the devolution of local economic development and regeneration, so that investment decisions can be based directly on what local economies and local businesses need in terms of future and present workforces to create jobs;
7. To give councils in Northern Ireland **traffic management powers** similar to Wales and other regions.
8. To strengthen the leadership, representational and commissioning roles of councillors:
 - by including an elected member from each council on the Board of the new **Education Authority**;
 - ensuring that the Boards of Arms-Length Bodies (e.g. the **Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service, NIHE**) delivering services provided by local government elsewhere, include an appropriate, politically balanced number of councillors.
9. To develop an agreed, **shared**, cross-governmental, outcome-focused **performance management and improvement** system – with a single Code of Conduct - so that we can improve together.
10. To develop a new **Northern Ireland Policy & Investment Forum**, led by a principal department and the Executive Office on behalf of regional government, and co-ordinated through NILGA within local government, to optimise knowledge & investment of Structural & Non-Structural Funds available through the EU & other investors.



CONCLUSION

NILGA has developed this Programme and aims to deliver it through the explicit leadership of councils, government more widely and many of their partners at regional level.

Government must always have an eye on the future despite the relative shortness of mandates. Strengthening democracy and developing sustainable communities are not time bound initiatives; therefore the Association has done its level best to balance aspiration with pragmatism.



Over the next decade, it is imperative that NI's local councils make the case to government and the public that they are not only the hub of local communities, but are a confident, resourced, essential and growing part of sustainable democracy and world-class public service provision, locally, regionally, nationally and beyond. NILGA believes that this will and must happen, for any Programme for Government to be truly citizen-centred.

Disclaimer

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nilga
northern ireland
local government association

Bradford Court, Upper Galwally,
Castlereagh BT8 6RB
T: +44 (0) 28 9079 8972

office@nilga.org

www.nilga.org

Follow us @NI_LGA

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Appendix 3 – NILGA Comments on Outcomes and Indicators

A. Comments on Outcomes

Outcome 1: We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy

NILGA strongly supports the inclusion of this outcome, but would highlight the impact UK policy and legislation can have in this area.

For example, evidence from the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership engagement with NI employers shows that UK immigration regulations vis-a-vis employment of non-EU nationals is undermining Northern Ireland's competitiveness. Tier 2 regulations inhibit Northern Ireland employers from attracting and retaining the workforce they need. Additionally, sector skills councils have highlighted the need for diverse staff with linguistic and cultural skills for successful expansion overseas.

Outcome 2: We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

NILGA would wish to see this outcome strengthened by inserting the words 'and enhancing', i.e. "We live and work sustainably – protecting **and enhancing** the environment".

NILGA would be keen to see a further two bullet points under the 'Role of the Executive' heading, i.e.:

- Promoting a Circular Economy
- Ensuring compliance with statutory obligations

Outcome 3: We have a more equal society

NILGA strongly supports inclusion of this outcome but would highlight that Northern Ireland needs more than equality monitoring, as attention needs to be on identifying where positive action is needed at national level as well as within organisations.

Outcome 4: We enjoy long healthy lives

NILGA strongly supports this outcome, and notes in particular the identified role of the Executive in providing children with the best start in life, supporting parents in their role. NILGA members are keen to see some thought given as to how the end of life experience is to be improved e.g. through improved hospice provision.

We would highlight that the UK Immigration Act will have an impact on the ability of Northern Ireland to achieve this outcome, given the changes in support for children of refused asylum seekers.

Outcome 5: We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential

NILGA welcomes outcome 5 and notes the link between the creation of a confident and innovative workforce/community, and the development of a cultural and societal 'permission to make mistakes'. There is a role for the Executive, for government departments and for councils to encourage the community and the workforce to be bold, less risk averse, and to encourage the media to be supportive of the drive to try new things.

NILGA would be keen to see a further bullet point under the 'Role of the Executive' heading, i.e.: "Promoting innovative use of resources, ensuring that government as a whole is entrepreneurial in its approach, for example within the circular economy."

Outcome 6: We have more people working in better jobs

NILGA welcomes this Outcome, welcomes the reference to local government, and seeks that enterprise support agencies, large company private sector resources, small businesses and social economy bodies work with municipal entrepreneurs (councils) and government innovators, utilising existing (rather than creating new, resource sapping) bodies such as the NI Entrepreneurial Leadership Group (formative, suggest that it is chaired by the Economy Minister).

NILGA again notes that attracting the best international talent to Northern Ireland will be made more difficult with the UK Tier 2 immigration rules - Northern Ireland employers find it difficult to compete with those in regions which can offer higher salaries.

Outcome 7: We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other

We ask that the PFG 2016-2012 Outcome 7 be modified by inserting the words 'and resilient', i.e. "We have a safe, **resilient** community where we respect the law, and each other.

NILGA is firmly of the view that community confidence happens at local level, and there is a fundamental role for councils and Policing and Community Safety Partnerships in contributing to achieving this outcome.

The NI crime survey can be used to track changes in confidence, but it would be helpful to incorporate the Racial Equality Strategy ethnic monitoring strand into the survey. The PCSP joint committee can provide guidance on how to monitor and assess progress in relation to migrant and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.

Outcome 9: We are a shared society that respects diversity

NILGA would encourage the Executive to include 'nationality' in the list of aspects of identity in the supporting information for outcome 9, as this is not always included in information on ethnic group. We would also encourage the use of the same strong wording that is used for outcome 3, i.e. the Executive role should be "actively promoting" rather than "acknowledging" diversity.

Outcome 10: We are a confident, welcoming, outward-looking society

NILGA would again highlight for Outcome 10 and also for Outcome 12, the limitations posed on Northern Ireland by UK immigration legislation and policy, which we believe undermines these objectives, and makes it more difficult to build our place on the international stage. Serious consideration will need to be given by the NI Executive as to how it can respond to Westminster legislation on this and other areas. Some of the rules that are introduced in Westminster as primary legislation are relegated to secondary legislation in Northern Ireland, which limits the opportunity for robust devolved debate.

Outcome 11: We have High Quality Public Services

NILGA suggests that the PfG 2016-2021 Outcome 11 be modified by inserting the words 'and resilient', i.e. "We have high quality **and resilient** public services". We would therefore also propose that the NI Executive requires preparation of adequately resourced Emergency Planning legislation appropriate to the Northern Ireland context, at an early stage within the 2016-2021 Assembly mandate.

Outcome 12: We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest

The explanatory text within the PfG should reference the importance of the role of the Executive in relation to:

- Reducing the risk of flooding; and coastal adaptation
- Providing increased water and wastewater capacity to allow new connections

Outcome 13: We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure

NILGA would be keen to see reference to **waste infrastructure** widened in the supporting text for this outcome, to include specific reference to infrastructure for recovery of energy from waste.

NILGA is conscious that energy from waste is a sensitive issue, and we recognise that some technologies are less accepted by local communities than others. It is the case however, that Northern Ireland requires significant provision of infrastructure if we are to divert our waste from landfill, and particularly illegal landfill. The NI Executive and councils will need to work together to develop appropriate technology and sites to ensure Northern Ireland future-proofs our approach to the Circular Economy. NILGA reasserts its six main policy points in this regard:

1. Minimise municipal waste.
2. Achieve the 2020 target of recycling 50% of household waste and prepare to contribute to meet a 65% municipal waste recycling target by 2030.
3. Maximise recovery and use of energy from residual waste in Northern Ireland.
4. Ensure provision of sufficient landfill capacity in Northern Ireland.
5. Develop a new delivery model to manage Northern Ireland's municipal waste.

6. Create a new procurement strategy to deliver outcomes 1-4.

Under this outcome we would also suggest adding, as a further role for the Executive “Improve regional balance of economic prosperity in peripheral areas with low / limited GVA growth potential”.

Outcome 14: We give our children and young people the best start in life

NILGA would highlight that given the increasing percentage of our children who are from migrant and BME backgrounds, it is essential to ensure in the indicators for Outcome 14 that actions also meet their needs, particularly Indicator 12, which is a pressing issue for communities with a high number of migrants.

B. Indicators

B.1 There are some concerns within local government in relation to how the indicators identified in the Framework Document have been tested, and questions as to whether some are the right indicators, given the evidence already available to government through existing data collection systems. There is also concern in relation to the lack of ‘depth’ of indicators and the fact that use of secondary indicators has not been maximised. Again, we need to establish ‘what good looks like’, and there is some concern that there are no indicators related to issues on which Northern Ireland is currently performing well, leading to a less than rounded picture being painted.

Although the indicators are necessarily population wide, it is the view of local government that a (complementary) breakdown of these indicators by local government district will give a better picture of local priorities, emphasising the importance of alignment between council evidence bases, plans and performance management and that of the NI Executive. The breakdown of employment rate by council area given at indicator 34 is therefore welcomed. A more localised approach to the application of the policy direction established by the Framework Document should also ensure rural considerations are addressed, with councils and other sectors working in partnership with government departments, particularly DAERA. A two tier approach to driving local economies and the regional NI economy, as previously mentioned, would also contribute to a number of identified outcomes of the draft PFG.

B.2 Gaps identified in the list of indicators

NILGA is concerned that a number of issues have not been included in the list of indicators, although it acknowledges that the list of indicators shouldn’t become too unwieldy. Given the challenges faced by our society we would particularly like to see indicators strengthened / included relating to:

- Reduction of incidence of obesity
- Increased physical activity
- Adaptation to and mitigation of climate change
- Protection of built heritage and reduction in dereliction
- Continued Public Sector Reform and Private Sector / Social Economy Growth

Suggested additional Indicators

Under Outcome 3 & 9: We suggest that migrant population and migrant economic activity (labour market and SME) be measured.

Under Outcome 11: We suggest creating a new indicator relating to resilience, e.g. “% of central and local government organisations that have a resilience strategy and action plan”.

Under Outcome 12: We suggest creating two new indicators relating to:

- Flooding, such as number of properties assessed to be within the extent of land at risk of flooded from the sea or due to pluvial or fluvial flooding
- The wastewater capacity, area of NI served by wastewater treatment works which have limited or zero capacity to allow new connections.

B.3 Suggested adaptations of existing indicators

NILGA asserts that, subsequent to 2nd December 2016, and during the formal consultations regarding the Economic, Social and Investment Strategies, councils and bodies including NILGA and the Partnership Panel are utilised to enable local government to further clarify, adapt and respond to indicator through their programmes of work, particularly where there is commonality (e.g. Education Indicators 11,12,13). It does however make the following suggestions at this stage.

Indicator 1: Reduce Crime

NILGA is of the view that the content of Indicator 1 is problematic, in that prevalence rate – measuring the number of victims of any crime, is subject to high levels of variability. It is possible for one crime to affect thousands of people, which in our view would skew the overall picture. We would suggest that a better indicator would be numbers of crimes occurring.

Indicators 12-17

NILGA asserts that these inter-dependent indicators need to explicitly reference the need for redesigning our Economic and Skills Development interventions, producing an Enterprise Menu which is less confusing, less grant aided, and less “inter agency competitive”, and include the provision of teaching entrepreneurial skills (using entrepreneurs themselves) linked to the curriculum as early as Primary School through to Third level College / University years.

NILGA is also of the view that performance measures for schools should be broader than just academic results and would urge the inclusion of wellbeing indicators for schools which promote the importance of pastoral care alongside academic results. It is widely evidenced that those children from social deprived backgrounds, that against the odds do well at school, a common thread identified in such cases is that someone cared about them and where this is absent within the home setting should be picked up on through an effective pastoral care approach.

Indicator 18: Increase the proportion of people working in good jobs

The suggested Better Jobs Index – noting the name change from Good Jobs - is problematic unless it is an independently (ex NI) verified Index with clear agreed, qualitative and quantifiable elements put in place, particularly in regard to affirming the need to proportionately increase private sector and social economy jobs in NI, dispersed throughout the 11 council areas, with “better” meaning more than salaries and high end jobs, since in many parts of NI a “better” job is one which enables work life balance, social and community cohesion, reduced travel to work, locality based, etcetera.

Indicator 20: Private Sector NICEI (Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index)

The lead measure is problematic unless there is an independently verified (ex NI) formula with clear agreed, qualitative and quantifiable measures put in place, particularly in regard to affirming the need to proportionately increase private sector and social economy jobs in NI, dispersed equitably throughout the 11 council areas as far as reasonably possible, and to set ambitious targets for enabling social economy, third sector and private sector bodies to deliver public sector contracts and services.

Indicator 24: Proportion of premises with access to broadband services at speeds at or above 30 Mbps

It is noted that the lead measure under this indicator relates to ‘premises’ which would seem to limit consideration of this indicator to business premises. Given the increase in the home working culture, and the desirability of growing the digital economy in Northern Ireland, which is particularly free from the need for physical premises, NILGA would advocate that the next step for the Executive in supporting the Next Generation Broadband project would be expanding on the “**Fibre to the Cabinet**” by implementing the “**Fibre to the Home**” model. NILGA acknowledges that provision of fibre to the home is more expensive, but the Association is of the view that this is a means of future proofing the necessary infrastructure in Northern Ireland, and will vastly improve future take-up of government and private sector digital service delivery. It will also aid decentralisation – crucial to the sustainability of many non metropolitan areas of NI.

We note that Fibre to the Home (FTTH) has been championed in Europe as the preferred option capable of delivering Superfast Broadband (a minimum of 30Mbps). Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) model is not promoted as an answer to rural broadband issues as it was not seen as a solution to future proofing.

Indicator 31: % who think leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres in their areas are "shared and open" to both Protestants and Catholics

NILGA firmly recommends that the measure is reworded and includes S75 groups and does not specifically list ‘Protestant and Catholics’.

Indicator 32: Employment rate of 16-64 year olds by deprivation quintile

It is noted that the measure under this indicator identifies deprived communities by place only. Although some S75 groups are the subject of discrete indicators, this is not the case for BME groups.

Indicator 36: Increase Household Recycling

NILGA supports our member councils in the drive to increased household recycling levels; however we are of the view that this indicator and the measures supporting it require more attention. It will be vital, particularly on the basis of recent information made available by Strategic Investment Board that in addition to consideration of recycling, the NI Executive fully considers the impact of waste crime in Northern Ireland, and also the potential benefits to our society of the circular economy. NILGA would therefore strongly suggest that consideration be given to measures relating to a wider consideration of the waste hierarchy and the circular economy.

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Subject:	Capital Programme Update
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Programme Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The Council's Capital Programme is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new Council facilities.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - note the contents of this report and the major achievements delivered under the Capital Programme over the past couple of months which has seen over £50million of projects completed across the city - note the Property & Projects Department is happy to arrange site visits for Members/ Party Groups to any capital programme project and in particular would advise Members to visit the new accommodation at 9 Adelaide, the new Olympia Leisure Centre and the Connswater Community Greenway <p>Project Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - note that the Council is progressing with Phase 4 of the Alleygating Programming and as part of this the supporting process of consultation is underway. The Council is aware that areas in the former Lisburn and Castlereagh areas were not part of the previous alleygating phases and is therefore looking at these areas to assess provision and it is recommended that consultation is undertaken in these areas as part of the process

	<p>which will allow these gates to quickly progress if future funding is received (either Council or other funding). Members are asked to note at this stage there is no budget for a future alley gating programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leisure Programme – agree to the demolition of the Clonduff Community Centre in line with the demolition works at Robinson given the reasons outlined in 3.2 below. Members are asked to note that officers will immediately progress discussions with the local community groups and Elected Members to ascertain the temporary provision that may be required to be put in place in the interim until the construction of the new centre.
<p>3.0</p> <p>3.1</p>	<p>Main report</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Council’s rolling Capital Programme is a significant programme with over £185m of projects recently completed or currently underway. Members will be aware that when projects are completed they transfer from the Property & Projects Department to the relevant client Department (City & Neighbourhoods or Development) under the stewardship of the People and Communities and City & Growth Committees as appropriate. It is the role of the client department and the relevant standing Committee to manage the assets once completed.</p> <p>Members are asked to note that over £50million of projects have either been completed in the past two months or are currently in the final stages of completion. This is a major achievement in terms of delivery and in terms of staff performance.</p> <p><i>Projects recently completed/in final stages of completion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Council accommodation</i> – the new 9 Adelaide building, which will provide accommodation for over 800 officers, was officially handed over to the Council (Property & Projects Department) on 28th November. This development is significant as it is the first purpose built Grade A accommodation in the city centre since the economic downturn and is a significant sign of the Council’s confidence in and commitment to the city centre soon to be followed by the All State building at Maysfield which the Department also facilitated. The £20m plus new build was delivered ahead of programme and within budget and Members are asked to note that the project itself took just under two and a half years from start to finish which is an achievement in itself for a building of this scale. The first staff from Development moved into the building on the 9th December with Planning, Property & Projects, Reprographics, HR and Legal services to follow in the coming months. The decants will be completed by March. Further Public Realm works on the adjacent footpaths are planned for the new year.

- **Olympia Leisure Centre** – the new Olympia, which is the first of our new redeveloped facilities under the £105m leisure transformation programme, was handed over to GLL who will operate this under the Better brand on the 28th November. Testing of the building is currently underway with a soft opening at the start of January. The new building will be officially opened on the 24th January and further details on the opening will be provided to Members in due course. The new centre is the most modern and advanced leisure facility in Northern Ireland and has some new and innovative technologies. Facilities in the new centre, which adjoins the National Football Stadium at Windsor Park, include

- a 25m pool and teaching pool
- 120 station gym
- 4 court sports hall
- a luxurious day spa
- state of the art exercise studios
- multi purpose rooms
- coffee corner

£2.75m was provided by the Department for Communities as part of the NI Executive's Stadium Redevelopment Programme. The new centre is only the first phase of the £21.75million Olympia Sports Village development and in the New Year we will be demolishing the old leisure centre, creating an exciting new boulevard entrance, a new playground and additional outdoor sports pitches

- **Connswater Community Greenway** – on 22nd November the new CS Lewis Square, part of the £40m Connswater Community Greenway project, was opened. The Square, which has space for over 2000 people is the first dedicated outdoor space for activities and events. On the evening seven new sculptures were unveiled based on the characters from the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. The Square, which have been very popular with tourists and locals since its opening, will be open 24/7 and well-lit. The Connswater project is now in its final stages with seasonal planting to be finished off in the Spring.
- **North Foreshore** – Works on the ERDF funded project were completed at the end of October. Work on the Film Studio is nearing completion and is due to be opened in the New Year. Work is continuing on the infrastructure required for the development sites. A leisure development brief for the north end of the site being put out to the market.
- **New pavilion at Musgrave and pitch upgrades** – part of the £15m Pitches Programme, the new changing pavilion and upgrade to the pitch has recently been

completed. With the handover of this to the City & Neighbourhoods Departments this means that 8 out of the 10 projects under the pitches strategy have been completed with new facilities open at

- Musgrave – new pavilion and pitch upgrades
- Cliftonville – New 3G pitch, pavilion, floodlights, new fencing
- Woodlands – New 3G pitch, pavilion, floodlights, new fencing and car park facilities
- Ormeau – New pitch, floodlights and new fencing
- Victoria – New pavilion
- Dixon – New pavilion
- Ballysillan – New pavilion
- Waterworks – New pavilion

Works at Falls Park are due to commence in the New Year and a planning determination for the new pitch and pavilion at Cherryvale is expected next year. In addition works are due to commence in the New Year on the new pavilion at Sally Gardens to compliment the pitch which was completed earlier this year.

- **MUGA at Springfield Avenue** - handed over to the City & Neighbourhoods Department w/c 17th October. This has transformed a previously derelict area of land and a former anti-social behavior hot-spot into a new community facility
- **Phase 1 - Whiterock Community Corridor Phase 1** – handed over to the City & Neighbourhoods Department on the 16th November. Phase 1, which included the development of a new playground and MUGA, together with the LIF funded project at Glor NaMona on the other side has transformed what was derelict and underused land at the front entrance of the site. In total there has been a Council investment in the area of nearly £1m. Phase 2 of the Whiterock project – the completion of the road to serve the new Falls Park pitch will commence in January along with a piece of public art.

Project Updates

3.2 **Leisure Programme – Clonduff Community Centre** – Members will be aware that the Council is proceeding with the demolition works at the Robinson Centre in anticipation of going on ground with the new centre next Summer (subject to the outcome of planning). The contractors are currently mobilising on the site with demolition works due to begin in January. There are a number of reasons why it proposed that the demolition works at Clonduff are progressed in line with this

1. An overall cleared site will be better for the build programme of the new centre

rather than trying to build around an existing facility – this will facilitate the quicker development of the new facility

2. Members will be aware that asbestos has been discovered in the Robinson Centre and that a key part of the demolition contract is the removal of this. Members will be aware that issues may arise when asbestos is disturbed and therefore given the adjacencies and the arising health & safety implications it would be better to clear the overall site
3. Invasive species have been discovered on areas of the site adjacent to the Clonduff Centre which will need to be cleared
4. Demolishing the two centres under the one contract will also represent better value for the money for the Council

Approval is therefore sought from the Committee to proceed with the demolition of the Clonduff Community Centre in line with the demolition of the existing Robinson Centre. Members will be aware that the current Clonduff Community Centre is still operational and that officers will work with the local Elected representative and community groups to ascertain the temporary provision that may be required to be put in place in the interim until the construction of the new centre.

3.3 **Alleygates** – Members will be aware that Phase 4 of the Alleygating programme is currently underway and as part of this the supporting process of consultation is underway. The Council is aware that areas in the former Lisburn and Castlereagh areas were not part of the previous alleygating phases and is therefore looking at these areas to ascertain if any alleygating provision is required. It is recommended that this is undertaken as part of this process which will allow these gates to progress if future funding is received. Members are asked to note at this stage there is no budget for a future alley gating programme

3.4 Financial & Resource Implications

Financial – The capital programme is a rolling programme of investment

Resources – Ongoing resources in terms of project operation

3.5 Equality or Good Relations Implications

All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process

4.0 Appendices – Documents Attached

4.1 Appendix 1 – Photos of Capital Programme projects

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Appendix 1 - December 2016 SP&R Report – Capital Programme Update – Photos
Council Accommodation - completed













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SKIPPER STREET - BEFORE









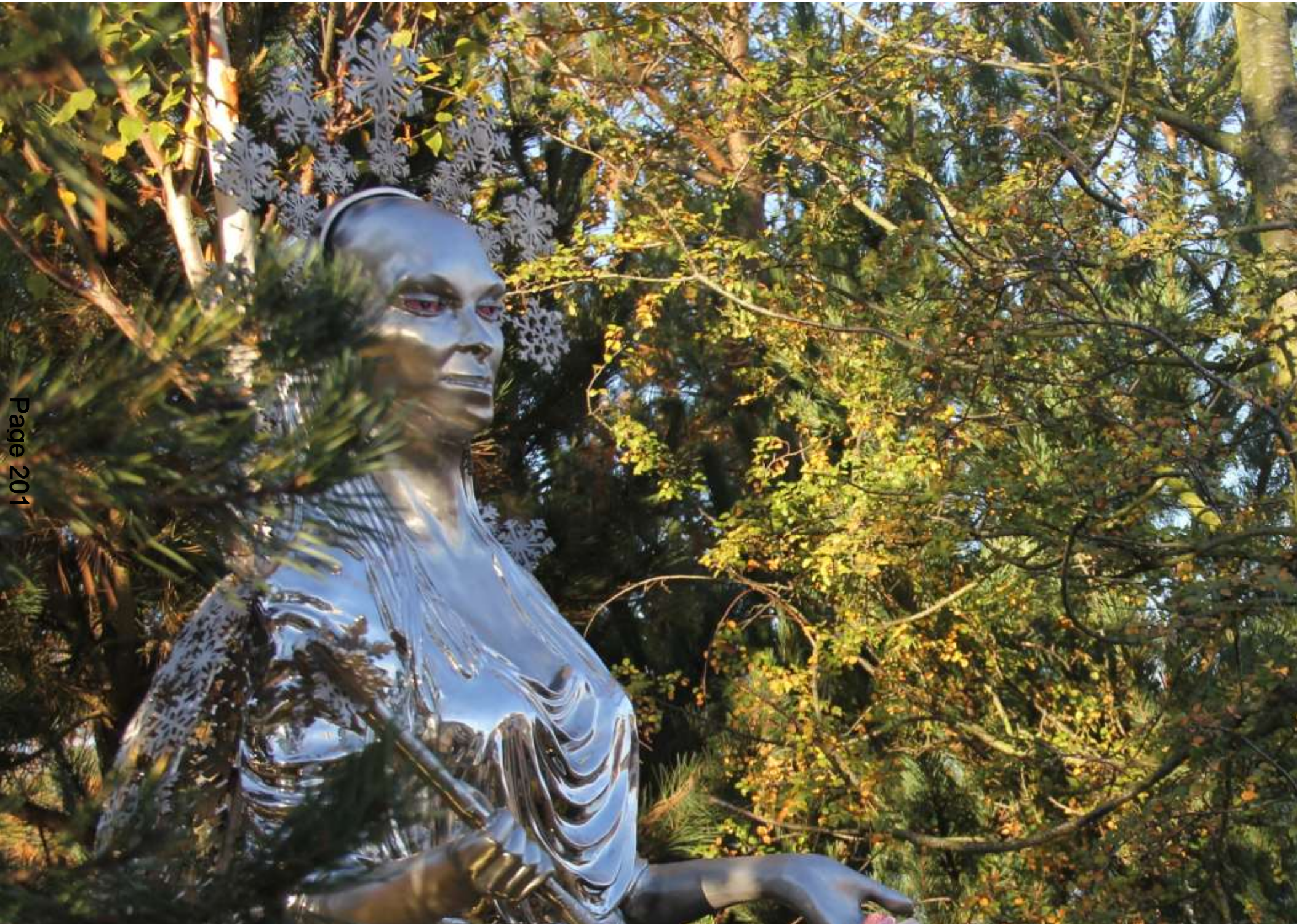


Connswater Community Greenway – CS Lewis Square









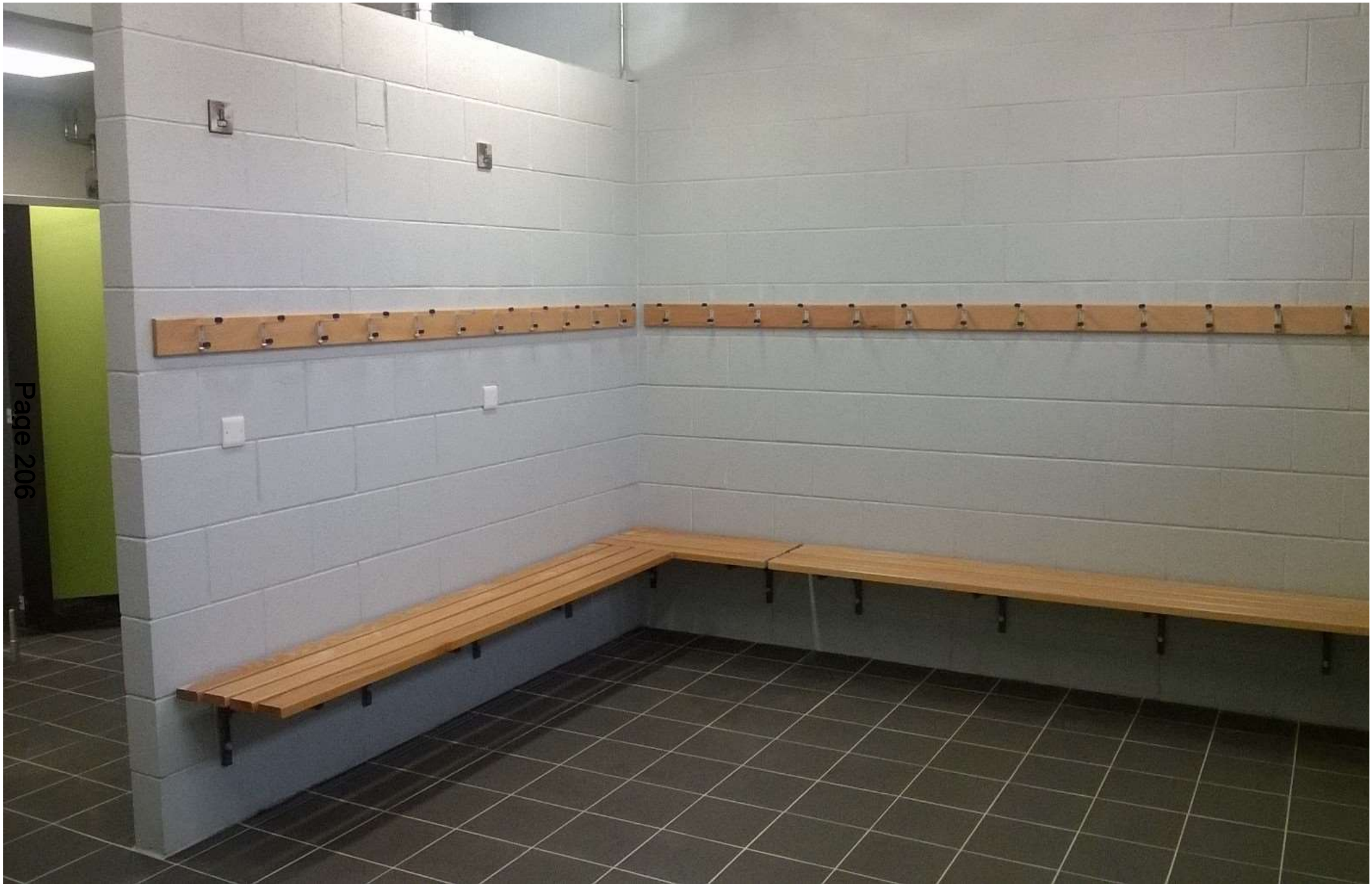


Musgrave – New pavilion











Whiterock Community Corridor











Subject:	Area Working Update
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	Sinead Grimes; Programme Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To update Members on a number of area related issues for Members consideration.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to;</p> <p>AWG minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve the most recent round AWG Minutes (<i>South – 28th November and West – 24th November</i>) as attached at Appendix 1. Members are asked to note that the North and East AWG held their meetings on Thursday 8th December – the minutes for these are not yet available however the relevant decisions in regard to LIF/BIF from the meetings are included within this report. <p>Local Investment Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree the recommendations from the West and East AWGs in relation to LIF funding (Section 3.2 – 3.3). note the additional projects which have been scored (Section 3.4) which have met the minimum threshold and agree that these are progressed to due-diligence (Appendix 2) <p>Belfast Investment Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree the recommendations from the East AWG in relation to BIF funding (Section 3.5)

3.0	Main report																					
3.1	<p><u>KEY ISSUES</u></p> <p>AREA WORKING GROUP UPDATES</p> <p>Members agreed in June that the Area Working Group minutes would be taken into the SP&R Committee for approval going forward in line with the Council’s commitment to openness and transparency and to ensure a consistency in approach to the other Member-led Working Groups. Members are asked to approve the most recent round AWG Minutes (<i>South – 28th November and West – 24th November</i>) as attached at Appendix 1. Members are asked to note that the North and East AWGs held their meetings on Thursday 8th December – the minutes for this are not yet available however the relevant funding decisions from the meetings are included within this report.</p> <p>LOCAL INVESTMENT FUND UPDATE</p> <p>WEST AWG - The West AWG at its meeting on 24th November, made the following recommendations for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their LIF subject to the required criteria being met.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ref No</th> <th>Project</th> <th>Recommendation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>WLIF2-13</td> <td>Sliabh Dubh Playground</td> <td>To be withdrawn from the LIF programme (£70,000)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WLIF2-06</td> <td>Lamh Dhearg GAC</td> <td>Additional £15,000 (reallocation from WLIF2-13) – overall in principle allocation of £60,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WLIF2-14</td> <td>MMA Regional Centre of Excellence</td> <td>Additional £30,000 (reallocation from WLIF2-13) – overall in principle allocation of £70,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WLIF2-23</td> <td>Blackie River Community Group</td> <td>£25,000 (reallocation from WLIF2-13) – New LIF proposal</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>EAST AWG - The East AWG at its meeting on 8th December, made the following recommendations for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their LIF</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ref No</th> <th>Project</th> <th>Recommendation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ELIF2-20</td> <td>Tullycarnet Community Support Service</td> <td>To be withdrawn from the LIF programme (£58,411)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The East AWG agreed that officers engage with a number of other projects which had been proposed in order to assess them for their feasibility with further details to be brought back to a future meeting.</p> <p>Projects recommended to proceed to due-diligence</p> <p>Members are asked to note that 4 LIF2 projects which had previously been agreed for in principle funding (<i>SLIF064 – Taughmonagh Community Forum; NLIF2-13 – Intercomm; NLIF2-14 – Star Neighbourhood Centre and WLIF2-22–Farset International</i>) have now been scored by officers</p>	Ref No	Project	Recommendation	WLIF2-13	Sliabh Dubh Playground	To be withdrawn from the LIF programme (£70,000)	WLIF2-06	Lamh Dhearg GAC	Additional £15,000 (reallocation from WLIF2-13) – overall in principle allocation of £60,000	WLIF2-14	MMA Regional Centre of Excellence	Additional £30,000 (reallocation from WLIF2-13) – overall in principle allocation of £70,000	WLIF2-23	Blackie River Community Group	£25,000 (reallocation from WLIF2-13) – New LIF proposal	Ref No	Project	Recommendation	ELIF2-20	Tullycarnet Community Support Service	To be withdrawn from the LIF programme (£58,411)
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ELIF2-20	Tullycarnet Community Support Service	To be withdrawn from the LIF programme (£58,411)																				

(see Appendix 2) and have successfully met the minimum threshold. It is recommended that these projects now proceed to the Due Diligence stage of the LIF process

3.5 BELFAST INVESTMENT FUND

EAST AWG - The East AWG at its meeting on 8th December, made the following recommendations for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their BIF

Ref No	Project	Recommendation
BIF28	Lagan Village Youth and Community Group	Move to Stage 2 – Uncommitted. Currently Stage 1

3.6 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- Financial – £5m has been allocated to LIF 1 and £4m has been allocated to LIF2. A summary of the current position across the LIF programme is attached below for Members

Local Investment Fund 1

Area	Project Details	Status
North £1,127,500	25 projects approved in principle - £1,127,500 in total Remaining allocation - £0	15 completed - £611,128 1 project on the ground - £50,000 4 at tender preparation stage - £137,000 5 not yet through due-diligence - £329,372
South £1,127,500	13 projects approved in principle - £1,083,600 Remaining allocation - £43,900	7 completed - £639,641 2 projects on the ground - £190,000 2 at tender preparation stage - £153,959 2 not yet through due-diligence - £100,000
East £1,127,500	8 projects approved in principle - £1,127,500 Remaining allocation - £0	6 completed - £627,500 1 project on the ground - £250,000 1 not yet through due-diligence - £250,000
West £1,127,500	17 projects approved in principle - £1,127,500 Remaining allocation - £0	15 completed - £1,057,500 2 projects on the ground - £70,000
Shankill £490,000	8 projects approved in principle - £490,000 Remaining allocation - £0	7 completed - £382,680 1 project on the ground - £107,320

Local Investment Fund 2

Area	Project Details	Status
North £800,000	14 projects identified - £694,867 Remaining allocation - £105,133 3 projects under consideration	1 project on the ground - £100,000 4 at tender preparation stage - £118,200 9 not yet through due-diligence - £476,667
South £800,000	12 projects identified - £796,000 Remaining allocation - £4,000	1 completed - £75,000 1 project on the ground - £90,000 8 at tender preparation stage - £511,000 2 not yet through due-diligence - £120,000
East £1,200,000	13 projects identified - £1,200,000 Remaining allocation - £0	1 project on the ground - £208,300 5 at tender preparation stage - £679,069 7 not yet through due-diligence - £312,631

	West £1,200,000	19 projects identified - £1,200,000 Remaining allocation - £0	2 completed - £325,000 1 project on the ground - £60,000 5 at tender preparation stage - £366,000 11 not yet through due-diligence - £449,000
3.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource - Officers time to deliver projects. <u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> LIF has been equality screened.		
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached		
4.1	Appendix 1 – Minutes of the Area Working Groups (<i>South – 28th November and West – 24th November</i>) Appendix 2 – LIF RAG status		

West Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 24th November, 2016

MEETING OF WEST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

- Members present: Councillor Magennis (Chairperson); and Councillors, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Carson, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Heading, Hutchinson, McConville, O'Hara and Walsh.
- In attendance: Mr. D. Rogan, Head of Contracts;
Mr. G. Millar, Director Property and Projects;
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services;
Ms. N. Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development;
Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;
Mr. G. Dickson, Policy and Performance Analyst; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Attwood, Bunting, Groves and McVeigh.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 27th October, 9th and 15th November were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor O'Hara declared an interest in respect of agenda item 6, viz., Update on Local Investment Fund, as a volunteer at Saints Youth Club; and
- Councillor Beattie declared an interest in respect of agenda item 6, viz., Update on Local Investment Fund, as an employee of Blackie River Community Group

Update on Local Investment Fund

The Director of Property and Projects provided an update on the status of those projects which had yet to be completed under LIF1, together with those which had been approved recently for funding under LIF2.

He reported that, through the original LIF1 allocation, Members of the former West and Shankill AWGs had supported 24 projects, to date, through the full allocation of £1,617,500. Of the 24 projects, 21 projects (totalling over £1.1 million of LIF investment) had been completed and the remaining 3 were all at delivery stage.

He continued that, when the second phase of the LIF had been agreed, £1,200,000 was allocated to the West AWG. To date, a total of 17 new projects had been agreed for in principle support, as well as additional support to two LIF 1 projects. Of the

17 projects, seven had passed due diligence and two were at the pre-construction stage and one project had been completed.

The Working Group were advised that the funding of £70,000 for the Sliabh Dubh proposal was no longer required as alternative funding had been granted to the project.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Corr, seconded by Councillor Carson and agreed that the £70,000 funding would be reallocated to the undernoted projects and recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for financial support under LIF2, subject to the required criteria being met:

- an additional £30,000 to the MMA Regional Centre of Excellence (Whiterock);
- £25,000 to the Blackie River Community Group; and
- an additional £15,000 to the Lamh Dhearg GAC

The Director of Property and Projects concluded by drawing the Members' attention to the list of all 41 projects which highlighted the projects where there had been significant progress.

Outstanding Actions – Decision Tracker

The Director of Property and Projects tabled a Decision Tracker document and explained that the document encompassed actions agreed from each of the items of the last meeting to provide feedback and a status update of any outstanding actions. He explained that he would continue to provide such an update, if the Working Group agreed to that approach.

He provided the Working Group of a brief overview of actions from the last meeting held on 27th October.

The working group noted the information which had been provided and agreed that this approach would form a standing item on the agenda of future meetings.

Presentation – City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy

The Director of City Centre Development provided the Working Group with a verbal update on the progress of the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy with particular emphasis on the Western Quarter which comprises the southern section of Inner West between Castle Court and Wellington Place.

She advised that as the Members would be already aware, there were ongoing issues in terms of dilapidation and dereliction, with the areas worst affected located at the western end of Castle Street. In addition, anti-social behaviour had been an ongoing issue in the area over a number of years. She detailed that the Council had been working closely with the City and Neighbourhood Services Department and the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership to try and address some of these ongoing issues. The Council and Belfast City Centre Management staff and officers from the PSNI had also recently attended meetings with the Castle Street Traders to address complaints around street cleanliness and the management of anti-social behaviour and she outlined a number of specific actions that had been agreed.

The Working Group noted the significant redevelopment proposals being brought forward by private developers and the Council's intention to develop an approach to the city centre animation across the whole of the city centre area.

Presentation – Department of Justice: Interfaces

(Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager, attended the Working Group in connection with this item.)

The Chairperson welcomed Mrs. B. McAtamney, Mr. J. Chittick and Mr. K. Boyce to the meeting, representing the Department of Justice.

Mrs. McAtamney thanked the Working Group for the opportunity to present. She reported that the Government had a number of strategic commitments to reduce and remove interface barriers and she detailed these as follows:

- Community Safety Strategy 2012 – 2017 (to seek agreement with local communities to reduce the number of interface structures);
- Executive Together Building a United Community Strategy (TBUC) (to create a 10 year programme to reduce, and remove by 2023, all interface barriers and create a support package); and
- Fresh Start (to contribute to the conditions that would allow the removal of peace walls and the creation of a shared future through delivery of confidence and relationship building measures).

Mrs. McAtamney reported that TBUC was the only commitment where a target had been set.

The representative proceeded to outline the Department of Justice objectives and principles along with the challenges that it faced in delivering these, which included economic, political, social and technical challenges. She stated that it had already been recognised that cross-departmental and joint statutory body working would be necessary in order to address the challenges and help create the conditions in order to enable the removal of the interfaces.

Mrs. McAtamney concluded the presentation by outlining the work to date, including that specific to West Belfast. The Working Group noted that in West Belfast, there were currently 18 structures of which partial removal had been achieved for two.

The representatives addressed a number of questions following which they left the meeting.

The Good Relations Manager provided an update regarding information on interfaces in West Belfast and advised that the Department of Justice would be opening a funding stream for programmes in early 2017 concerning barrier removal.

She explained the programme of work that was currently taking place regarding interface sites and informed the group of the various programmes already in existence across Belfast.

She asked the Group to consider which interface sites they would like to prioritise for funding in West Belfast and ideas for programming. She highlighted the following areas for consideration: Lower Falls/Shankill cluster which includes Northumberland Street, Townsend Street and North Howard Street; Carnanmore Park/Glen River Park (Suffolk); Springmartin Road and welcomed Members' feedback.

The Working Group agreed 'in principle' the potential sites and noted that further update reports would be submitted in due course.

Presentation – Casement Park and Belfast Rapid Transport

The Director of Property and Projects reported that as agreed at the last meeting representatives from Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) and Casement Park were in attendance to discuss the developments at Andersonstown in conjunction with the new Andersonstown Leisure Centre proposal.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. Ciaran de Burca (Project Director, Belfast Rapid Transit) and Mr. Rory Miskelly (Casement Park Project Director) to the meeting.

The Working Group were provided with an overview of the three projects, which included the common issues across these projects such as car parking, minimising the disruption to local residents and businesses both during the construction phase and once completed and the overall opportunities for wider regeneration of the area.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for attending and the Working Group and agreed that a report would be submitted to a future meeting on the potential collaboration and partnership arrangements that could be established between the Council, BRT and Casement Park.

Date of Next Meetings

The Working Group agreed to cancel the December meeting which was scheduled to be held on Thursday, 22nd December and they also approved the following schedule of meetings and agreed that it would meet at 4.30 p.m. on those dates:

Thursday, 26th January;
Thursday, 23rd February;
Thursday, 23rd March; and
Thursday, 27th April.

Chairperson

South Belfast Area Working Group

Monday, 28th November, 2016

MEETING OF SOUTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillors Dudgeon (Chairperson); and
Councillors Boyle, Craig, Hargey and McAteer.

In attendance: Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. D. Rogan, Head of Contracts;
Mrs. S. Toland, Assistant Director, City and
Neighbourhood Services; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 31st October were approved.

Matters Arising

Update on Urban Villages Initiative - Workshop

The Director of Property and Projects confirmed that work had commenced around the delivery of the workshop to discuss issues of relevance to South Belfast, in the context of the Urban Villages and other initiatives, and that would be likely to be held early in 2017.

Moonstone Street/Mowhan Street

The Assistant Director undertook to forward to the Working Group an update on the progress which had been made since its last meeting to address ongoing issues with antisocial behaviour being experienced by residents of the above-mentioned streets.

Edenderry Village Renewal Scheme

The Working Group agreed that the European Officer should continue to attempt to contact a local landowner, with a view to clarifying land ownership issues around Edenderry Village.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Boyle, Dudgeon and McAteer declared an interest in relation to the presentation by the South Belfast Partnership Board representatives in that they were Directors on the Board.

Councillor Boyle declared a further interest in that he owned a number of properties within the Botanic District Electoral Area, which he represented on the Council.

South Belfast Partnership Board

The Working Group was informed that representatives of the South Belfast Partnership Board were in attendance in order to provide an overview of its work around the Local Development Plan and related issues, and Ms. B. Arthurs, Mr. M. Graham and Ms. S. Rasmussen, together with Mr. S. Kumar, Queen's University Belfast, were welcomed to the meeting.

The representatives explained that the South Belfast Partnership Board had been established with the aim of enhancing the quality of life for residents of South Belfast through its strategic regeneration, neighbourhood renewal, urban regeneration, economic development and tourism and health and wellbeing work. They pointed out that the Belfast Agenda and the proposed Belfast Transport Hub offered significant opportunities for South Belfast and highlighted a number of potential initiatives which were being considered. Those included the proposed Bankmore Link project, which would deliver a number of the key objectives set out within the Council's 2015 Regeneration and Investment Strategy around increasing employment opportunities, residential population and connectivity and creating green and shared spaces.

In terms of the Local Development Plan, the representatives reported that the Partnership Board would, as part of the consultation process, be seeking the views of around 136 community groups/business representatives in South Belfast. It was planning also to host on 23rd January in Stranmillis College a city-wide seminar on the Plan, which would consider themes such as neighbourhood planning/best practice and community-led development models. Delegates would be addressed by Ms. Jackie Sadek, Chief Executive of UK Regeneration, and it was hoped that there would be input from the Council. The delegates concluded by requesting the Working Group to consider making funding available towards the hosting of the seminar.

The representatives thanked the Working Group for receiving them and left the meeting.

After discussion, the Working Group noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the Director of Planning and Place be recommended to examine current budgets, with a view to making funding available towards the hosting of the seminar.

Belfast Investment Fund

The Working Group was reminded that the Council had, earlier in the year, agreed to make available an additional £5million of BIF funding for projects in those areas which had been transferred in from Lisburn and Castlereagh under Local Government Reform, £500,000 of which had been allocated to South Belfast.

It was reminded further that, at its meeting on 31st October, it had agreed to allocate up to £250,000 of that additional funding towards a joint project being undertaken by Linfield FC, the Belfast Battalion of the Boys' Brigade and Belvoir FC to develop a community sports hub within the Belvoir Park. The Working Group had agreed also that representatives of Knockbreda Parish be invited to attend its next meeting in order to outline their proposals for the upgrading of their church hall, which might qualify for funding under the additional BIF allocation.

Accordingly, Rev. B. Press, Mr. J. Mayes and Ms. K. Vincent were welcomed to the meeting.

Rev. Press informed the Members that Knockbreda Parish Church was the oldest active Church of Ireland parish church in the City and that it formed part of the “Memories of Castlereagh” Heritage Trail. He explained that the current church hall, which had been constructed in 1969 and which was located in the car park of the church, was used for a wide range of meetings and activities hosted by the parish and by other organisations and individuals. The premises consisted of a main hall with a stage area, a minor hall, two small meeting rooms, an office, a kitchen and toilet facilities. However, its restrictive layout and lack of modern facilities, storage space and disability access, meant that it was no longer possible to accommodate the increasing number of requests for its use.

He reported that, following consultation with users, it had been decided that the current facility should be upgraded and that it should be extended to the front and to the side. A new entrance lobby and multi-purpose meeting space would be provided and disability access, kitchen, toilet, storage and office facilities would all be enhanced. He added that it was anticipated that current users would benefit significantly from the improved church hall and that it would offer local residents the opportunity to engage with each other, learn new skills, stay active and volunteer. He concluded by pointing out that the initial estimated cost of the project would be £178,200, exclusive of fees and VAT, and he urged the Working Group to consider meeting that cost through the Belfast Investment Fund.

In response to a number of questions from the Members, the representatives stated that the decision to upgrade and extend the church hall, rather than replace it completely, had been taken largely to ensure that users would not be required to find alternative accommodation whilst work was ongoing. They stated also that Knockbreda Parish was not in a position to contribute to the cost of the project, no financial assistance was being sought from other funding providers and no charges were levied for the use of the church hall, although some organisations did make voluntary donations.

The representatives were thanked by the Chairperson and retired from the meeting.

The Working Group was reminded that, at its meeting on 31st October, it had received from the Council’s European Officer information on the Edenderry Village Scheme, which might qualify also for funding under the additional BIF allocation. It had been agreed that representatives of that initiative should be invited to attend its meeting in January in order to outline the extent of their proposals.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed to defer consideration of the request for funding for the upgrading of the Knockbreda Parish Church Hall, until such time as it had received the presentation on the Edenderry Village Scheme.

Update on Local Investment Fund Projects

The Working Group considered the following report:

“1 Local Investment Fund

Through the Local Investment Fund (LIF) members committed their allocation of £1,127,500 initially to 12 projects. Of this total,

seven projects have been completed (Stage 5). These projects include:

- (SLIF002) Belfast Harlequins – New sports pitch;
- (SLIF007) May Street Presbyterian Church - refurbishments for community use;
- (SLIF038) Greater Village Regeneration Trust - Building for TREE Project;
- (SLIF040) Windsor Women's Centre - office refurbishment;
- (SLIF052) Mornington Community Association - office refurbishment;
- (SLIF054) St. Malachy's Youth Centre - new facility; and
- (SLIF061) Donegall Pass Community Forum - community garden.

Of the remaining five projects, two (Taughmonagh Community Forum and Finaghy Bridge) remain at stage 1 and a further two projects (Belfast South Community Resources and Annadale/Haywood Residents Association) are at stage 3. The remaining project (Women's Aid) is almost complete (stage 4) – the final invoice has been received and needs processing; normal monitoring processes will follow before the project is complete. A more detailed progress update on all projects is attached at appendix 1.

TOTAL LIF ALLOCATION	AMOUNT ALLOCATED TO DATE	AMOUNT REMAINING
£1,127,500	£1,083,600	£43,900*

2. Local Investment Fund 2

Given the success of the original LIF it was agreed in March 2015 that a £4m LIF2 would be established and allocated to Area Working Groups (AWGs) on a proportional basis. The South Belfast AWG, consisting of two District Electoral Areas (Balmoral and Botanic) was allocated a total of £0.8m. The table below shows the total allocation to date and the remaining balance.

TOTAL LIF2 ALLOCATION	AMOUNT ALLOCATED TO DATE	AMOUNT REMAINING
£800,000	£796,000	£4,000*

Members have committed their allocation thus far to 11 projects. Since the last meeting the Sandy Row Community Forum has progressed to stage 3 – their funding agreement has been issued and implementation will commence once the signed copy has been received. The project at Linenhall Library has also been completed in the last month. A more detailed progress update on all projects is attached.

*** Members have agreed to make no further LIF investment decisions until the exact prices for the additional alley-gates are known in the New Year and therefore how much of the remaining balance would need to be decommitted.**

3. Recommendation

The Working Group is requested to note the update on all LIF and LIF2 projects being delivered in South Belfast.”

After discussion, during which the Head of Contracts undertook to provide individual Members with further clarification on projects which they had raised, the Working Group noted the information which had been provided.

Date of Next Meeting/Future Agenda Items

The Working Group noted that its next meeting would take place at 5.00 p.m. on Monday, 19th December and agreed that Ms. N. Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development, be invited to attend that meeting in order to discuss issues around the Belfast Transport Hub.

Chairperson

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Theme RAG Scores / Projects				
	Taughmonagh Community Forum SLIF064	Intercomm NLIF2-13	STAR Neighbourhood Centre NLIF2-14	Farset International WLIF2-22
Affordability	-	-	-	-
Feasibility	-	-	-	-
Deliverability	-	-	-	-
Sustainablility	-	-	-	-
Overall RAG / Score	-	-	-	-

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East Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 8th December, 2016

MEETING OF EAST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Alderman Haire (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff of Belfast, Alderman Rodgers,
Aldermen McGimpsey and Sandford; and
Councillors Armitage, Copeland, Dorrian,
Graham, Hussey, Johnston, Mullan,
Newton and O'Donnell.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. D. Rogan, Head of Contracts;
Mr. R. Connelly, Programme Officer; and
Mrs L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Howard, Jones, Long and O'Neill.

Minutes

The Working Group agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 3rd November, 2016, were an accurate record of proceedings.

Declarations of Interest

Alderman Rodgers and Councillors Copeland and Newton declared an interest in the Lagan Village Youth and Community Group, in that they were Board members.

Announcement

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Working Group, passed on congratulations to Councillor O'Neill on the recent birth of her son.

Lisnasharragh project - Outer East BIF

The Working Group noted that the Members which represented the Lisnasharragh District Electoral Area would meet immediately after the Area Working Group meeting had concluded, to discuss a project proposal for the ring-fenced Belfast Investment Fund. The Working Group noted that details of the proposal would be brought to the next Area Working Group meeting on 5th January, 2017.

Declaration of Interests – Briefing note

The Working Group was reminded that it had requested a report from the City Solicitor on declarations of interest, particularly in relation to the issue of Members proposing or voting to allocate funding to a group which they were a Board Member of.

The Working Group considered the undernoted report:

“ Purpose of the briefing

1. Councillors are seeking clarification around the requirements set out within the Code of Conduct for Councillors in respect of the register and declaration of interests.
2. In particular, clarity is sought in relation to Area Working Group discussions when councillors are involved in allocating funding to groups of which they may be a member or have a seat on the board. This briefing should be considered supplementary to the report presented by the Democratic Services Manager to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 21 October 2016 and the Conflicts of Interests Policy appended to the same report.

Background to the Code of Conduct in relation to the registration and declaration of interests

3. The Code of Conduct and the associated guidance indicate that the requirements of the Code in relation to the disclosure and declaration of interests are *‘intended to give members of the public the confidence that decisions are being taken in their best interests, not in the best interests of the councillors or their family, friends or personal associates’*.
4. Councillors are required to publically disclose, in the Council’s Register of Interests, any such personal interests (both financial and otherwise) where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 5.2 of the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).
5. Councillors are required to disclose, or to declare, their personal interests where they relate to a matter coming before a meeting of the council, including a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee. (The fact that a Councillor has disclosed an interest in the Register of Interests does not exempt the Councillor from a duty to declare the interest when it arises at a meeting of the council).
6. The requirement to declare such relevant interests also applies in Members’ dealings with council officers and in unofficial relations with other councillors. Therefore, it is clear that these requirements also apply to matters coming before the Area Working Groups.
7. The Code sets out Councillors’ obligations in relation to the disclosure and declaration of both pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

Guidelines in relation to Pecuniary Interests

8. The term 'pecuniary interest' is defined in the 1972 Act. Pecuniary interests are your business interests (for

example, your employment, trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which you are associated) and wider financial interests you may have (for example, investments, and assets such as land and property). (See Code Paragraph 5.2 at Appendix 1)

9. Councillors are required to declare both direct pecuniary interests (where you would personally benefit from a decision on the matter) and indirect pecuniary interests (where your employer, your partner in a legal partnership, a company in which you have shares, or a body of which you are a trustee or director or member, such as a club or charity, may benefit as a result of a decision).
10. When you declare a pecuniary interest, either direct or indirect, in a matter coming before a meeting of your council, you must not speak or vote on the matter in which you have an interest. In addition, if the matter is to be discussed by your council, you must withdraw from the meeting during the discussion.
11. In exceptional circumstances a Member may be able to obtain a dispensation from the Department to speak and vote at a council meeting despite having declared a pecuniary interest.

Requirements of Councillors having declared a pecuniary interest

12. Having declared a pecuniary interest the requirements of the Code are very clear – the Councillor must not speak or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting during any discussion on the matter.
13. The Commissioners guidance to the Code of Conduct at Paragraph 4.13.7 states that when you *'disclose a pecuniary interest, either direct or indirect, in a matter coming before a meeting of your council...you must withdraw from the meeting entirely during that discussion. This means that you must leave the room while the discussion takes place'*.
14. I have looked into the Guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales which gives further consideration to this issue. The Welsh Guidance is clear that having declared a 'prejudicial' interest in a matter one *'cannot remain in the public gallery to observe the vote'* on a matter and in fact the guidance states that *'your presence itself could be perceived to be capable of influencing the decision making process'*.
15. This capacity to influence the decision seems to be at the crux of the matter and I have sought further clarification on this point from the Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards.

Guidelines in respect of non-pecuniary interests

16. The Code requires that you declare *'any significant private or personal non-pecuniary interests'* in a matter coming before a meeting of your council, as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
17. Non-pecuniary interests are those that do not involve business or financial matters and can include, for example, those interests that arise through a position of responsibility in, or membership of, a club, society or organisation. A non-pecuniary interest will be considered to be 'significant' if:
 - It falls within one of the categories outlined in Paragraph 5.2 of the code (Appendix 1); or
 - You anticipate that a decision coming before the meeting of the council might reasonably be deemed to benefit or disadvantage you to a greater extent than other council constituents.
18. This second bullet point is referred to as the 'public perception test'. A councillor should apply this 'public perception test' before deciding whether they have a 'significant' private or personal non-pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed.
19. The term "significant" is key. There is no requirement for a councillor to declare an interest if they decide that the decision would not reasonably be considered, by a member of the public, to benefit or disadvantage the councillor to a greater extent than other council constituents.
20. The question here is not whether the councillor would deem the decision to benefit or disadvantage them but whether a member of the public would consider so. If the Councillor determines that the interest is not significant then there is no need to declare any interest and the councillor may speak and vote on such matters as normal.

Requirements of Councillors having declared a significant non-pecuniary interest

21. Whilst the requirements in relation to pecuniary interests are clear, with regards to non-pecuniary interests the situation is not as straightforward and the introduction of subjective terms such as 'significant' has created uncertainty amongst councillors. The result is that too often, councillors have removed themselves from discussions on an issue, when public policy would suggest that it would be more appropriate for them to participate.
22. The Nolan Committee in its 3rd Report on Standards in Public Life (1997) recognised this point:
'a councillor is part of the community, and will have many interests in common with the rest of the community...a councillor may also be involved with a particular interest group, or may be concerned with a particular cause...or may

well take a particular standpoint on an issue that divides the community'.

23. Citing the example of a councillor who championed the interests of people with disabilities, the report said *'it would be inappropriate for a councillor in this position to be debarred from council decisions on providing facilities for persons with disabilities.'* In the Committee's view:

'In such situations, even though the councillor has direct contacts with organisations, the interest is a public interest, not a private one. The important principle is that everyone should know that the councillor approaches the matter from a particular background and standpoint, so that his contribution to the discussion and decision can be weighed by colleagues, and the press and public, against that background'.

24. The Principle is therefore clear – there requirement upon the councillor to declare any *'significant' private or personal non-pecuniary interest* which may exist. Having done so the options open to the councillor are somewhat more complex - unlike with pecuniary interests – as the councillor may remain in a meeting and even vote if the matter does not concern property or finance. The key is determining whether the Councillor's participation would be in the public interest.

The next section of the briefing aims to provide more clarity on this matter.

Declaring a significant private or personal non pecuniary interest but remaining in the meeting

25. Unlike pecuniary interests, there are circumstances in which a Councillor may declare a significant private or personal non-pecuniary interest but still participate in the meeting and vote on a matter.
26. The Code of Conduct for Councillors - Para 6.9 provides that:

Code Paragraph 6.9

It would, however, be appropriate for you to remain at a council meeting and speak and vote on a matter in which you have declared a significant private or personal non-pecuniary interest if your interest arises because you are:

- A member of a public body; or
- A member or supporter of a charity, voluntary body or other organisation formed for a public purpose (i.e. not for the personal benefit of members).

However, except where you have been appointed by your council as a representative on the organisation, you must not vote (although you may speak) on any matter directly affecting the finances or property of the organisation if you are a member of the organisation's management committee or governing body.

27. If the Councillor is a member of a body or organisation which has been established to pursue an objective that might be classified as being in the 'general public interest', then an association with such a body or organisation does not prevent a Councillor from participating in the decision making process but the interests should nonetheless be declared.
28. However, if the Councillor's interest in such a body or organisation includes participation in management or governance, then a non-pecuniary interest should be declared and the Councillor may participate in discussion but may not vote on decisions concerning finance or property.

Application of the Code in respect of Area Working Groups

Requirement to disclose interests

29. The guidance issued by the Commissioner states at 4.13.3 that:

"Members are required to disclose, or to declare, their personal interests where they relate to a matter coming before a meeting of the council, including a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee".

30. The guidance goes on to state that *"this requirement to declare such relevant interests also applies in Members' dealings with council officers and in unofficial relations with other councillors"*. It is therefore clear that this the requirement to declare relevant interests would apply to proceedings within the Area Working Groups in the same way as they would apply to Council, Committee or Sub-Committee meetings.

Speaking and voting

Pecuniary Interests

31. It is clear that in respect of matters in which a Councillor has a pecuniary interest (direct or indirect), the Councillor is not permitted to speak or vote on the issue. The Councillor must declare the pecuniary interest and withdraw from the Area Working Group meeting whilst that item is being discussed.

Significant private or personal non-pecuniary interests

32. However, in respect of matters in which a Councillor has a significant private or personal non-pecuniary interest, then

the Councillor, having declared that interest, may apply the criteria outlined at Paragraph 26 of this report (Code Paragraph 6.9) to determine whether or not it would be appropriate for them to participate in the meeting.

33. It would be appropriate for the Councillor to remain at the meeting and to speak and vote on a matter in which they have declared a significant private or personal non-pecuniary interest if the interest arises because the Councillor is a member of a public body; or a member or supporter of a an organisation formed for a public purpose (i.e. not for the personal benefit of members).
34. However, a Councillor must not vote (although they may speak) on any matter directly affecting the finances or property of such an organisation if the Councillor is a member of the management committee or governing body of the organisation (e.g. a Board member).
35. Councillors may however speak and vote if the organisation is one to which they have been appointed on behalf of the Council.

Allocation of funding under LIF and BIF

36. With respect to decisions on the allocation of funding under LIF and BIF, it is clear that a Councillor who is a member of a group or organisation which may benefit from such funding (or indeed which may be disadvantaged by the award of funding to another organisation) should declare an interest accordingly.
37. If the organisation has been formed for the 'personal' benefit of its members then membership of such a body would give rise to an indirect pecuniary interest. The Councillor would then have to declare an indirect pecuniary interest and must leave the room when the matter is being discussed.
38. If the organisation has been formed in the 'public interest' then the Councillor should declare a significant private or personal interest and may speak on the matter and vote (unless they are on the management committee / governing body / board of the organisation in which case they may speak but not vote on matters of finance or property).

Conclusions

39. Councillors on Area Working Groups must declare interests in the same way as they would do at meetings of Council or Committee.
40. A Councillor must determine whether they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in matters to be discussed at the Area Working Group.
41. If the Councillor declares a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter then the Councillor must withdraw from

the meeting (leave the room) whilst the matter is being discussed and may not vote on the matter.

- 42. If the Councillor has a private or personal interest in a matter they must apply the 'public perception test' to determine whether the interest is 'significant' enough to declare.**
- 43. Having declared a 'significant' private or personal non-pecuniary interest in a matter the Councillor may participate in the meeting and vote provided that the organisation in question is a 'public body' or is one which has been formed in the public interest (and not for the personal benefit of its members).**
- 44. If the Councillor holds a position on a management committee or governing body of an organisation formed in the public interest, then the Councillor may participate in the meeting but must not vote on any decisions which affect the finances or property of that organisation (unless they have been appointed to the organisation on behalf of the Council).**
- 45. If however the organisation has been formed for the personal benefit of its members then the Councillor (if a trustee, director or member of the group) should declare an indirect pecuniary interest and withdraw from the meeting."**

The Working Group noted the information which had been provided.

The Programme Officer presented to the Members a flowchart which sought to illustrate the questions which all Members should consider in relation to each agenda item and he highlighted the importance of the Public Perception test. The City Solicitor advised the Members that they should speak with him or an officer within Democratic Services before a meeting if they had a query in relation to whether they should declare an interest in an item or not.

In response to a Member's question in relation to Board Members of a public body and their voting rights, the City Solicitor clarified that while they could bring forward a proposal for the body to be considered for funding, given that it was for the public benefit, it would be prudent that Board Members would not participate in a vote to determine funding for that public body.

The City Solicitor advised the Members that he had written to the Local Government Commissioner for Standards, Ms. Marie Anderson, to seek further clarity on three areas of the Code of Conduct, those being:

- Members declaring interests with regards to 'public bodies';
- the definition of what constituted 'an organisation formed for a public purpose'; and
- whether a Member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest or a significant private or personal non-pecuniary interest, should leave the room during discussion.

The Working Group noted the response which had been received.

After discussion, the Working Group noted the information which had been provided and agreed that copies of the Declarations of Interests flowchart and of the response from the Local Government Commissioner for Standards should be circulated to all Members for their information.

Belfast Investment Fund

A Member informed the group that, given recent media coverage in relation to both BIF and LIF, the Audit and Risk Panel had recently agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Panel would be circulated to all Members of the Panel and Party Group Leaders for their reference.

Lagan Village Youth and Community Group

A Member suggested that the Working Group consider rescinding its decision to ring fence £130,000 for pre-contract work on the three BIF projects which were at Stage 3, with an additional £200,000 designated for contingency, which had been agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the Council in November, 2016.

During discussion, the Director of Finance and Resources explained to the Working Group that, in accordance with the advice which he and the Director of Property and Projects had provided to the Working Group at its meeting on 6th October, the £130,000 which had been ring-fenced in order to work up the plans for the first three projects which had already been agreed.

In response to a Member's question, the Head of Contracts confirmed to the Members that a further project could be moved to Stage 2 of the BIF process, as funding was not committed to a project until it had reached Stage 3.

After further discussion, the Working Group agreed:

1. that the Lagan Village Youth and Community Group proposal would be moved to Stage 2 under BIF; and
2. to delay any further decision on the £200,000 contingency and £130,000 ring-fenced funds through BIF until the next meeting of the Working Group on 5th January, 2017.

The Director of Finance and Resources confirmed to the Members that the current Council decision stood in relation to the £330,000, and advised the Working Group that if any of the projects which were at Stage 3, namely, Willowfield Parish Church, Bloomfield Community Association or the Harland and Wolff Welders Football Club, required funding to be drawn down for pre-contract work, that he was authorised to do so.

Tullycarnet Community Support Services

The Working Group noted that Tullycarnet Community Support Services had withdrawn their project from the LIF process but had since written to the Working Group expressing their interest in the Belfast Investment Fund.

Ring-fenced BIF for newly transferred area

The Head of Contracts tabled an update report on the three Outer East projects under BIF, namely the Hanwood Trust, TAGIT Boxing Club and Braniel Church.

The Working Group noted that none of the projects had reached the required level to move beyond Stage 1. The Group agreed that officers would continue to engage with all three groups to develop their projects and that a detailed report would be submitted to the meeting on 5th January, 2017.

Local Investment Fund

Progress Report

The Working Group noted that the Tullycarnet Community Support Services proposal had failed to progress through the Due Diligence process and had, therefore, been withdrawn from the LIF process. The Working Group agreed that the £58,411 which had been allocated to that project would therefore be re-allocated.

The Working Group agreed that officers should engage with Our Lady and St. Patrick's College Knock in relation to its proposal for the installation of an outdoor gym, which had previously been considered by the group.

The Working Group also requested that an update on the Dock Café project be submitted to the meeting on 5th January, 2017.

St. Christopher's Church

The Working Group considered a report on officer engagement with St. Christopher's Church, where the Group had previously agreed that officers should assist them in getting their proposal 'project-ready', in the event that other funding might become available.

The Working Group agreed that officers would continue to engage with St. Christopher's Church.

Castlereagh Presbyterian Church Halls – Ald. Haire to raise

The Working Group noted that Castlereagh Presbyterian Church would submit a request in writing for the Group's consideration for funding at a future date.

Date of next meeting

The Working Group agreed that it would meet at 5.00 pm on Thursday, 5th January, 2017.

Chairperson

North Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 8th December, 2016

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillor McCabe (Chairperson);
Aldermen Convery and Spence;
Councillors Clarke and Magee.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. D. Rogan, Head of Contracts;
Mrs. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager;
Mr. G. Dickson, Policy Analyst; and
Miss E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Campbell, Aldermen L. Patterson and McKee, and Councillors Corr-Johnston and McAllister.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th November were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Decision Tracker

The Director of Property and Projects explained that the Decision Tracker document had been emailed to Members before the meeting and provided the Working Group with a brief overview of actions since the last meeting held on 10th November.

He also tabled the Parks and Leisure Committee report from March, 2010 regarding the Velodrome Consultation, as requested at the last meeting.

Noted.

Girdwood Community Forum - Update from Representatives

The Chairperson welcomed Members of the Girdwood Community Forum to the meeting, Mr. M. Maguire, Mr. I. McLaughlin and Mr. P. O'Neill.

The representatives outlined the contents of the report that had been submitted to the Working Group for consideration, which included the following points for discussion:

- changing facilities for the Girdwood sports pitches;
- the need for toilet facilities for the Girdwood Youth Space;
- the possibility of fencing around the new sports pitches;
- community management of the Girdwood Community Hub; and
- issues with car access and bollards in situ.

The Director of Property and Projects confirmed that an economic appraisal had been completed regarding the potential for changing facilities at Girdwood. He advised that the issue would be highlighted at a meeting in the New Year with the Department for Communities and that interim facilities were also being considered.

It was reported that a feasibility study had been completed regarding the toilet facilities and access point and would be taken through the capital governance process.

The Head of Contracts advised that the installation of the fencing around the new sports pitches would commence in December and take approximately six weeks to complete.

The Community Development Manager informed the Group that Council staff had been working with the Girdwood Community Forum regarding the potential of community management of the Youth Space within the Hub and that a formal application for consideration would be submitted by the Forum early next year.

It was also reported that the bollards on the site were functioning and that training was due to be given to Greenwich Leisure Limited staff on 9th December on how to operate the bollards.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives from the Girdwood Community Forum for attending.

The Working Group noted the information which had been provided and agreed that a document be produced to explain the processes, approximate timeline, and key decision points of the outstanding actions to help the Girdwood Community Forum and the wider community gain a better understanding of Council procedures.

Presentation – Women's TEC

The Working Group was reminded that, at its meeting on 24th August, it had been agreed that representatives from Women's TEC be invited to attend the Working Group.

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting, Ms. L. Carvill, Chief Executive of Women's Training, Enterprise and Childcare (Women's TEC). With the permission of the Chairperson, she tabled copies of the presentation.

Ms. Carvill provided an overview of the work that had been undertaken by the organisation since 1998. She highlighted that, over the last three years, they had engaged

over 500 women in a range of accredited and non-accredited skills training programmes in non-traditional areas such as horticulture, plumbing, joinery, painting and decorating, tiling, electrics, and information and technology.

She explained that they had moved to a new premises on Chichester Avenue and that their vision was to become a hub for the local community, a neutral venue, accessible for all women.

She explained that Women's TEC was responsible for the maintenance and overheads of the building and that support for structural building work of approximately £52,000 was required to upgrade the premises. She also advised that funding assistance may be required for the replacement of IT equipment.

During discussion the Members noted that Women's TEC had worked with various organisations, including the Council, to organise work placements for its students and that some participants advanced to employment. However, the majority of participants progressed to further education courses due to the continued access to childcare facilities.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked Ms. Carvill for attending and the Working Group noted the information which had been provided.

Presentation – Ligoneil Improvement Association

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting, Mr. D. McCallin, Environment and Recreation Programme Coordinator, representing Ligoneil Improvement Association.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Mr. McCallin tabled copies of the presentation regarding the proposed redevelopment of an old Corn Mill at the Wolfhill Environment and Heritage Site (estimated total cost of £500k).

He explained that the charity had been set up to reduce health inequalities prevalent in Ligoneil and that the work of the organisation had been implemented by three strands: Strategic Development; Youth Health; and Environment and Recreation.

He provided an overview of the projects currently run by the Association and its future plans for the site. He advised that the Association would appreciate the cross-party support of the Council, and wished to make a further representation once consultation and feasibility studies had taken place.

During discussion, the Assistant Director provided an update on the Belfast Hills Project regarding accessing and promoting the area further via path networks. She advised that an update report would be submitted to the People and Communities Committee in the future.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked Mr. McCallin for attending and the Working Group noted the information which had been provided.

Local Investment Fund Update

The Director of Property and Projects provided an overview of the report which included an update on the progress of those projects which had yet to be completed under the Local Investment Funds (LIF phase 1 and LIF phase 2).

He advised that the group had allocated £694,867 of its £800,000 LIF phase 2 allocation and that there were three projects remaining which required further information

to be provided by the project organisations so that feasibility assessments could be completed.

Noted.

Future Agenda Items

The Working Group noted that the following items would be discussed at the next meeting on 24th January, 2017:

- Alleygates Update on the consultation process Interface Programme Report;
- LIF Update;
- Workshop Report; and
- Plan information sessions on Inner North Belfast Projects.

The Working Group also noted the following future deputations and agenda items:

- Belfast Hills;
- Urban Villages (February);
- Zoo Update ;
- Harbour Commissioner Update; and
- Yorkgate Interchange Update.

Chairperson



Subject:	Asset Management: i) Percy Street Community Centre – Lease Renewal ii) 10-18 Cromac Street and 33-37 Market Street, Belfast – Disposal of Ground Rent Interest iii) Stewart Street – Proposed Agreement for Easement with Northern Ireland Electricity at Stewart Street
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects Department
Contact Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Estates Manager, Property & Projects Department

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to asset related disposal, acquisition and lease matters.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>i) Percy Street Community Centre – Lease Renewal Committee is recommended to approve the renewal of the Lease for Percy Street Community Centre for a further 5 years with the Trustees of Lower Shankill Group Welfare Committee.</p>
2.2	<p>ii) 10-18 Cromac Street and 33-37 Market Street, Belfast – Disposal of Ground Rent Interest Committee is recommended to approve the disposal of the Council's ground rent interest in land at 10-18 Cromac Street and 33-37 Market Street, Belfast.</p>
2.3	<p>iii) Stewart Street – Proposed Agreement for Easement with Northern Ireland Electricity at Stewart Street Committee is recommended to grant approval to enter into an Agreement for Easement with</p>

	NIE in respect of land at Stewart Street (location edged red on map in Appendix 1) for the purposes of facilitating development of a community garden and to provide potential pedestrian access to the Council's Gasworks Estate.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>(i) Percy Street Community Centre – Lease renewal</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>In 1982 the Trustees of the Lower Shankill Group Welfare Committee were granted a month to month Licence to occupy the Percy Street Community Centre. This arrangement continued until 2011 when the Development Committee (11 June 2011) and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (23 September 2011) agreed to change the licence agreement to a lease similar to other independently managed centres. A 5 year Lease was granted from 1st April 2011 at a yearly rent of £1,550.</p>
3.2	It has now been agreed with the Trustees that the Lease will be renewed for a further 5 years from 1 April 2016 on the same terms as present including the rental amount of £1,550 per annum.
3.3	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Staff resources from the Estates Management Unit and Legal Services Department will be required to finalise the renewal documentation. This Lease agreement is covered by the committee decision of 7 March 2006 to include the rental cost of independently managed premises leased from the Council within the annual Council grant.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
3.5	<p>ii) 10-18 Cromac Street and 33-37 Market Street, Belfast – Disposal of Ground Rent Interest</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Council hold the reversionary interest in a Fee Farm Grant dated 1 July 1916 for land located at 10-18 Cromac Street and 33-37 Market Street, subject to a non-reviewable annual rent of £120.00, collected half yearly. The land has since been developed in recent times with an office building known as Forsyth House.</p>
3.6	The Council's interest in the premises is historic and non-functional and the Development Committee on the 18 August 2004 approved a number of recommendations regarding the collection of ground rents relating to this and other similar properties. One of these

proposals was to continue collecting ground rents above a £30.00 per annum threshold but at the same time offer to dispose of the ground rent interest to the ground rent payer if possible. The Estates Management Unit subsequently wrote to all the ground rent payers included in the report offering them the chance to effectively 'buy out' the ground rent payable on their interests. Take up of this offer was limited and was declined by Haymarket House Limited who owned the interest in Forsyth House at this time.

3.7 However, recently the building has been purchased by a company called CL5 Limited. Under terms within the Fee Farm Grant the Council had to provide consent to this transfer of interest, after which the opportunity to 'buy out' the ground rent was offered to CL5 Limited. The Company have now accepted the offer and agreed to the release of the covenant to pay the ground rent for a premium of £1,200.00 plus reasonable legal fees which have been estimated at £400.00 plus VAT, subject to Committee approval.

3.8 Financial & Resource Implications

The Council will receive a premium of £1,200.00 in return for releasing the covenant to pay the annual ground rent of £120.00 plus payment of reasonable legal fees incurred. The Council will also no longer incur the administration costs of invoicing this ground rent half yearly. Staff resources from the Estates Management Unit and Legal Services Department will be required to finalise the conveyance documentation.

3.9 Asset and Other Implications

The Council's reversionary interest in the Fee Farm Grant and the other covenants contained within it will remain unaffected.

3.10 **iii) Stewart Street – Proposed Agreement for Easement with Northern Ireland
Electricity at Stewart Street**

Key Issues

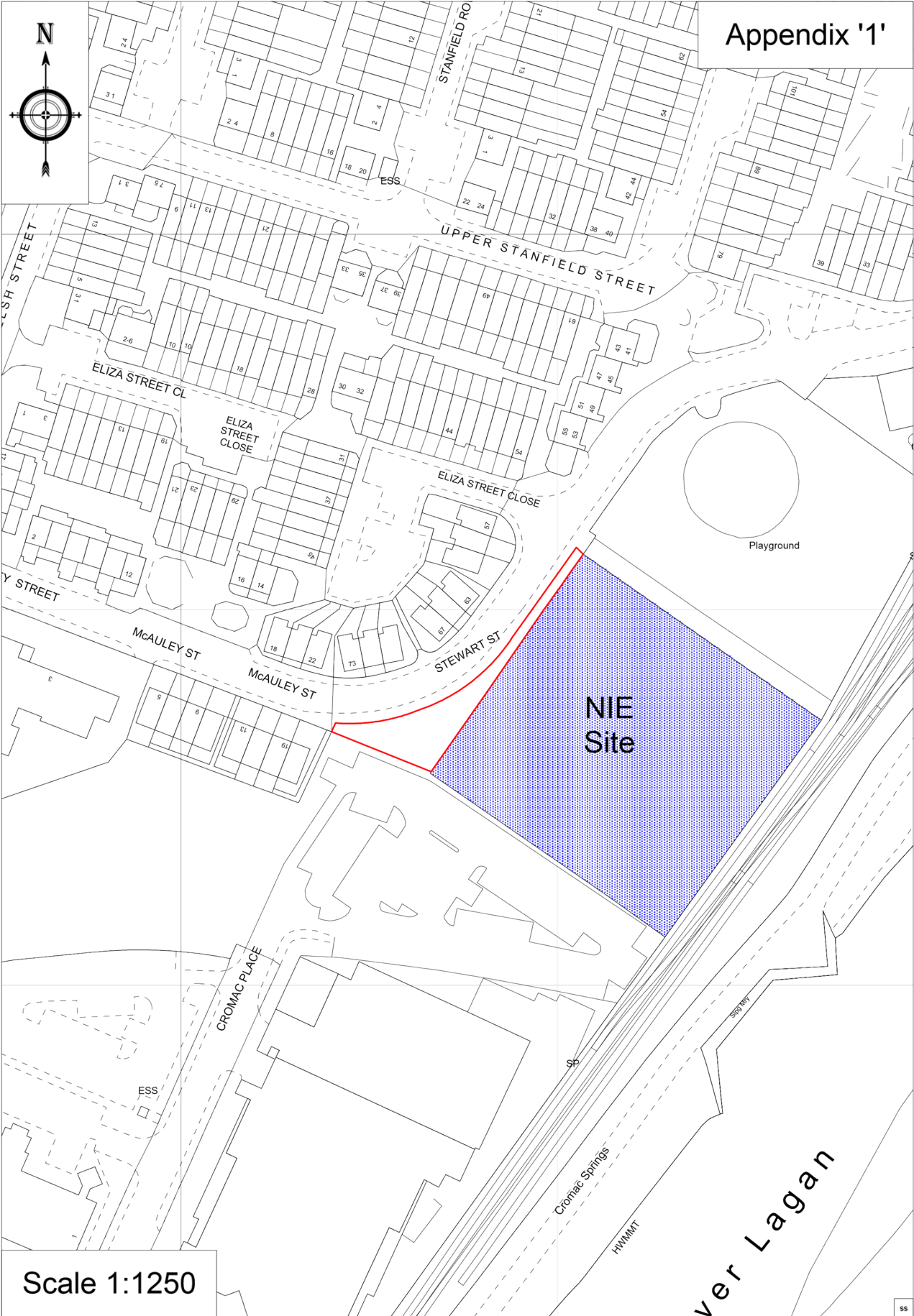
Following redevelopment of the Markets area during the 1980's a revised street pattern was established with formal adoption of the new Stewart Street layout following in 1990. However there was never any formal abandonment of the original street layout resulting in a small portion of land along Stewart Street becoming surplus for the purpose of highway provision. Whilst Transport NI historically has had control of the land as an adopted highway, they never had ownership of the underlying title, which has always remained with the Council. This area of land is no longer regularly maintained as part of a public highway and has become a convenient dumping ground creating a hazardous eyesore in the area.

An application was received by TransportNI from the Markets Development Association

3.11	<p>(MDA) for the abandonment of land on Stewart Street (location edged red on map in Appendix 1) and this request was formally noted at the Council's Planning Committee's meeting of 17th May 2016. Formal abandonment is a necessary step required in order to facilitate the proposed installation of planters and artwork on the land as a community garden.</p>
3.12	<p>NIE own an adjoining site on Stewart Street (identified on map in Appendix 1) which has its sole access over this land which TransportNI are seeking to abandon; NIE also have existing in-ground electricity cables that traverse the subject land. Given the pre-existing NIE requirements to have access over this land they have formally objected to its abandonment.</p>
3.13	<p>Upon completion of any formal abandonment procedure full control of the land would revert to the Council as the legal landowner.</p>
3.14	<p>In addition to providing scope to develop a community garden, by regaining control of this portion of land the Council is presented with an opportunity to establish a pedestrian access from the Markets through to the Council Gasworks Estate thereby facilitating more direct access for the community to the riverside walkway.</p>
3.15	<p>In order for NIE to withdraw their objection and thereby progress the abandonment procedure the Council, as effective landowners, have been requested by NIE to enter into an easement with them so as to retain appropriate accesses as required by NIE over the land. However, until such time as abandonment has formally completed, and full control regained, the Council are not at liberty to grant such easement requested. Therefore the Council's Legal Services have advised, and NIE agree, that an Agreement for Easement (which is in effect a precursor to an agreed form of Easement, which would be appended) would provide sufficient legal comfort sought that would permit NIE to withdraw their objection to formal abandonment proceeding.</p>
3.16	<p>Further reports will be brought back to this Committee with more detail in respect of the community garden and the Gasworks pedestrian access in the context of the Gasworks Northern Fringe Masterplan.</p>
3.17	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no finance or resource implications at this time associated with progressing the Agreement for Easement beyond Estates and Legal Services input.</p> <p>There are proposals by the MDA to develop a community garden but details of this will be</p>

3.18	brought back to Committee in due course.
3.19	As part of their planning consent for the Council's Maysfield site Allstate is committed to providing £15,000 towards the cost of providing a community garden on this land in Stewart Street together with 100 hours volunteer time for its development. The creation of a pedestrian access from the Markets though to the adjoining Gasworks Estate is also referenced in the commitment made through Allstate's planning consent.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1 – Map identifying location of proposed Easements at Stewart Street

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Subject:	Acquisition of Springfield Dam from Department for Communities
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of City & Neighbourhoods
Contact Officer:	Celine Dunlop, Estates Surveyor, Property & Projects

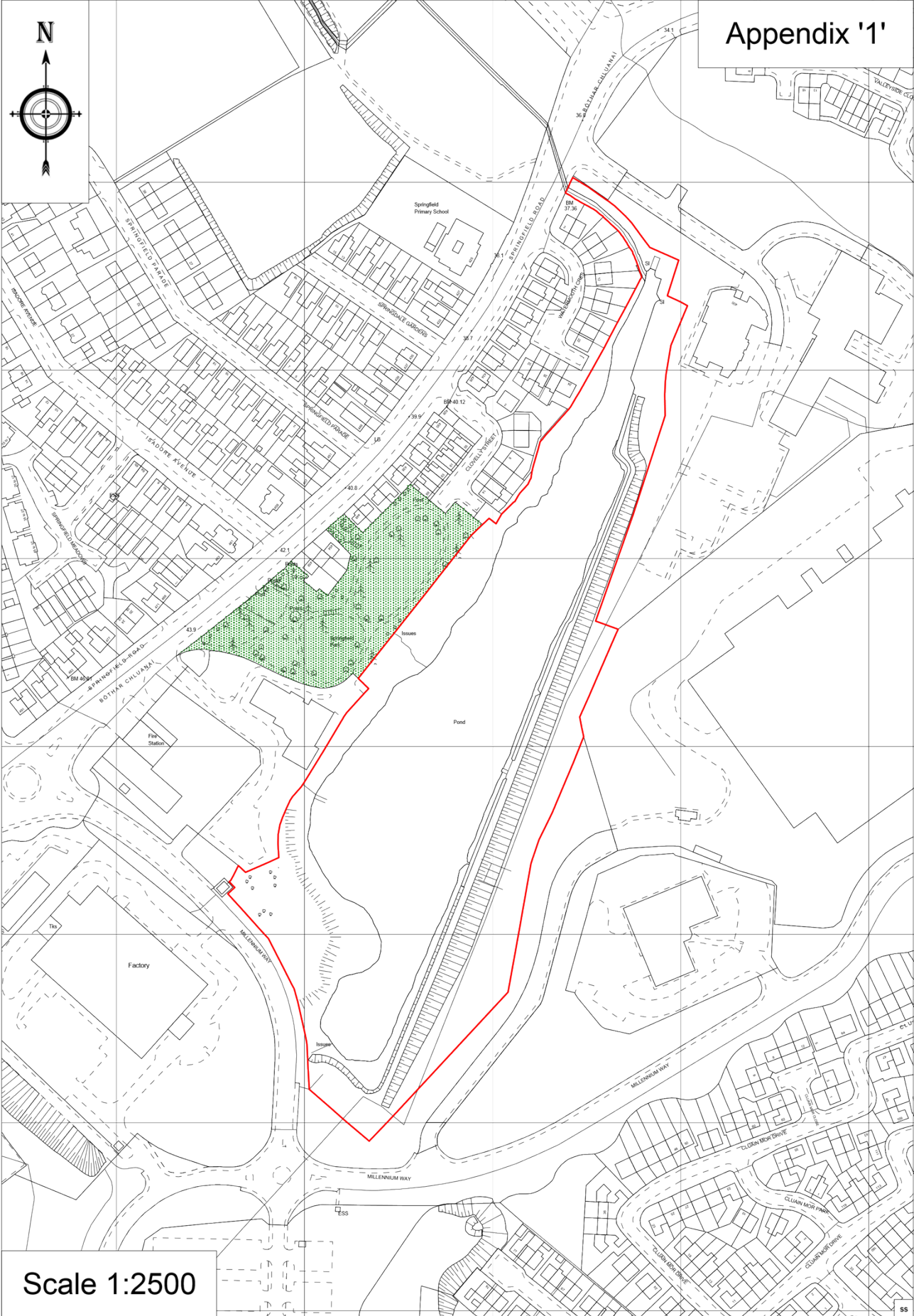
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To seek approval to take a transfer of land owned by the Department for Communities (DfC) following expenditure of c. £0.5m by DfC on capital work to upgrade the area.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant approval to accept the transfer, on terms as outlined below, of the land shown outlined red on the attached plan from DfC following completion of capital works to enhance the site.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The DfC own the land at Springfield Dam shown outlined red on the plan attached at Appendix 1. DfC commissioned AECOM to undertake a feasibility study in partnership with BCC to develop high level concept plans for the site. The Springfield Dam site shares a boundary with the Council's Springfield Park shown shaded green on the plan attached at Appendix 1 and there is an opportunity to create a larger enhanced and integrated open space at this location. The feasibility study produced two options; the estimated construction cost for option 1 is £448,513.71 and for option 2 is £1,215,511.01. DfC have advised that they have funding available this financial year for Option 1 and they are keen to start spending the estimated total construction costs for Option 1 before the 31st March</p>

	<p>2017, if expenditure is committed and commenced prior to the 31st March 2017 they advise that the full cost can be accrued by DfC in Financial Year 16/17. There is no funding currently available for Option 2.</p>
3.2	<p>Option 1 comprises the basic framework to improve access and provide for recreational use of the site. The proposed paths will provide for circulation between the Dam and Springfield Park and also link into proposed new entrances to the site. This will facilitate 'loop' walks in the locality. The proposed recreational facilities include a proposed building for classroom/training/recreational use, fishing stands and an activity trail.</p>
3.3	<p>At its meeting on the 21st Oct 2016 the SP&R Committee agreed in principle to the transfer of land and property assets from the DfC, or other central government bodies as appropriate, upon completion of identified capital projects, subject to the conditions of transfer as set out in the report and specifically on agreement on revenue budgets at the time of the transfer, with up to three years agreed maintenance costs being provided as a minimum, depending on the nature of the asset.</p>
3.4	<p>The following Heads of Terms have been provisionally agreed with DfC in respect to the transfer of Springfield Dam to the Council subject to Council Committee approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DfC to provide BCC with copies of satisfactory title and confirmation that there are no restrictions, onerous conditions or charges in the title which would preclude the proposed works. - BCC will appoint consultants to design Option 1 of the Springfield Dam project. - BCC will secure planning approval and statutory approvals as required for the scheme. - BCC will appoint the contractor to complete the works. - DfC will fund all costs including design, statutory approvals and construction. - BCC will agree to take ownership of the site at nil cost to the Council on completion of Option 1 of the works. - BCC to be represented on the design group for the project to ensure that the future maintenance and management of the Springfield Dam is properly reflected in the designs. - DfC will fund the Council's maintenance costs for a period of three years following handover of the site to the Council.

3.5	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The transfer will be at nil cost to the Council and will only take place following completion of capital expenditure of c.£0.5m.</p> <p>Maintenance costs for three years following completion of the capital works and hand over to the Council will be covered by DfC.</p> <p>Staff from Legal Services and Estates Unit will complete the transfer of the land and staff from the Project Management Unit will deliver the capital project on behalf of DfC, with design and maintenance advice from the City & Neighbourhoods Department.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
4.1	<p>Appendix 1 - Plan</p>

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Subject:	Exhibition Area – changes to layout and pricing
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	George Wright, Head of Facilities Management

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of report or summary of main issues
1.1	To seek the Committee’s approval to implement the proposals set out below in relation to the operation of the new Exhibition Area in City Hall.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the proposals in respect of the operation of the new Exhibition Area as set out at below • Agree to charge an entrance fee for commercial bookings broadly in the order of £2 per person, but with discounts available in respect of the provision of multi-lingual head-sets when booked as a group, in order to encourage use and enhance income.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware that a paper was presented to the Committee in November 2016 seeking approval for a new Reception arrangement for the Exhibition. This proposal involved the removal of the former PUP room area as the main reception for the Exhibition, to be replaced by a bespoke new facility on the main floor inside the front entrance.
3.2	Following some discussion on the matter concerns were expressed by some members that the proposal may create un-necessary bottlenecks on the main marble area, and it was referred back for officers to re-consider the proposal to see what alternatives may exist. Officers had also noted that there would be noise impact on the Lavery Room.
3.3	Officers have reviewed the proposals as requested, but have concluded that in any event insufficient time now remains to prepare alternative proposals and get furniture etc ordered. Consequently the original proposal, which uses the former PUP party room as the main

- entrance and reception area, must be re-instated on the basis previously agreed.
- 3.4 The proposal to create a new reception area on the marble was developed primarily to enhance the potential income to be derived from the sale of merchandising. By contrast, using the original reception area will mean that no merchandising can be sold at all on Saturdays or Sundays or on any evening (because any such sales will now have to be carried out by staff at the main Reception as opposed to the dedicated Exhibitions facility). Therefore it is likely that overall merchandising sales will be adversely affected.
- 3.5 There remains a concern that the original proposal will itself inevitably create bottlenecks, given that it is only 1.4m wide at its narrowest point and must provide for disabled access etc. while the proposal in relation to the marble would have allowed for more effective management of a build-up of visitors (including the use of the former PUP room and the room opposite for waiting areas), and the council's principal consultants Redhead Ltd had expressed their agreement with this approach.
- 3.6 However, as outlined above, the facility is due to be complete and to initiate a series of 'soft' opening events during April 2017, and consequently officers do not believe that it is now feasible to develop alternative options, obtain Heritage Service approval and amend the overall project plan in order to deliver a new option in the time remaining.
- The Committee is therefore requested to approve the reversion to the original reception location in the former PUP offices.**
- 3.7 Members will also be aware that in the previous proposal entrance to the exhibition was free, although charges will be levied for head-set hire, souvenir booklet and app downloads etc. Officers considered recommending a general admission charge of £1, but concluded that the administration associated with this would outweigh the benefit. However there would be the opportunity to introduce a charge for Commercial Tour Groups and this is considered below and the potential for donations remains.
- 3.8 Commercial Tour Groups - It is also proposed that separate entrance charges be introduced for commercial tour groups (e.g. cruise-ship bookings etc), where each participant pays a significant premium to the relevant tour operators. This mirrors the approach recently adopted by the Committee in relation to the council's standard public tour offer and which has produced additional income of £12,067 in the 2016/17 financial year to date (1st 6 months).
- 3.9 It is proposed to adopt the same approach to charging for the new Exhibition Area, and would involve a charge broadly in the order of £2 per person, but with discounts available in respect of the provision of multi-lingual head-sets when booked as a group, in order to encourage use and enhance income. This would generate estimated additional income of £61,425.
- 3.10 Following a discussion at the party group leaders' forum the overall logo and strap-line to be used for the Exhibition Area is to be changed from the previous 'City Hall for All'

3.11	<p>approach simply to ‘Belfast City Hall’ and using the same graphic as previously agreed.</p> <p>This new logo - which will be used on associated signage, promotional material and merchandising etc – is set out for note by the Committee in Appendix 1(a). Also included for note at Appendix 1(b) is the artwork to be used for the refurbished Bobbin coffee-shop area (which is intended to be operational by early March 2017).</p>				
3.12	<p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levying the recommended charge for commercial groups would generate additional estimated income of £61,425, based on anticipated visitor numbers 				
3.13	<p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 				
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached				
	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Appendix 1 (a)</td> <td>New Exhibition logo</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appendix 1(b)</td> <td>New Bobbin logo</td> </tr> </table>	Appendix 1 (a)	New Exhibition logo	Appendix 1(b)	New Bobbin logo
Appendix 1 (a)	New Exhibition logo				
Appendix 1(b)	New Bobbin logo				

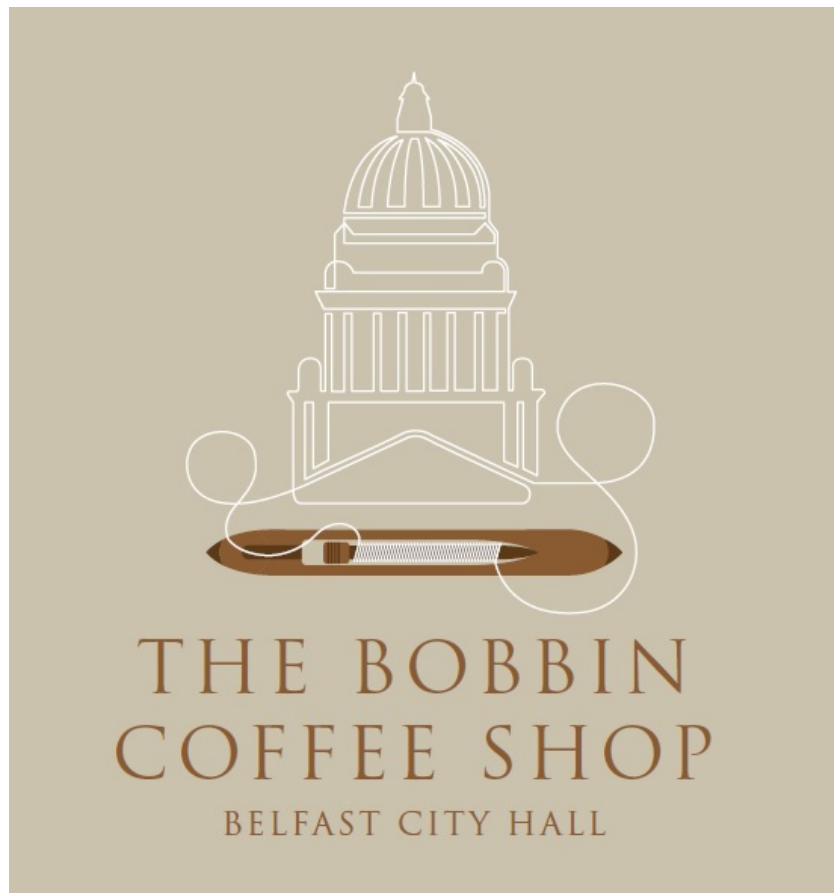
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APPENDIX 1(a) – Exhibition & Memorabilia revised



BELFAST
CITY HALL

APPENDIX 1(b) – Bobbin revised logo



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Subject:	Mid - Year Treasury Management Report 2016/17
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Performance
Contact Officer:	Mark McBride, Head of Finance and Performance

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	This report presents the half year treasury management position for the Council as at the end of September, 2016/17.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the report.
3.0	Main report
	Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011
3.1	The Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011, and the supporting Prudential and Treasury Codes introduced a new capital financing system and legislative framework within which the Council manages its finances.
3.2	The Council's Treasury Management policy, developed in response to the new legislative framework, states that the Council will receive reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities, including, as a minimum, an annual strategy, a mid-year review and an annual report after the close of the financial year.
	This report represents the mid-year review as required by the policy and is structured to

3.3 highlight key changes to the Council's capital activity and the actual and proposed treasury management activity.

Prudential Indicators

3.3 The Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 and CIPFA's Prudential Code require the Council to set and monitor a series of Prudential Indicators (PIs). The key objective of which is to ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the Council are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

Capital Expenditure Prudential Indicator:

3.4

	Original	Revised
Indicator	£'000	£'000
Estimates of Capital Expenditure 2016/17	48,529	51,797

The original estimate reflects the capital budgets that were approved by the Council on 22 March 2016, whilst the revised estimate reflects the capital expenditure that is forecast to be spent by 31 March 2017. The increase in the forecast for this year is mainly due to the re-profiling of the capital programme. As the overall total has not changed this does not affect the financing of the capital programme.

Other Prudential Indicators

3.5

	Original Estimate	Current Estimate
Indicator	£'000	£'000
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	110,727	114,825
Borrowing Within CFR	yes	yes

As can be seen above the CFR estimate has increased. This is due to the increase in the revised estimate of capital expenditure in the current year's capital programme. The Council is forecast to remain within the Authorised Borrowing Limit, and the CFR indicates that over the medium term borrowings will only be for a capital purpose.

Treasury Management

3.6	<p>The Council's Treasury Management Policy and Strategy adopt the key principles of CIPFA's Code of Practice and have taken account of the guidance issued by the Department of The Environment on Local Government Investments.</p>
3.7	<p>Debt Activity: During the first half of 2016/17 the Council has taken advantage of internal borrowing, i.e. cash surpluses, to fund capital expenditure.</p>
3.8	<p>In addition, loan principal repayments of £1,573,854 have been made during the same period.</p>
3.9	<p>The level of external borrowings at 30 September 2016 is £33,188,655.</p>
3.10	<p>Investment Strategy 2016-17: The primary objective of the Council's investment strategy is to safeguard the repayment of the principal and interest of its investments on time. Investment return being a secondary objective.</p>
3.11	<p>The current investment climate is one of overriding risk consideration, particularly that of counterparty risk. As a result, officers continue to implement an operational investment strategy which maintains investments short term with high quality counterparties.</p>
3.12	<p>The Council has earned £66,486.63 in interest in the period from 1 April to 30 September 2016.</p>
3.13	<p>During this period the Council has placed deposits with Bank of Scotland, Santander UK, HSBC and Barclays. All four institutions meet the council's approval criteria.</p>
3.14	<p>The Council's limit for total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days is £2,000,000. As at 30 September 2016, the Council has not made any investments which are for periods longer than 364 days.</p>
3.15	<p>Other Treasury Management Indicators: Two other Treasury Management indicators were set at the start of the year as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upper Limits for Fixed and Variable Rate Borrowing - Limits on the Maturity of Fixed Rate Borrowing <p>Officers can confirm that the limits set have not been breached and no changes to the current limits are required.</p>

<p>3.16</p> <p>3.17</p> <p>3.18</p> <p>3.19</p> <p>3.20</p>	<p>Bank Tender</p> <p>Approval was sought through SP&R Committee on 24th June 2016 to seek tenders for the provision of banking and merchant services with a contract period of three years and the option to renew for two further periods of one year. Following a tender process the contract has been awarded under delegated authority to the Barclays, who are the Council's current bankers.</p> <p>The contract shall be for a period of three years with the option to renew for two further periods of one year.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>All finance implications are dealt with in the report</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations implications associated with this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>None</p>



Subject:	Contracts for award
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director Finance and Resources Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects
Contact Officer:	Donal Rogan, Head of Contracts

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek approval from Members to the advancement and award of the tenders as outlined in Appendix 1 in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the public advertisement and acceptance of tenders as listed in Appendix 1, table 1, through the Council's electronic procurement system 2. Grant delegated authority to the appropriate Director, using pre-agreed criteria the most economically advantageous tender, and allow extensions where contracts are under review as per table 2.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> Section 2.5 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation outlines that under Standing Order 60(a) any contract that exceeds the statutory amount (currently £30,000) needs to be made under the Corporate Seal. Under Standing Order 51(b) the Corporate Seal can only be affixed when there is a resolution of the Council.
3.2	The tenders submitted for approval in Appendix 1 have been forwarded by Departments for approval. Departments have been required to provide assurance that provision for the expenditure has either been made within their departmental budgets or approval has been sought from the Director of Finance and Resources that this expenditure has been provided for within a corporate budget.

3.3	As part of this process, Departments have also provided assurance that appropriate resources are available within their departments in order to effectively administer and management any contract(s).
3.4	In accordance with Standing Orders these tenders shall comply with the relevant requirements of national legislation and European directives and be overseen by Corporate Procurement Services.
3.5	This report relates to corporate as well as departmental supplies and services only. The procurement of services and works contracts relating to the capital procurement is dealt with under the Capital Programme reports in accordance with the approved stage approval process.
3.6	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The financial resources for these contracts will be met within the current departmental budgets and the proposed departmental estimates process which are taken forward through the rate setting process.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>No specific equality or good relations implications.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1 – Contracts For Award, Schedule of tenders for consideration

Appendix 1 - Schedule of tenders for consideration

Table 1 - New tenders

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Tender for supply, fitting and maintenance of fire extinguishers	Gerry Millar	3 years
Tender for provision of minibus/coach service (with driver)	Gerry Millar	1 year plus option to renew for a further 3 years
Tender for provision of employment agency services	Jill Minne	1 year plus option to renew on an annual basis for a further 2 years
Tender for the supply, delivery and management of pyrotechnics	Donal Durkan	3 years with options to renew for a further 2 years
Tender for financial appraisals	Gerry Millar	3 years plus option to renew on an annual basis for a further 2 years
Professional services to develop a full feasibility study for the City Growth Deal	Suzanne Wylie	Up to 18 months

Table 2 - Contracts for extension of contract period

Title of tender	Director Responsible	Proposed extension
Tender for supply of general uniforms for stores	G Millar	Month by month until new contract is in place

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Subject:	Shared City Partnership Meeting – 5 th December 2016
Date:	16 th December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nicola Lane, Good Relations Manager
Contact Officer:	Margaret Higgins, Senior Good Relations Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to report to committee on the key issues discussed at the Shared City Partnership meeting held on 5 th December 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the minutes and the recommendations from the Shared City Partnership Meeting held on 5th December 2016.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Shared City Partnership (formerly known as the Good Relations Partnership) is a Working Group of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which consists of Elected members and representatives from various sectors across the city. The minutes from the Partnership are brought before the Committee for approval on a monthly basis.
3.2	The key issues on the agenda at the December meeting were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition • Update on the Department of Justice TBUC Interface Funding bid • Update on the Good Relations Action Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Peace IV
3.3	<p>More details regarding the above issues and recommendations are included in the minutes of the meeting</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.4	<p>The financial implications of all recommendations are contained within existing budgets</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.5	<p>The recommendations of the Partnership promote the work of the Council in promoting good relations and will enhance equality and good relations impacts.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1 - Copy of the minutes of the Shared City Partnership of 5 th December 2016.

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY, 5th DECEMBER 2016

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Members present: Councillor Kyle (Chairperson);
Alderman Sandford and Councillors
Johnston, and Walsh.

External Members: Ms. O. Barron, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust;
Mr. K. Gibson, Church of Ireland;
Mrs. M. Marken, Catholic Church;
Mrs. G. Duggan, Belfast City Centre Management;
Mr. M. O'Donnell, Department for Communities; and
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director;
Mrs. S. Toland, Assistant Director;
Mrs. M. Higgins, Senior Good Relations Officer;
Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Attwood and Nicholl,
Mr. S. Brennan and Mrs. J. Hawthorne.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 7th November were taken as read and signed
as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Change in Membership

The Chairperson welcomed Mrs. G. Duggan to her first meeting and reminded
the Members that she had replaced Mr. H. Black as the Belfast City Centre
Management's representative.

Presentation by the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition

The Chairperson reminded the Partnership that it had agreed that
representatives from the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition could
present to the Partnership regarding its work.

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 5th December, 2016**

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr. N. Armstrong, Dr. D. Bryan, Mr. T. Hartley, Professor Tom Hennessey and Mr. M. Sharma.

The representatives thanked the Partnership for the opportunity to present and commenced the presentation by advising that the Commission would not just focus on flags and emblems but would look at the broader issues of identity, culture and tradition.

The Partnership noted the specific role of the Commission as follows:

- to identify and acknowledge the opportunities presented by having a rich diverse community in which cultural expression could be celebrated;
- to consult with the established and new elements of the community;
- to identify key areas of commonality as well as difference;
- to consult with the United Kingdom and Irish Governments as appropriate, should its work touch on the expression of sovereignty, national identity and political allegiance in a divided society; and
- to encourage shared learning, active listening and understanding in a meaningful way across traditional boundaries.

The representative outlined the Commissions proposed timescale:

- phase 1 November 2016 – January 2017 - to listen, learn and ask questions (request submissions, public meetings, look at reports and information and discuss key issues);
- March 2017 – preliminary report to the First and Deputy First Minister;
- phase 2 April 2017 – September 2017– to consult on specific issues arising from the preliminary review; and
- final report(s) scheduled for December 2017.

The representatives concluded the presentation by detailing some of the questions the Commission wished to ask people/organisations. They outlined that they were keen to consult with all sections of the community and also that individual submissions were welcomed.

The representatives then addressed a number of questions following which they left the meeting.

Following a query, the Good Relations Manager confirmed that the Council would forward information to the Commission to assist with its work, however, she stressed that it would not be a formal submission but would be the outcomes/information gathered from previous relevant Council evaluations and workshops and events.

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 5th December, 2016**

Update on the Department of Justice TBUC Interface Funding Bid

The Partnership were advised that the final funding bid had been submitted to the Department of Justice (DoJ) through ring-fenced Fresh Start monies for 2016/17 to deliver good relations work at interfaces that could support delivery on the T:BUC headline action on, 'the removal of all barriers by 2023'.

The Good Relations Manager highlighted the following items that had been included within the funding bid:

- £2,500 facilitated co-design workshop with the SCP;
- £2,500 facilitated workshop with community stakeholders;
- £2,500 maintenance for the wildflower meadow at Townsend Street;
- £2,500 technical assistance for the Alexandra Park engagement process; and
- £18,000 technical assistance for the procurement of an independent Economic
- Appraisal for the former Finlay's site which will go forward (with Council as a strategic partner) for funding under the PIV call for capital projects.

The Members were reminded that, as part of the work around interfaces, an internal officer working group had been established to ensure cross departmental working and to explore potential priority sites where programmes could take place and these would then be taken to the Council for its consideration. She advised that officers had recently attended meetings of both the North and West Area Working Groups and had ascertained the Working Group's views regarding potential sites that could be included in any future bid to the DoJ and it had been agreed that further update reports would be brought back to the Working Groups in due course.

The Good Relations Manager advised that, in order to enable the Partnership to contribute to the conversation, a facilitated workshop would take place with Partnership members in the New Year.

The Members were also advised that they had been invited to attend a presentation by the University of Ulster on their recently completed research (commissioned by the DoJ) on 'Life at the Interface', which was being held at the City Hall on 19th January 2017 from 12.00 p.m. – 2.00 p.m.

The Partnership noted the submission of the 2016/17 T:BUC funding bid by the DoJ and agreed that a facilitated workshop on interface working would take place with the Partnership before the end of March 2017.

Update on the Good Relations Action Plan

The Good Relations Manager reminded Members that each year it was a requirement of the Good Relations Unit to submit the District Council Good Relations Programme Action Plan (DCGRP) 2016/2017 to the Executive Office in order to draw down funding for the Good Relations work of the Council.

She reported that officers had identified a project underspend in relation to the 2016/17 budget, as a result of a lower than anticipated uptake for the mural replacement programme and underspends by organisations that receive funding through the Good Relations Small Grants Programme.

The Good Relations Manager advised the Members that the underspend was in the region of £30,000 and officers had developed the following proposals for projects that met the aims of the DCGRP and could be delivered by March 2017:

- development of a bonfire beacon design that could be fabricated at lower cost, with longer durability than the current design - £2,500;
- fabrication of up to two beacons and repair of the existing beacons - £20,000;
- support for the development of literature to support a 'Peace Trail' in the area of North Belfast around the Girdwood shared space site - £5,000; and
- development of an online/training resource to capture Good Relations best practice - £2,500.

The officer asked the Partnership to note that there was no mechanism to allocate the underspend through grant aid as the process operated within defined opening and closing dates and in addition there was a need to spend the resources by March 2017, which would not be practicable through grant awards in January 2017.

The Partnership agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the suggested additional projects be approved for funding under the District Council Good Relations Programme 2016/17.

Update on Peace IV

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Partnership that the Stage 2 application had been submitted. She reported that SEUPB had advised that, due to the level of funding applied for, an additional level of assessment and appraisal would be required which would take slightly longer than originally anticipated. It was anticipated that the assessment and approval process would now be completed in the New Year rather than December, as originally planned. She reported that the original

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 5th December, 2016**

Plan timetable envisaged the work commencing in the 2017/18 financial year and it was anticipated that the revised timescale would not unduly impact upon the delivery of the programmes under the Plan.

Noted.

Chairperson

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Subject:	Request for the Use of the City Hall
Date:	16 th December, 2016
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	An application has been received from the 36 th (Ulster) Division Memorial Association Arts and Cultural Society for the use of the City Hall for a lecture and exhibition to mark the centenary of the role of the 36 th (Ulster) Division and the 16 th Irish Division in the Battle of Messines (copy attached at Appendix 1).
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider if it wishes to grant the use of the City Hall for the event in June, 2017.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Committee will be aware that, where a proposed event could be held to impact upon the Council's programme in relation to the Decade of Centenaries, then the opportunity is normally taken to seek the views of the Diversity Working Group before presenting the request to the Committee. However, the Working Group is currently not meeting whilst discussions take place on its future role and remit. Accordingly, the request is being presented to the Committee.</p> <p>The Council's policy on the use of the City Hall, whilst not specifically ruling out exhibitions</p>

3.2	<p>and lectures, does not encourage such use as the function rooms are not seen as being ideal for that use. However, given that the request is to mark a significant centenary, the Committee may feel that the request should be acceded to.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The cost of the provision of tea, coffee and biscuits for guests is estimated at £750. This can be met from within existing budgets.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>The Committee should consider if the request is in keeping with the principles established for events marking significant centenaries, as established by the Diversity Working Group.</p>
3.3	
3.4	
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1 – Application form for the use of the City Hall.



Subject:	Information Governance Training for Elected Members
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, Town Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Sarah Williams, Programme Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of report or summary of main issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to outline to Members the importance of attending Information Governance training which is planned to take place in February 2017.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of this report
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that the Council suffered a high-profile data breach in 2012. Following this breach, a group chaired by the Town Solicitor, the Information Governance Group, was established with officers from the Information Governance Unit, Digital Services, Audit Governance and Risk Services and Legal Services. This group is developing and implementing policies and procedures in the key areas of Information Governance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Information management (how information is created, described, used, stored, archived and disposed of) B. Information compliance (the legal framework and standards to ensure that information management is within the law) C. Information security (the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information within the organisation and when sharing with partners)

	<p>D. Information assurance (the practice of assuring and managing information risk)</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p>
3.2	<p>One of the key areas of risk in Information Governance relates to the protection of personal data as required by the Data Protection Act 1998. To this end, training has been delivered to over 2,300 council employees. In order to ensure that all Members are aware of the issues relating to personal data, and as agreed at November's Elected Member Development Working Group, it is proposed to hold training sessions for Members on the Council's Data Protection policy and procedures. Members will be aware that the need to comply with the Data Protection Act is also included in the Guidance to the Code of Conduct for Councillors and that individually you have legal obligations which could give rise to consequences in the event of non-compliance. This training will also cover the basics of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.</p>
3.3	<p>This training will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to be aware of when dealing with personal data • When to notify/register with the Information Commissioner • Data Protection and social media • Physical security of personal data • Working away from the office • Disposal of personal data • What to be aware of in relation to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004
3.4	<p>Two one-hour training sessions have been scheduled for February 2017 (see below) and, if required, further sessions can be organised. Members will be contacted individually with the details of these sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evening: Thursday, 9th February 2017 5.00 -6.00pm in the Lavery Room • Day-time: Tuesday, 28th February 2017 12.30 -1.30pm in the Lavery Room <p>All Members are strongly encouraged to attend.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None

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Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting 8 December 2016

Attendance

Members:

Councillor John Hussey (Chair)
Alderman Pat Convery
Councillor Matt Garrett (for Cllr J. McVeigh)
Councillor Billy Hutchinson
Councillor Michael Long
Councillor Lee Reynolds
Alderman Jim Rodgers (for Alderman D Browne)

Apologies: Alderman Browne, Cllr McVeigh

Officers:

Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources
Mark McBride, Head of Finance & Performance
Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects (for Item 2)
Phil Williams, Director of Planning and Place (for Item 9)
Emer Husbands, Strategic Performance Manager (secretariat)

1. Revenue Estimates 2017 /18

The Director of Finance and Resources provided an updated position on the revenue estimates and rate setting process for 2017 / 18. This included a revised EPP position and additional efficiency savings. A number of additional potential areas for savings were highlighted by Councillor Reynolds and these would be discussed further at the December SP&R Committee. The Director then outlined the proposed timetable for agreeing the estimates and striking the rate which would include party group briefings and special meetings of the standing committees in January 2017.

2. City Centre Development

The Director of Property and Projects outlined to members a possible city centre development opportunity and he agreed to take a report to December SP&R for a decision on the matter.

3. Programme for Government

The Chief Executive updated members on the Council's draft response to the Programme for Government. The detailed response would be presented to SP&R together with an Executive Summary which would also be e-mailed to members of the panel. She highlighted to members some of the key issues in the response and in particular the council's wish to

work as a strategic partner in co-designing and delivering aspects of the programme in line with its aspirations for the city and the region.

4. Belfast Agenda

An updated copy of the Belfast Agenda together with a short summary document was circulated. The Chief Executive reminded the panel that this would go out for public consultation from 15th December. A launch for stakeholders is planned for 15th December and with a number of area events taking place during January. Dates and venues would be sent to members and discussed further at the January meeting of the panel. Members welcomed the document and highlighted the importance of getting the support of our partners to develop and deliver realistic and resourced programmes of work to ensure we achieve our outcomes.

5. Westminster Update

Following the recent meetings in Westminster and Stormont the Chief Executive re-iterated the council's city growth deal priorities of, creating a single mechanism for regeneration and place-making powers, a focus on skills and employment of citizens at a local level, infrastructure development and exploring access to alternative financing platforms. She also informed members that the City Growth Committee has agreed to commission a detailed piece of work to develop the proposal (including financial contributions and pay-back).

Following the recent event at Stormont further meetings will be set up with MPs in January and another with MLAs. A Political workshop for partner Councils is also proposed for late January/early Feb as well as formal engagement with Executive.

6. Diversity Working Group

The members agreed that the Party Group Leaders would meet to discuss the future role and remit of the Diversity Working Group. A report would then be brought to SP&R in January 2017.

7. ICT for Members

The Director of Finance and Resources outlined the proposals to ensure members IT equipment is fully compatible with Office 365. This will involve the replacement of their IT equipment in April 2017. A protocol for ICT support for members was also being drawn up and would be brought to a future meeting.

8. Audit and Risk Panel Update

Alderman Rodgers, chair of the Audit and Risk Panel, provided the Members with a brief update on the recent meeting and in particular highlighted the 'clean' audit received from the NIAO. The minutes of the Audit and Risk Panel would be presented to the November SP&R Committee. He also reminded Members of the protocol for referring matters of concern around council processes to the Audit Panel in line with its terms of reference.

9. Planning Applications / Update

The Chief Executive informed the panel of the applications that were being presented to the Planning Committee in October.

The Director of Planning and Place updated the Panel on the progress with establishing a Framework for securing developer contributions in particular the timeline and steps included in consulting on the framework which will include party group briefings. A report on the framework including the developer contributions to date will be presented to the December Planning Committee.

10. AOB

(i) Robinson Centre

The members were updated on the position in relation to the Robinson Centre.

(ii) Peace IV

The Chief Executive updated the panel on the Peace IV Shared Space funding bid submitted to SEUPB and the fact that a decision was due in January 2017.

(iii) New Council Building

The Chief Executive reminded the panel that staff were starting to move into the new Council building and members were welcome to have a tour anytime from next week.

(iv) Bin Route Optimisation

Members highlighted that there were still problems in some areas following the changes to bin collection routes but that the management in Cleansing Services were helpful in trying to resolve any issues. The Chief Executive asked if she could be copied in on any correspondence to Cleansing Services so that she could discuss it with the Director of City

and Neighbourhood Services. She also informed the Panel that a report on Assisted Bin Lifts would be prepared.



Subject:	Report of the Audit & Risk Panel to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources and Deputy Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Andrew Harrison, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS)

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The Audit and Risk Panel is constituted as a working group of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. The purpose of the Panel is to provide an independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and associated control environment. The Panel also oversees the Council's financial reporting process.
1.2	The purpose of this report is to provide a brief summary to Committee of the key issues that have been considered and discussed by the Panel at its December 2016 meeting and present the detailed minutes (attached) for approval.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the minutes of the Audit & Risk Panel meeting of 6 December 2016 and notes the key issues arising from the meeting.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Panel Governance Arrangements
	Following a recent Member training session at Belfast Castle, the Panel agreed to an Improvement Action Plan, aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the operation of the

<p>3.2</p> <p>Internal Audit</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>External Audit</p> <p>3.4</p> <p>Other</p>	<p>Panel. Also in relation to the governance of the Panel itself, Members agreed to invoke the Council's option to extend the contract of its external member, Mr Richard Cox, for a further 2 years and agreed its programme of business for 2017. The Panel also considered the protocol for the referral of issues to the Panel.</p> <p>The Panel received and considered a report from the Director of Planning & Place on actions arising from the recent internal audit of planning and was provided with detailed information regarding ongoing issues and improvement plans. Similarly, following a recent internal audit and a separate stakeholder engagement exercise, the Panel considered a report and action plan relating to improving the Council's grants processes, with an emphasis on ensuring that the controls over grant streams were proportionate to the risks. Further information was provided to the Panel with regard to a number of recent completed audits in relation to waste management, estates, government procurement cards and progress being made in implementing agreed audit recommendations. Where appropriate, further follow-up actions were identified which will include AGRS 'following up' on the implementation of agreed actions arising from these audits and the Panel getting updates from management in relation to specific areas.</p> <p>Final NIAO reports on the 2015/16 financial audit were received and noted, including the Report to those Charged with Governance and the Annual Audit Letter. The accounts were unqualified, with a 'clean' audit opinion. The NIAO also presented their Annual Report on the outcome of audits at all councils during 2014/15.</p> <p>The Panel also received updates on health and safety, absence management performance, risk management and performance improvement arrangements.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Appendix 1 – Minutes of Audit and Risk Panel, 6 December 2016</p>

Audit and Risk Panel

Tuesday, 6th December, 2016

MEETING OF AUDIT AND RISK PANEL

Members present: The High Sheriff, Alderman Rodgers (Chairperson); Alderman Haire; Councillors Hargey, Hutchinson, Jones and Mullan; and Mr. R. Cox.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources; Mr. M. McBride, Head of Finance and Performance; Mr. A. Harrison, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services; Mr. T. Wallace, Financial Accounting Manager; Mr. L. Mulholland, Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager; Mrs. C. O'Prey, Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager; Mrs. E. Eaton, Corporate Health and Safety Manager; Mrs. C. Kane, Director, Northern Ireland Audit Office; and Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Pre-meeting with Director of NIAO

The Audit and Risk Panel met privately with the Director of the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO), Colette Kane, before the meeting commenced.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th September were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

External Member

(Mr. R. Cox left the room while this Item was under consideration)

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services, reminded the Panel that, in line with good practice, the Audit and Risk Panel had an external member who assisted it in fulfilling its terms of reference. He explained that the current external member, Mr Richard Cox, had held this position for just over a year, and that it was now incumbent upon the Council, in line with its contract with Mr Cox, to consider exercising its option to extend this contract for a further two years.

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2016**

The Panel was advised that Mr Cox played an important role in supporting the Chairperson and other Elected Members of the Panel in bringing an objective perspective to help the Council provide the highest standards of corporate governance arrangements.

The Audit and Risk Panel agreed to extend Mr Cox's contract for a further two years.

**Training session for Audit and Risk Panel, 11 October 2016 –
Summary and Improvement Actions Arising**

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) provided the Panel with an overview of the outcomes from the training which had been provided to the Panel at Belfast Castle on 11th October, 2016, and highlighted the 'good practice' and improvement actions which had been identified.

He advised the Panel that there were a number of areas where the Members had agreed that there was scope for further improvement, including:

- Making 'Audit and Risk Panel Update' an item on the agenda at Budget & Transformation Panel meetings to raise the profile of the work of the Panel, to include consultation on annual audit plan;
- Improving the Panel's own annual reporting to the Strategic Policy and Resources (SP&R) Committee through the Chairperson's attendance / presentation of report;
- Ensuring the Audit and Risk Panel minutes were sent to the External Member after issue (i.e. prior to next meeting). It was noted that formal Panel review / approval prior to the issue of papers to SP&R / Council may prove impractical;
- That the Panel would consider holding 'de-brief' meetings, without officers, once a meeting had formally concluded;
- The Panel and Chair would meet privately, and separately, with external and internal audit at least annually. It was noted that this was scheduled for the NIAO in December but needed scheduled for the Head of AGRS;
- That another Member awareness training would be arranged on audit, governance and the role of the Audit and Risk Panel;
- That items arising out of Panel meetings which were to be considered at the next meeting would be highlighted at the end of the minutes;
- That an annual report on activity and assurances of the Audit Assurance Board would be sought;
- That NIAO comment on the assessment of the effectiveness of the Audit and Risk Panel would be sought;
- That the Panel would, where appropriate, consider inviting Directors in periodically to talk the Panel through their key risks and their approach to managing them (noting that there was now an enhanced process of risk reporting to the Committees);
- Consider, in consultation with the City Solicitor, whether health and safety accident reporting could include information on the

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2016**

approach / underlying issues which might give rise to compensation claims; and

- Review and, where possible, try to simplify the language and key messages in the Audit and Risk Panel reports, particularly in regards to relating the key issues to objectives and outcomes.

The Panel was advised that, in addition to the above exercise, it had also been agreed at the training session that AGRS would, on behalf of the Panel, review the CIPFA 'self-assessment' of the Panel's effectiveness and present the results of this exercise to the Panel for its approval, together with any proposed actions arising. The Head of AGRS advised the Panel that that exercise had now been completed and he pointed out that it had shown that arrangements were largely compliant with the guidance and that the key issues arising were as follows:

- Consideration of Risk Management Strategy – Members noted that this was being considered in the context of a wider piece of work linked to the development of corporate management frameworks; and
- Separate meetings with external and internal audit.

The Panel was advised that the improvement actions noted above had been captured in an Improvement Action Plan.

After discussion, the Panel:

1. reviewed and approved the improvement actions which had arisen from the training;
2. reviewed and approved the comparison of current practice with the 'CIPFA – Audit Committees: practical guidance for local authorities' checklist, which was available in more detail on modern.gov; and
3. approved the related 'Audit and Risk Panel – Improvement Action Plan', which was available on modern.gov.

**Audit and Risk Panel Dates and
Indicative Programme of Business 2017**

The Panel agreed to the Indicative Programme of Business 2017 as presented by the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services, and agreed that it would meet on the following dates in 2017:

- 7th March;
- 13th June;
- 5th September; and
- 5th December.

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2016**

Report on Actions Arising From Internal Audit of Planning Service

(Mr. P. Williams, Director of Planning and Place, and Mr. E. Baker, Development Engagement Manager, attended in connection with this item)

The Director of Planning and Place introduced to the Panel Mr. Ed Baker, who had recently been appointed Development Engagement Manager in the Planning Department.

The Panel considered the undernoted report on the actions which had arisen from the internal audit of the Planning Department:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 This report provides an update on the action plan arising from the internal audit of planning. An Executive Summary from the audit report was presented to the Audit and Risk Panel in September 2016, highlighting that major improvement was needed within the planning service and that an action plan based on audit recommendations would be brought to the December meeting of the Panel.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Panel is requested to note the:

- **Action plan to implement audit recommendations;**
- **Planning Service Improvement Plan; and**
- **Update on the project to replace the Planning Portal.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 In April 2015, under the Local Government Reform programme Belfast City Council became responsible for delivering planning functions in Belfast. This involves:

- **receiving and making decisions on the majority of planning applications;**
- **enforcing breaches of planning permission;**
- **making tree preservation orders;**
- **protecting and preserving built heritage; and**
- **producing a local development plan outlining how land should be used and developed in the future.**

3.2 In August 2016 following an internal audit of the planning service, the AGRS team provided an audit opinion that major improvement was needed. A number of high, medium and low priority recommendations were made to improve the control environment across five main areas:

**Audit and Risk Panel,
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- **Customer Service**
- **Member Engagement**
- **Development Management**
- **Planning Portal**
- **Governance – including risk management, gifts, hospitality and conflicts of interest.**

3.3 The Planning Service has agreed an action plan to address the audit recommendations. All of the agreed actions are to be in place by March 2017. A copy of the plan, including management progress updates, is attached in Appendix 1.

3.4 All of the audit actions have been incorporated into the Planning Service Improvement Plan which was reported to SP&R on 18 November 2016 and is attached in Appendix 2. The Improvement Plan reflects the City Council's corporate priorities and objectives with a clear focus on an efficient and effective development management service. It is a continuation of previous improvements and covers both 'internal' and 'external' measures to bring about the necessary changes to the way business is conducted and how the public can enjoy an enhanced service. Updates on some of the key aspects of the Improvement Plan are highlighted below.

Member/Customer Engagement Update

3.5 Work is ongoing to improve engagement with customers and elected members. A series of engagement events have been held with stakeholders and all planning staff have received customer service training. Key priorities over the next few months are to finalise an engagement protocol with members, reviewing the scheme of delegation, finalising guidance on levels of interaction and service standards with the public and industry, and to further improve linkages across the Council including key internal stakeholders.

3.6 For example, reception processes are currently being reviewed in anticipation of the establishment of a joint reception with Building Control next month. These new arrangements will include a duty planner being based at reception to improve face to face customer contact.

3.7 A number of issues with the NI Direct call handling service were identified in the audit report. Over the next few months we will be reviewing the NI Direct service and working with Digital Services to investigate options to introduce an alternative corporately aligned call management solution. In

the short-term, the NI Direct system is providing performance information on call handling which is valuable to the service as we aim to improve accessibility/understanding of the planning process to all users of the planning system,

Planning Portal Replacement Update

- 3.8 The current contract for the ePIC Planning Portal runs to March 2019. The Department of Infrastructure (DFI) has advised Councils that it will not be responsible for the management of a new replacement system and has stated that a new system must be funded by Local Government. In response to this BCC has investigated a range of alternatives for system replacement and has looked at the following options:**
- 1. Belfast City Council procuring a replacement Planning system based on its own requirements.**
 - 2. Local Government collectively procuring and implementing a new Planning system.**
 - 3. The Department of Infrastructure - Planning Portal Management Board - taking responsibility for the Planning Portal replacement.**
- 3.9 A market testing exercise was undertaken and suppliers were provided with key high level requirements. Market Testing indicated that there are a number of commercial off-the-shelf systems that could meet the requirements of the Belfast Planning Service. 5 year costs are estimated as follows - Internally hosted - £220,000 or Externally hosted - £300,000 plus additional storage costs. Additional costs would also be required for data migration, and integration with other systems.**
- 3.10 Following this initial evaluation, Option 1 appears to be the most advantageous option which would allow Belfast City Council to procure a replacement Planning System based on its own requirements.**
- 3.11 Shortly after our options appraisal was completed the Planning Governance board and DFP Enterprise Shared Services invited Councils to participate in a 'Pre-Discovery' exercise to review the options for replacement of the Planning Portal. This resulted in a recommendation that a bespoke development of a new Planning Portal should be taken forward by the DoI as a shared service. The cost of this bespoke development was estimated at approximately £5 million which included a cost for data migration of**

£450,000 and annual costs of £30,000. This equates to a 5 year cost for BCC of £560,000.

3.12 Following concerns raised by SOLACE regarding the lack of analysis of all potential options and costs, Fiona McCandless (DFI) wrote to Councils asking that they participate in a ‘Discovery Phase’ that would now look at all options, produce an Outline Business Case and an Economic Appraisal.

3.13 BCC has responded to this request agreeing to participate as long as:

- 1. Participation in the Discovery phase does not commit Belfast City Council to accept any recommendations arising out of this work.**
- 2. All options will be given equal consideration before a final recommendation is made.**
- 3. A collaborative procurement of a commercial off-the-shelf product will be included as an option for taking forward a shared services approach.**
- 4. The feasibility of a Hybrid approach will be further investigated and detailed within the report (Multiple back office systems with a single online customer portal)**
- 5. Data Migration will be thoroughly explored.**
- 6. Agreed and costed approaches to data migration will include both the scenarios where a council opts in or out of any future collaborative development or procurement.**
- 7. A detailed specification of requirements will be provided to each of the participating councils at the end of the Discovery phase.**

3.14 The Planning Portal Governance Board will meet on 24 November 2016 to discuss the Discovery Phase of the process. Draft terms of reference for this work have been issued to the eleven Councils and will be discussed at the meeting. Officers will ensure that Belfast City Council’s requirements for Discovery, as outlined above, will be fully met. It is expected that the meeting will provide clarity around the timescale for the Discovery Phase.

4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1 To be met within approved structure and budget.”

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The Director and the Development Engagement Manager advised the Panel of the key actions which were being taken to address the audit recommendations. They also advised Members of some of the key systemic improvements which are being considered in the medium term including the replacement of the current portal system, the introduction of a suite of local key performance indicators and the use of the Council's telephony system as an alternative to NI Direct. .

In response Members raised concerns about the timeliness of the implementation of the audit recommendations and stressed the need to incorporate a planning CRM solution with a corporate one.

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services reminded the Panel that a report on the audit recommendations for the Planning Service would be analysed through their next Recommendations Monitor Exercise, and that a report would be submitted to the Panel for its consideration at its meeting on 13th June, 2017.

After discussion, the Panel:

1. agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, that a meeting be sought between Senior Management in the Council and the Statutory Consultees in relation to the response time taken by agencies in relation to planning applications; and
2. noted the recommendations within the report.

**Update on Belfast City Council Grant Funding and Proposed Improvement
Actions to current processes**

The Panel considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Belfast City Council has been gradually centralising its grants process following an independent review in 2011/12, which had three main objectives:

- **Improve accountability and governance**
- **Provide greater consistency in process and decision making**
- **Take a more customer focused approach**

1.2 Since 2011/12, significant effort has gone in to co-ordinating the central administration of the Council's large and small grants to ensure a consistent, fair and coordinated approach across council - from summer schemes to Community Services Capacity & Revenue to Culture and Arts Multi-Annual Funding. Several strands of work have taken place during 2015/16 to continue the improvement journey for

grants management processes and for the recipients with most significantly the procurement and introduction of a Grants Management System featuring an on-line application process for the first time.

1.3 This report focuses on the results of a recent AGRS review of grants and an externally facilitated review / series of workshops with key stakeholders regarding grants and the actions that management is proposing to take to improve the effectiveness of the current processes.

1.4 Other results from the AGRS Review and the external review will inform planned future work to align the grants programme and approach to the Belfast Agenda.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 In relation to improving the effectiveness of current processes Assurance Board / Audit and Risk Panel are asked to:

- Note the outcome of a recent AGRS audit of grants and the key issues arising
- Note the outcome of a recent externally facilitated review of grants, including feedback from various stakeholders and the key issues arising
- Note the actions that management is proposing to take to address the issues arising from the above reviews

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

3.2.1 Several strands of work have been undertaken during the last year to continue to improve and share the learning and experience across services in relation to the Council's grants process. To date, the strands of work have been undertaken independently and each has had a slightly different focus; however, there are a number of common messages. With the developing Belfast Agenda and outcomes framework there is an opportunity to use the findings to date to take a more holistic approach to grants.

3.2 AGRS audit

3.2.1 In late 2015, AGRS conducted an internal audit of grants, which included a detailed analysis of the grants, the system and process. While the audit provided a reasonable level of assurance, several areas for improvement to processes and

**Audit and Risk Panel,
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the system were identified. Areas identified that required attention included:

- Proportionality of control, so that the level of control applied is reflective of the value of the grant and the risk profile of the funded organisation / grant stream
- Timeliness of processing, so that there is formal tracking, monitoring and reporting of the timeliness of grant processing to identify the causes and trends as well as potential solutions
- Focus on outcomes, so that there is improved monitoring and reporting on outcomes of the grants programme

3.2.2 A copy of the Executive Summary from the audit report (which has already been provided to management, the Audit Assurance Board and the Audit and Risk Panel) is attached at Appendix A.

3.3 Externally Facilitated Review

3.3.1 In September 2015, an independently facilitated workshop was carried with internal stakeholders in relation to those grants administered and delivered by the Development Department. At this stage it was also acknowledged that feedback from grants recipients would be essential to inform any overall lessons learned and that this should also consider the views of other Council services involved in delivering grants.

3.3.2 In November 2015, over 100 grant applicants across all grants streams participated in a short workshop to assess their views and experiences of the current grant process and to identify potential areas for improvement. Participants had the opportunity to provide feedback (both in writing and through discussion) on all stages of the process. This workshop was independently facilitated by Anne McMurray and officers across Council assisted during the session.

3.3.3 The report from the grant applicants workshop (attached at Appendix B) includes suggestions for improvement in terms of :

- Timescales and timeliness of the grant calls, payments and processing
- Promoting and providing clear guidance and feedback at all stages of the process

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- Continuing to provide one-to-one contact points and support for applicants in terms of (i) building capacity and (ii) assistance with grant applications
- Addressing the proportionality of the levels of administration and the value of grants
- System improvements to include automatic alerts e.g. upload limits and process improvements such as reviewing the need for compulsory attendance at the awareness workshops.

3.3.4 Although there is a clear difference in approach / methodology between the audit and external review, there is clear commonality in message.

3.4 Proposed Action

3.4.1 Following a meeting involving relevant Directors, senior management and AGRS an action plan to address the current issues raised in the audit report has been developed, lead officer assigned and implementation dates set and is attached at Appendix C. In line with established processes, AGRS will input these actions on to the MK Insight system and report on implementation progress.

3.4.2 A further action plan addressing the current additional issues / recommendations arising from the external review is attached at Appendix D. These suggestions have been included in the overall Central Grants Unit improvement action plan which is monitored by the Business Support Manager, Development Department. The completion date is 31 March 2017.

3.4.3 The key actions that are to be taken are summarised below:

- Two senior responsible officers have been identified for grants. The Director of Development will have responsibility for events / tourism / culture / arts, while the Director of City & Neighbourhood Services will have responsibility for all other streams. It was agreed at the meeting that the Central Grants Unit would continue to sit in the Development Department, but would report to the relevant SRO depending on the grant stream.
- A number of 'quick win' improvements have been identified and will be implemented in the short term. These will aim to improve the administration process for grants.

3.5 Equality & Good Relations implications

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3.5.1 Equality and good relations considerations are factored into the design and delivery of the grants and associated process and will feature as part of any ongoing improvements and programme of work.

3.6 Finance & Resource Implications

3.6.1 None at present.”

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

**AGRS Progress Report
(September - November 2016)**

The Panel considered a report which provided an overview of the specific internal audits which had been carried out for the period between September, 2016 and November, 2016, by Audit, Governance and Risk Services.

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services highlighted that audits of Waste Management, Estates Management and Government Procurement Cards had been completed, where the opinion for the latter two was determined as ‘Some Improvement Needed’ and Waste Management determined as ‘Major Improvement Needed’.

A number of Members expressed concern regarding the findings of the Waste Management audit, particularly given the large budget involved and the backlog of contracts. The Panel requested that the Director be asked to attend the next meeting of the Panel to provide an update on the actions being taken address the issues identified in the audit, and that this update includes an update on arc21. The Head of AGRS indicated that the implementation of the audit recommendations would be reviewed as part of the action tracking review, with a reportsubmitted to the Panel at its meeting on 13th June, 2017.

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services advised the Members that a number of important assurance audits were ongoing, namely, on the Review of ERDF projects post-delivery arrangements, Budgetary Control and Financial Reporting, Major Projects, Payroll and Payments to Members, Business Continuity Management, Follow up review of Visit Belfast, Follow up review of the Capital Programme, and Annual Compliance Review of Police and Community Safety Partnerships, and advised that the outcomes of these would be reported to the Panel in March, 2017.

The Panel was also advised that the enquiries into concerns which had been referred to the Council by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) was nearing completion and the Head of AGRS updated the Panel on the outcome of the investigation, and AGRS was continuing to liaise with the PSNI in relation to two ongoing fraud investigations and with the Department of Finance in relation to a case involving a suspected fraud against Sport NI.

After discussion, the Panel:

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1. noted the Audit, Governance and Risk Services Progress Report for the period September – November 2016; and
2. agreed to invite the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to attend the next meeting in relation to the Waste Management Audit Report and in relation to arc21.

Audit Recommendations Monitoring Report

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) Manager, Mr. Mulholland, reported that AGRS undertook, on a twice yearly basis, a monitoring and validation exercise to determine the progress of actions arising from agreed audit recommendations.

He advised the Panel that the previous validation exercise, which had been undertaken by AGRS and reported to the Panel on 7th June, 2016, focussed on a review and validation of open audit recommendations in relation to 10 specific areas where a significant number of actions had required attention. The Panel was advised that the most recent exercise had encompassed a review of all audit recommendations which were open as of 22nd September, 2016. The Panel was advised that the exercise began with 230 'live' actions and that 68 of those actions had been closed. The Manager pointed out that this had left 162 'live' actions on the system, 93 of which had been partially implemented. He advised the Members of the Panel that there had been a 29% decrease in the number of open actions during the period ending 31st October, 2016.

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager advised the Panel that approximately a third of the recommendations which remained open were classified as high priority but he explained that a number of these related to substantial pieces of work, such as the Council's procurement process, overtime and IT systems. The Panel was advised that these were significant areas of work for the Council and the Manager stressed the importance of the monitoring process to address the issues.

The AGRS Manager highlighted that detailed action plans for both the Planning and Grants audits had recently been received and that those actions would be followed up in the next recommendations monitor exercise.

The Panel noted the update on the progress which had been made by management to implement audit recommendations.

Corporate Risk Management

The Panel considered the undernoted report in conjunction with associated appendices:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

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- a) report to the Audit and Risk Panel on the assurance provided by Directors, in consultation with their departmental risk champions, on the risk management processes within their departments, including any updates on the corporate risks
- b) update the Audit and Risk Panel on the timeframe for management providing committees with corporate risk updates
- c) update the Audit and Risk Panel on the timeframe for AGRS reviews of the corporate risks
- d) update the Audit and Risk Panel on business continuity management.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Audit and Risk Panel is asked to note:

- the corporate risk register and compliance with the quarterly risk management process
- the timeframe for management providing committees with corporate risk updates
- the timeframe for AGRS reviews of the corporate risks
- business continuity management update

3.0 Main report

3.1 This section covers:

- Compliance with the quarterly risk management process (3.2)
- Monitoring and Reporting on the Management of the Corporate Risks – Assurance from Management (3.3)
- Reviewing the Management of Corporate Risks – Assurance from AGRS (3.4)
- Business Continuity Management update (3.5)

3.2 Compliance with the Quarterly Risk Management Process

3.2.1 A one page summary of each of the 16 corporate risks is set out in the Corporate Risk Register at Appendix A).

3.2.2 Management are responsible for reviewing the corporate risks / progress on actions on a quarterly basis on MKinsight.

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3.2.3 We can confirm that 14 of the 16 corporate risks have been allocated action owners and timeframes and have been input to the Council's risk management system, MKinsight.

3.2.4 Specific information in terms of action owners and timeframes is still required for the following 2 corporate risks – we are liaising with the relevant officers to get this information:

- **Strategic Planning and Corporate Frameworks**
- **Agreement and Delivery of Community Plan / Belfast Agenda**

3.2.5 The table below summarises compliance with the risk review process for the quarter-end September 2016. The majority of assurance statements have been completed and are due to be returned shortly.

Chief Officer	Assurance regarding compliance with the risk management process
Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources	Full compliance, with the exception of a small number of departmental level risks which require review.
Director of Organisational Development	Full compliance
Director of City and Neighbourhood Services	Full compliance
Town Solicitor	Full compliance
Director of Property and Projects	There has been an issue in respect of service level risks where a number of these have not yet been reviewed. The Director confirmed that he will seek assurance from his management team that the reviews will be brought up to date.
Director of Planning and Place	Compliant re building control and corporate risk. Work is underway to develop a risk action plan for the delivery of the replacement Planning Portal.
Director of Development	Full compliance
Director of City Centre Development	This is the first time that the Director of City Centre Development has been brought into the quarterly assurance process. Full compliance in terms of the review of the corporate risk.

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	Further work to be undertaken to develop the project risk management processes.
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3.2.6 In addition to the management of corporate wide risks, the Council’s risk management process provides for formal project risk management in respect of major, high risk, capital projects, as part of overall project management. This process is overseen by the Director of Property and Projects. He has indicated to us that he was reviewing the list of ‘high risk’ projects to confirm that it was up to date and would provide assurance regarding risk management within his signed assurance statement.

3.3 Monitoring and Reporting on the Management of the Corporate Risks – Assurance from Management

3.3.1 In terms of receiving assurance on the progress being made to manage these corporate risks, management will report to the relevant committee’s as follows:

Committee	Risks	Date
Strategic Policy and Resources Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ERDF Projects ▪ Physical Investment Programme ▪ Asset maintenance ▪ Leisure estates programme ▪ Financial position of the Council ▪ Strategic planning / corporate frameworks ▪ Change Management. ▪ Information Governance ▪ Agreement and delivery of community plan / Belfast Agenda <p>[H&S was reported to committee in September 2016]</p>	20 January 2017

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People and Communities Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GLL ▪ Waste management ▪ Safeguarding all ages 	10 January 2017
City Growth and Regeneration Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ City Centre Regeneration Strategy 	11 January 2017
BWUH Shareholders' Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performance Management at the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. 	12 January 2017
Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Development Plan. 	17 January 2017

3.4 Reviewing the Management of Corporate Risks – Assurance from AGRS

3.4.2 AGRS are responsible for undertaking specific reviews to provide independent assurance that risks are being managed in line with the agreed action plan in order to achieve the target risk rating within the required timeframe. AGRS will undertake these reviews in 2 tranches and will report the results of these reviews to the relevant Director, the Assurance Board and the Audit and Risk Panel as follows:

Tranche 1

3.4.2 Reviews of the risks listed below will be undertaken in December / January 2017, with the results reported to the Audit and Risk Panel in March 2017

- Information governance
- H&S
- Asset maintenance
- Agreement / delivery of Community Plan
- Change management
- Strategic Planning / corporate frameworks
- Local development plan
- City Centre regeneration strategy
- Financial position of the Council

Tranche 2

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3.4.3 Reviews of the risks listed below will be undertaken in March / April 2017, with the results reported to the Audit and Risk Panel in June 2017

- ERDF projects
- GLL
- Managing performance at BWUH
- Waste management
- Physical investment programme
- Leisure estates programme
- Safeguarding all ages

3.5 Business Continuity Management update

3.5.1 One of the key ways that Members and Chief Officers can gain assurance over the arrangements we have in place to manage a disruption to our services, is that the Business Continuity (BC) plans are up to date and have been exercised (at least annually) to ensure their effectiveness.

3.5.2 All services, with the exception of Digital Services, have planned their BC exercise for 2016-17 and have been reminded of the need to ensure that BC exercises are scheduled and undertaken by the 31 March 2017. We have been liaising with Digital Services and have been assured that the BC exercise will be undertaken during November 2016 and that the relevant reports will be provided.

3.5.3 An external review of the councils BCM arrangements is due to take place in early 2017 in order to provide Members and management with independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements along with any proposed improvements.”

Regarding the safeguarding risk, members were advised that a management report was being prepared for submission to the People and Communities Committee. The Head of AGRS undertook to advise management of the need for this paper to cover the safeguarding arrangements that the Council has in place for clubs using Council facilities and coaches employed by the Council.

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

Report to those charged with governance (including management responses to audit recommendations)

The Head of Finance and Performance advised the Panel that the Local Government Auditor had certified the 2015/2016 statements for Belfast City Council with unqualified opinions.

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He advised the Panel that the Report had identified two significant risks as part of the Audit Strategy, namely:

1. Landfill aftercare cost provision; and
2. Local Government Reform

The Panel was advised that the Local Government Auditor had identified three areas where recommendations had been made, which were prioritised as 'important issues to be addressed by management in their areas of responsibility':

1. Procurement of Capital Investment Programme Review 2015 –this related to diversions from normal procurement practice and AGRS was currently carrying out an investigation into this area;
2. Funding Request for Groups – This related to awards to seven organisations previously approved by the Council under section 37 of the 2011 Act, and recommended developing an open and transparent process in assessing funding requests; and
3. Contract Management Issues – This related to issues raised by a whistleblower and had been subject to a detailed review by AGRS.

The Head of Finance confirmed to the Members that management would monitor the progress made in implementing the recommendations and would report back to the Audit and Risk Panel on progress which had been made.

The Panel noted the report to those charged with governance Audit Results for 2015/16 and agreed the management responses.

Final NIAO Annual Audit Letter

The Panel considered the undernoted report which outlined the key aspects of the Council's Annual Audit Letter for 2015/2016, which had been received from the Local Government Auditor:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 As an independent auditor of the Council, the Local Government Auditor seeks to examine that the Council has managed its affairs having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and that public money is properly spent or in the case of income properly accounted for. The Annual Audit Letter is issued under Article 13 of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. The Regulations require the Council to publish this Annual Audit Letter as soon as reasonably possible.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 To note the comments and review the Annual Audit Letter.

3.0 Main report

1. Financial Statements

The Chief Local Government Auditor had noted a number of adjustments to the draft accounts as a result of her audit work and these are covered in a separate report. The accounts for the 2015/16 year were given an unqualified opinion.

The Chief Local Government Auditor has indicated that the Council will need to prepare group accounts from 2016-17 to consolidate the activities of the BWUH Ltd.

2. Proper Arrangements

The Chief Local Government Auditor is required to satisfy herself that proper arrangements have been made for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

The Chief Local Government Auditor has confirmed that she is satisfied that the council has proper arrangements in place.

3. Performance Improvement

The Chief Local Government Auditor is responsible under statute to review the performance improvement plans, and the arrangements made to deliver on those plans, for each financial year.

As the 2015-16 financial year was the first cycle of this process, there were limited requirements for councils and the audit process was aligned accordingly. However, from next year (2016-17), the results of performance improvement audit work will be published on the NIAO website.

4. Annual Governance Statement

The Chief Local Government Auditor has indicated that the Annual Governance Statement reflects compliance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015-16, it also complies with proper practices as specified by the Department of the Environment, and it is not

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misleading or inconsistent with other information from the audit.

5. Absenteeism

The annual rate of absenteeism has shown an increase of 0.41 days from 2013/14.

Average number of days sickness absence per full time employee

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
10.47	10.33	9.9	10.31	10.3

There has been a considerable reduction in sickness absence since 2005 and the robust, fair and consistent management of attendance continues to be a key priority for Belfast City Council.”

Mrs. Kane summarised the findings of the Auditor’s Letter and highlighted that the Council would be required to prepare group accounts from 2016-2017 to consolidate the activities of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd.

The Auditor had been satisfied that the Council had put in place ‘proper arrangements to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources and that public money had been properly accounted for’ during the financial year 2015/2016.

After discussion, the Panel thanked the staff of the Audit Office for the work which they had undertaken and agreed to note the information which had been provided.

Local Government Auditor's Annual Report 2016 (all Councils)

The Director of the Northern Ireland Audit Office advised the Panel that the Local Government Auditor was required to produce an annual report which summarised, from an external audit perspective, the key issues which had arisen in all Councils across Northern Ireland. She advised that the report provided the Local Government Auditor’s perspective on the audits of all local councils based on the key messages from audits performed up to 31st March, 2016.

The Chief Local Government Auditor explained that the report had raised a wide variety of issues arising from the audits, including local government reform, the management of resources, good governance and absence. She pointed out that, with regard to Belfast City Council, the report did not include any specific issues but that a number of tables were included to allow comparison with other councils

After discussion, the Panel noted the contents of the report of the Local Government Auditor for 2016 and noted that a copy was available on modern.gov.

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Update on Corporate Health and Safety Performance Report

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager provided the Panel with an update in relation to the Council's Health and Safety performance for the second quarter of 2016/2017. She explained that 42 accidents involving employees and 18 involving non-employees had been reported during the quarter, which represented a decrease of nine and two respectively on the previous three months. The majority of those accidents could be attributed to slips, trips and falls, lifting or carrying, wasp stings and being struck by a moving object.

She reported that seven accidents had been categorised under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), which was five less than in the previous quarter. Finally, the number of reported accidents occurring in GLL-managed facilities during the quarter had been 95, with the number involving employees and non-employees having been 11 and 84 respectively. Of those, one accident had been categorised under RIDDOR reportable to the Health and Safety Executive NI (HSENI). She informed the Panel that there had been 16 incidents of work-related violence during the quarter, which had decreased from 44 in the previous three months.

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager provided information on seven visits to Council premises which had been undertaken by the HSENI in August 2016. She reported that, while this was a higher figure than usual, the Council had been able to demonstrate a responsible approach to health and safety management throughout and was able to provide the necessary documentation to support its position. She confirmed that a meeting had taken place between the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services and GLL to inform the HSENI of the contractual relationship between the two parties and their respective health and safety responsibilities.

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager concluded by reviewing the progress which had been made in relation to the Corporate Health and Safety Unit's key health and safety priorities for 2016/2017 and by confirming that work would continue on the development of effective arrangements for the monitoring and reporting of the key corporate risks set out within the Corporate Health and Safety Risk Register.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

Absence Rates Q/E September 2016

(Mrs. J. Minne, Director of Organisational Development, attended in connection with this item.)

The Panel considered a report providing information on the absence figures for the second quarter of 2016/2017. The Director of Organisational Development reported that sickness absence per employee for that period had been 5.27 days, which meant that the Council was above its target to reduce sickness absence to 10 days by the end of March, 2017. She advised that the number of absences which had been classified as long term (20 days or more) during the quarter had been 65.5%, with no change compared to the same period last year. The Panel was advised that the number of staff

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with recorded absence had increased to 37.67%, and that it had been 35.94% in the same quarter in the previous year.

She informed the Panel that a detailed analysis had been undertaken of the management of attendance in each Council department and set out the main reasons for absence across each department. She pointed out that Chief Executive's, City and Neighbourhood Services and Property and Projects were at risk of not meeting their target for 2016/2017.

The Panel was advised that the figures were, in part, a result of an ageing workforce and highlighted that a number of the long-term absences were due to cases of cancer or organ transplants. The Director acknowledged that, while there was a high number of difficult and sensitive absence cases which had warranted a considerable level of discretion to be applied, there was a need to refocus on attendance management compliance to ensure all efforts were in place to reach the target. She advised the Members that Corporate HR would continue to robustly monitor the implementation of the Council's Attendance Policy to ensure that timely and appropriate action was taken to manage attendance fairly and effectively across the organisation.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

Performance Improvement Arrangements

The Panel considered the undernoted report:

1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To provide assurance to the Panel that Council's arrangements to monitor performance of the delivery of its Improvement Objectives are in place to ensure compliance with the performance improvement requirements of Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014.

2.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

2.1 Note that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee received a full mid-year update on all the activity relating the delivery of the Council's Improvement Objectives

2.2 Note the NIAO has undertaken their annual audit and assessment on the Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement. The NIAO report and any proposed actions for improvement will be presented to the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel.

3.0 Main report

3.1 BCC Plan 2016-17

BCC's Corporate Plan 2016-17 was agreed by Council in May 2016. Contained within the Plan is the Council's commitment to securing continuous improvement through delivery of 11 Improvement Objectives in line with Part 12 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act. The projects underpinning these improvement objectives are delivered through strategic programmes of work, which are reported to the appropriate Committee on an ongoing basis and managed through the Corporate and Departmental Management teams. Members of the Panel will also be aware that additional delivery structures are also in place for large scale programmes of work, such as Leisure, and these are also reported through CMT and Committee.

3.2 However there is a need to provide a full performance update on the plan in line with Improvement Duty. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as the Committee responsible for overall performance received this report at its meeting on 19th November. The overall update had been compiled from a range of sources and provided a detailed overview of progress to date on all programmes of work. A separate update on the council's extensive capital programme and support for physical development across the city was also provided.

3.3 A presentation was tabled at the meeting by way of a summary document which also allowed members to see that many of our projects and programmes of work are already aligned with the Priorities outlined in the Community Plan / Belfast Agenda.

3.4 A half year Finance update was also presented to the Committee.

3.5 Performance Improvement Duty

In line with Part 12 of the Local Government Act the NIAO must undertake an annual audit and assessment of the Council's arrangement to secure continuous improvement. This review took place during August and September and the Audit Office will issue their final report to the Chief Executive by 30 November 2016. An initial draft which has been reviewed by officers states that the Local Government Auditor is

‘Satisfied that the Council has discharged its statutory performance improvement and reporting duties and that it acted in accordance with the Guidance.’

3.6 A few proposals for improvement are included in the report and actions to implement these including the full report will be presented to the next meeting of the Panel.

3.7 **Corporate Plan and Improvement Objectives 2017-20**

The Panel should note that work has begun on the development of the Council’s Corporate Plan 2017 – 20 and associated Improvement Objectives, with an initial workshop held with the Committee in October. This new plan will build on the programmes and projects already underway and further align with the outcomes, priorities and actions within the Belfast Agenda.

3.8 **Financial Implications**

The Council is required to cover the cost of the Performance Improvement Audit and The NIAO have advised that fees will be calculated on the basis of the time spent by NIAO on Belfast’s audit and on the levels of skill and responsibility involved.

3.9 **Equality and Good Relations**

None associated with this report.”

The Panel adopted the recommendations within the report.

Date of next meeting

The Panel agreed to hold its next meeting at 1.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 7th March, 2017.

Local and Belfast Investment Funds – Ald. Rodgers to raise

The Panel noted a recent article in the media in relation to the Local Investment Fund and the Belfast Investment Fund. The Director of Finance & Resources confirmed that, in keeping with the Terms of Reference of the Audit and Risk Panel that, where any individual Member wished to raise an issue under the terms of reference, the Member should either raise the matter through the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee or, in the case of urgency, with the Chief Executive.

The Panel agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Audit and Risk Panel should be circulated to all Members of the Panel and Party Group Leaders for their reference.

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Chairperson

ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

Monday, 5th December, 2016

MEETING OF ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

(Held in the new Olympia Leisure Centre)

Attendees

- Directors:** Mr. J. McGuigan (Chairperson)
Councillor Boyle
Councillor Long
Mr. P. Boyle
Mr. J. Higgins
Mr. C. Kirkwood
Ms. K. McCullough
Mr. R. Stewart
Mr. G. Walls and
Mr. C. Webster.
- Officers:** Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director
(City and Neighbourhood Services);
Mr. N. Munnis, Partnership Manager; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.
- GLL:** Mr. G. Kirk, Regional Director and
Mr. G. Holland, Partnership Manager.

Welcome

Mr. McGuigan reported that, following the recent recruitment exercise, he had been appointed to the role of Chairperson of the Board and that Mr. P. Boyle, Mr. J. Higgins, Mr. C. Kirkwood, Ms. K. McCullough and Mr. C. Webster had been nominated to serve as Directors. He welcomed the new Directors to their first meeting and paid tribute to Councillor McAteer, the previous Chairperson, for the contribution which she had made to the work of the Board over the course of the past year.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Mr. McGarrity and Mr. Mitchell.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th October were approved.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Annual Accounts 2015 - 2016

(Mr. D. Moan, Advanced Accounting, and Ms. J. Wilson, Business Manager, City and Neighbourhood Services Department, attended in connection with this item.)

Mr. Moan informed the Board that the accounts for Active Belfast Limited for the period ending 31st March, 2016 had now been completed. He provided a brief overview of the accounts, which included the company's Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet and recommended that the Board approve them for submission to Companies House before the deadline date of 31st December.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Mr. Stewart,

Seconded by Mr. Walls and

Resolved - That the Board approve the accounts for Active Belfast Limited for the period ending 31st March, 2016.

The accounts were thereupon signed by Mr. McGuigan and Mr. Walls, the Chairperson and the Treasurer of the Board, respectively.

GLL Positive Impact Summary

The Partnership Manager reminded the Board that it had, at a previous meeting, agreed that it would be beneficial to receive on a quarterly basis an update on the positive impacts being achieved by GLL across its four strategic elements of Better Business, Better Communities, Better People and Better Services.

Accordingly, Mr. Kirk highlighted GLL's success at the recent Social Enterprise Northern Ireland Awards and at the Belfast Top 50 Business Awards, together with initiatives such as the Better Belfast Club Games and the Paralympic Sport event, both of which had been held in the Girdwood facility. He highlighted also the recent opening of the new Spin Studio within the Falls Leisure Centre, the positive feedback from the latest Talent Identification Scheme and the fact that GLL had been appointed as the lead partner in Belfast of the MacMillan 'Move More' Programme. He added that the use of social media continued to be an effective way of improving customer communications and promoting events and services.

The Board commended GLL on the positive impacts which it had achieved during the quarter and noted the information which had been provided.

Active Belfast Limited Pricing Review 2017/2018

The Board considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report

To propose amendments to the leisure schedule of charges for 2017/2018.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Board is requested to agree the proposed price increase to be applied from April 2017.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 A new membership architecture for Belfast was agreed by the ABL board in April 2016. The architecture applied to new members only with existing members 'ring-fenced' in terms of pricing and Terms and Conditions.

3.2 A six month review of the membership architecture provided the following headlines:

3.2.1 a £1.61 increase in average yield (year on year)

3.2.2 a 266% increase in Pay and Play memberships with 12,500 people now using this option across the city

3.2.3 Positive uptake on new membership options with:

- 50+ Better Swim memberships sold since May 2016**
- 150 GP referral memberships**
- 25 Better inclusive (disability memberships)**
- Overall Swimschool numbers have increased to over 2700 children**

3.3 There has been continued investment across the City with the inclusion of Girdwood Community Hub and Better Gym Connswater in 2016/2017. Olympia Leisure Centre and Church Lane are due to open in the next 12 months. On review of the current pricing, there remains elasticity in the marketplace to apply a price increase.

3.4 The 2017/2018 pricing proposal is to apply an average 2.4% price increase on selected prepaid memberships (including ring-fenced memberships), and an average 2.6% on Pay and Play activities from April 2017. Within the proposal, no individual price for any membership category, pay and play activity charge or facility hire rate is increased by more than 3%.

3.5 Within the proposal, several membership categories, pay and play activity charges and facility hire rates are retained at 2016/2017 prices. Most prices remain below the Northern Ireland average.

3.6 Proposed Prepaid Membership and Pay and Play Member Pricing.”

Prepaid Membership Type	15/04/16 -31/03/17		New Price from 01.04.17		% Increase
	Full Price	Concession Discount	Full Price	Concession Discount	
Better HF Corporate	£25.40		£25.40		0.0%
Better HF Student	£19.95		£19.95		0.0%
Better Swim	£19.95		£19.95		0.0%
Better Inclusive	£19.95		£19.95		0.0%
Better HF+ Non Resident	£35.00	£17.50	£35.50	£17.75	1.4%
Better HF Resident	£32.00	£16.00	£32.50	£16.25	1.6%
Better HF Single Centre	£28.00	£14.00	£28.50	£14.25	1.8%
Better HF Conc Spa		£19.00		£19.50	2.7%
Better Swim School		£17.00		£17.50	3.0%
Better Junior HF		£9.95		£10.20	2.5%
Better HF (Ring-fenced)	£26.00	£13.00	£26.80	£13.40	3.0%
Better HF Junior (Ring-fenced)		£14.00		£14.40	2.9%

Pay & Play Activities	15/04/16 -31/03/17		New Price from 01.04.17		% Increase
	Full Price	Concession Discount	Full Price	Concession Discount	
Fitness Suite	£5.50	£2.25	£5.60	£2.30	2.2%
Fitness Classes	£5.50	£2.25	£5.60	£5.60	2.2%
Handball/ Squash/Racquetball per person (60 mins minimum)	£4.50	£2.25	£4.60	£2.30	2.2%
Swimming	£3.20	£1.60	£3.30	£1.65	3%
Family Swim	£7.20		£7.40		2.8%
Laser Zone	£4.50		£4.50		0%
Shower/Changing	£2.20	£1.00	£2.20	£1.00	0%
Soft Play (60 Minutes)	£3.30		£3.30		0%
Bowls per person (60 mins min)	£4.50	£2.25	£4.60	£2.30	2.20%
Climbing	£4.50	£2.25	£4.60	£2.30	2.20%
Climbing Courses	£38.00		£39.00		2.60%
Table Tennis per person (60 mins)	£4.50	£2.25	£4.60	£2.30	2.20%
Tennis per person (60 mins)	£4.50	£2.25	£4.60	£2.30	2.20%

After discussion, the Board adopted the pricing proposal for 2017/2018, as set out within the report.

Hire Charges for Council Pitches

Arising from discussion in the foregoing item, Councillor Long pointed out that, at the meeting of the People and Communities Committee on 8th November, a proposal to adopt a discretionary policy for community and voluntary groups and grant a 25% reduction for groups which met criteria set out by the Committee had been defeated. He suggested that, should that proposal be made at some point in the future, it would be beneficial at this stage to obtain from GLL information on how a 25% decrease in the cost of hire of the pitches which it managed would impact upon its ability to deliver the £2 million in annual efficiency savings, as set out within its partnership agreements.

Mr. Kirk undertook to forward that information to the Board.

Review of Active Belfast Limited Business Plan

The Partnership Manager reported that the current Active Belfast Limited Business Plan had been approved by an interim Board of Directors in December, 2014 and that it had been the intention initially to operate it until 31st December, 2016. He pointed out that, since there was now a full complement of Directors on the Board, there was a need for much of the document to be updated to make it fit for purpose and to reflect the current tri-partite partnership operations and governance arrangements.

He informed the Board that it was proposed that the Plan would cover the three-year period until 31st March, 2020, which would bring it into line with the first five-year contract review point and that, in future, it should have a five-year lifespan. It was proposed also that the Plan be aligned with the Council/Active Belfast Limited reporting cycle, which commenced each year on 1st April, which would necessitate the current document being extended until 31st March, 2017. He added that it was anticipated that a draft document, outlining the structure, format and key principles of the new Plan would be submitted to the Board for consideration in January and that a final draft would be presented for approval in March. He concluded by seeking the views of the Board in relation to the overall development of the Plan.

After discussion, the Board agreed that:

- i. a Working Group be established to develop the Business Plan, and that it should comprise Mr. McGuigan (Chairperson), Mr. Higgins, Ms. McCullough and Mr. Stewart, who had each volunteered to participate;
- ii. the Partnership Manager should co-ordinate the development of the new Business Plan and organise an initial meeting of the Working Group by 31st December;
- iii. the structure and format of the current Business Plan should be used as a template for the new document;
- iv. a progress report be submitted to the Board meeting in January; and
- v. the current Business Plan should be extended until 31st March, 2017.

The Board noted that the Partnership Manager would contact those Directors who were not in attendance to determine if they wished to participate in the working group.

Update on Aquatics Strategy Working Group

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th June, it had agreed to the establishment of a Working Group to oversee the development of a Belfast-wide Aquatics Strategy, which would seek to increase participation in aquatic activity.

The Partnership Manager reported that the Working Group had met on 6th October and on 28th November and that it had on 25th and 26th October undertaken a visit to a number of sites in East London in order to observe aquatic activities and programmes in action and to meet with key partners. He confirmed that the Working Group had now agreed a work schedule, which would seek to have the Aquatics Strategy document ready for consideration by the Board by September, 2017. It had agreed also the broad scope of the Strategy, together with the outline format of the strategic document, which would be presented under eleven section headings. Phase one of the process would seek to produce by March, 2017, a draft of the first four sections, namely, an Introduction, a Vision, Strategic Principles and an Executive Summary. He added that he would forward to the Working Group by 31st December a discussion paper aimed at agreeing a draft vision and overarching principles for the Strategy.

After discussion, during which it was agreed that stakeholder consultation should be afforded priority within the development process and feature prominently in discussions within the Working Group, the Board noted the information which had been provided.

Schedule of Meetings 2017

The Board approved the following schedule of meetings and venues for 2017, with all meetings to commence at 4.30 p.m.:

- Monday, 16th January (Lavery Room)
- Tuesday, 21st March (Grove Wellbeing Centre)
- Thursday, 20th April (Lavery Room)
- Thursday, 15th June (Andersonstown Leisure Centre)
- Monday, 7th August (Lavery Room)
- Monday, 18th September (Girdwood Hub)
- Monday, 30th October (Lavery Room) and
- Monday, 11th December (Avoniel Leisure Centre)

New Olympia Leisure Centre – Mobilisation and Opening Arrangements

The Board considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide Board members with a progress update on the mobilisation and opening of the New Olympia Leisure Centre in January 2017.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Board is requested to note the information contained within this report.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Timeline to Opening

3.1.1 The centre was originally planned to be handed over from the principal contractor O’Hare McGovern on Monday 14th November 2016.

3.1.2 The centre will be utilised from 5th December to complete membership pre-sales, community tours, staff training, testing and the official launch.

3.1.3 The main products available at the New Olympia Leisure Centre are:

- **Swimming pools**
- **120 station fitness centre**
- **Spa Experience**
- **Sports Hall**
- **Better Coffee Corner Café**
- **Group exercise studio and community room**

3.1.4 The timeline to the centre opening is as follows:

- **Mobilisation and Fit out – 28th November to 2nd January**
- **Centre opening and testing period (open to the public/programmed sessions) – 2nd to 16th January**
- **Centre full opening – 16th January**
- **Opening programme – 16th January – April**
- **Official centre launch – 24th January
(Date confirmed for Lord Mayor’s attendance)**

3.2 Recruitment

3.2.1 A robust recruitment strategy has been written and delivered by GLL and has run on schedule ahead of the opening of the centre. This has given staff from all across the city the opportunity to work in a new facility, with staff transferring from both the old Olympia Leisure Centre and from other leisure centres in Belfast.

3.2.2 An outline of the New Olympia management and supervisory team is as follows:

Role	Date Appointed
General Manager	26th September
Assistant Manager's x 2	24th October
Spa Supervisor	28th October
Catering Supervisor	28th October
Leisure Centre Supervisor's x 3	28th November
Aquatics Officer	28th November

3.3 Training

3.3.1 A training and induction plan for all staff has been designed by GLL's Belfast Service and Modernisation Manager and will be funded through the BCC mobilisation fund within the LTP (Leisure Transformation Project).

3.3.2 An overview of training undertaken by leisure centre staff has been circulated to the Board.

3.3.3 A full training schedule for the New Olympia delivered by GLL is available upon request.

3.4 Programming

Centre Opening:

3.4.1 The New Olympia Leisure Centre will be open between 6 am – 10 pm (Mon – Fri) and 8 am – 5 pm (Sat and Sun) respectively.

Swimming Pools:

3.4.2 The swimming pools will be open to mirror the centre opening times both on weekdays and weekends.

3.4.3 GLL have held two meetings with existing Olympia swimming clubs to present their vision and delivery of the new Olympia pool programme.

3.4.4 This will consist of a balanced programme and will consist of public fitness swimming at all times and would move swimming clubs from exclusive use to shared use at peak and off peak times

3.4.5 The main 25m swimming pool will be broadly programmed as follows between Monday - Friday:

Time	Use
6 am – 9 am	Public fitness swimming and swimming clubs
9 am – 12 pm	Public fitness swimming and schools swimming
12 pm – 1.30 pm	Public fitness swimming
1.30 pm – 3 pm	Public fitness swimming and school swimming
3 pm – 7 pm	Public fitness swimming and Better Swim School
7 pm – 10 pm	Public fitness swimming and swimming clubs

3.4.6 The Teaching pool will be utilised primarily for Better Swim School, school swimming and specialist user and community groups. This programme is still to be finalised.

Fitness Centre

3.4.7 The fitness centre will be open to mirror the centre opening times on weekdays and weekends.

3.4.8 The fitness centre consists of 120 pieces of state of the art Technogym equipment and houses a 20 station spin cycling studio.

3.4.9 The equipment will consist of:

- Fixed resistance equipment
- Cardiovascular equipment
- Free weight equipment
- Cross functional equipment

3.4.10 A 3D illustration of the New Olympia fitness centre has been circulated to the Board.

Sports Hall

3.4.11 The sports hall is a four court sports hall designed to championship standard for Basketball competitions.

3.4.12 The sports hall can also be utilised for Badminton, Short tennis and 5 a side Football.

Better Coffee Corner Café

3.4.13 All programming information relating to Better Coffee Corner Café can be seen in 'Product Update'

Better Spa Experience

3.4.14 All programming information relating to Better Coffee Corner Café can be seen in 'Product Update' below.

3.5 Product Update

Better Coffee Corner

3.5.1 The Better Coffee Corner is a brand of GLL and a standalone concept introduced into a number of its centres in 2015

3.5.2 As a not for profit social enterprise, GLL is committed to providing locally and ethically sourced products

3.5.3 All paper products used at the Better Coffee Corner are made from recycled materials, the bottled water is supplied by Belu, also a social enterprise who donate 100% of their profits to Water Aid

3.5.4 Each time a customer purchases a hot drink from Better Coffee Corner, GLL will donate 2p of the cost to the GLL Sports Foundation (GSF).

3.5.5 The GSF is the largest independent athlete support programme in the United Kingdom helping athletes across the country to reach their potential and achieve sporting success

3.5.6 Further information on pricing and opening times has been circulated to the Board.

The Better Spa Experience

3.5.7 The Better Spa Experience was originally launched by GLL in London in 2007

3.5.8 The key to the Better Spa Experience brand success is based upon its ability to offer luxurious products of thermal spa experience, hot and cold spa therapies including saunas, steam, hot rooms and ice fountains with an affordable and accessible pricing structure

3.5.9 The brand was a concept created in order to introduce the therapeutic and recreational benefits of a spa culture to a

whole new audience. It will offer high quality, first rate services, but with less of the cost and exclusivity

3.5.10 Further information on pricing and opening times has been forwarded to the Board.

3.6 Marketing and Branding

3.6.1 There has been a spend of £50,000 for the launch of the New Olympia pre-sale and marketing strategy (£35,000 – BCC and £15,000 – GLL)

3.6.2 It was aimed at developing a suite of marketing materials to reflect a premium product and effectively engage the target market.

3.6.3 This marketing and branding was aimed at successfully identifying and targeting affluent, young professional as a key target market demographic in line with the catchment area.

3.6.4 It will be used to develop a programme of key events to engage and further develop relationships with local communities, stakeholders, partners and public bodies.

3.6.5 GLL has engaged with a specialist public relations company called Clearbox to assist communication with media relation, corporate partners and other key stakeholders

3.6.6 Utilising this marketing and branding concept was aimed to help promote the New Olympia Leisure Centre as the first project of the Leisure Transformation Programme.”

The Board noted the information which had been provided.

Other Business

Future Events

Mr. Kirk confirmed that an invitation would be forwarded to all Elected Members and to the Active Belfast Board to avail of free trial sessions for activities being provided within the new Olympia Leisure Centre. The Board would receive also an invitation to attend GLL’s forthcoming annual communications event.

Articles of Association

The Council’s Partnership Manager circulated for signature by the Board a “Written Resolution to Amend” its Articles of Association and confirmed that, both the Resolution and the revised Articles of Association would be filed with Companies House, once the required number of signatures had been secured.

Olympia Leisure Centre

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Directors undertook a tour of the facilities within the new Olympia Leisure Centre, which was due to open officially in January.

Chairperson

MEETING OF ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Minutes of the meeting of Monday, 21st November, 2016

Members present: Councillor Graham (Chairperson);
Aldermen Convery and Rodgers.

Also attended: Councillor Jones.

In attendance: Ms. J. Minne, Director of Organisational Development;
Mr. J. Walsh, Town Solicitor;
Ms. S. Williams; Programme Manager;
Ms. C. Christy, Human Resources Manager;
Ms. L. Rogan, Principal Human Resources / Organisational
Development Advisor; and
Miss. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 20th June were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Election of Chairperson

The Working Group was reminded that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 24th June, had agreed that a policy should be introduced whereby each Council Working Group would be required to consider the appointment of a Chairperson on an annual basis. That item of business would be placed on the agenda for the first meeting of each Working Group following the Annual meeting of the Council each year.

Accordingly, nominations were sought for the position of Chairperson of the Elected Member Development Working Group.

The Working Group agreed that Councillor Graham be re-elected to serve as Chairperson for the period to end on the date of the Annual meeting of the Council in 2017.

**Meeting of Elected Member Development Working Group
Monday, 21st November, 2016**

Members' Portal – Update

The Town Solicitor provided the Members with an update regarding the development of the Members' Portal, which included the key issues, proposed content of the portal, and impending actions of the project.

He reminded the Working Group that a facilitated Workshop had taken place in June to explore how technology could be used to improve communication between Members and the wider Council organisation and that the following three issues had been prioritised:

- They were unable to easily find relevant information (key contacts and documents) both inside and outside the council;
- They felt swamped with council-related information (size of committee report packs, emails, phone calls, voice mails); and
- They wished to be able to resolve issues raised by constituents more easily.

He advised that an update report setting out the proposed content had been brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 18th November, however, a more detailed report with an accompanying Action Plan was set out in Appendix 1, regarding the suggestions which had been made by Members during the workshop, together with the options considered and the recommended approach.

He outlined the proposed initial content of the Portal:

- A directory of key internal and external contacts – internal contacts could have photos and any relevant description tags (e.g. bonfires, dogs, derelict buildings);
- An alert function for significant issues, briefings for Members, training reminders, Council policies, and recent awards won by the Council;
- The existing “Members’ Meeting Calendar” (e.g. training events, and non-committee meetings);
- A new calendar showing the event and RSVP details for Council-organised events to which all Members had been invited;
- Open consultations: council’s own; NI Executive; and others which the council had been consulted;
- Member training material;
- A list of key council policies;
- Area Working Group area profiles; and
- Frequent Member queries.

He advised that up-to-date information about Council grants would also be developed for the Portal in the future.

He explained that additional communication actions to be taken forward by the project team included the development of a ‘contacting Members protocol’ (e.g. using their preferred method of communication, more mobile-to-mobile calls to enable easier call-back, email subject heading convention) and ensuring that new members of staff in key teams included their team in their email name so that Members would not miss important emails (e.g. *Sam Jones (CX Business Support)*).

**Meeting of Elected Member Development Working Group
Monday, 21st November, 2016**

He pointed out that the other issues which had been raised by Members outside the scope of the Members' Portal project had been highlighted to the Corporate Management Team for further consideration:

- Enhance the external website to be able to search for events/classes/programmes by location;
- The ability to analyse Council-related information by District Electoral Area (e.g. participants on programmes);
- Progress on the outcomes from organisations receiving significant funding from the Council;
- Address the issue of the size of committee report packs (e.g. by re-introducing a two-page limit);
- Consideration of the role of a central support team for Members; and
- Consideration of how any new corporate approach to customer relationship management could be used to help Members manage constituents' queries (e.g. tracking outcomes of queries, generating reply letters, the use of 'live chat' chatbot on the website).

During discussion, the Working Group raised matters regarding server issues, linking online calendars, the possibility for adding department codes to emails, the timeliness of reports being issued, and the need for Councillors to respond to event invitations.

The Town Solicitor advised that the Project Team would take forward immediate and medium-term actions, as outlined in the report, to aim for a pilot demonstration for Members in January, 2017.

Noted.

Member Development Action Plan and Activities – Update

The Director of Organisational Development provided an update on the implementation of the Member Development Plan and related activities.

She provided an overview of the action plan and development activities that had been undertaken to date, which included training sessions on media, code of conduct, and welfare reform. She also highlighted the workshops which had taken place as part of the Planning Committee Continuing Development Programme and the Peer Mentoring for the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Planning Committee.

She advised the Working Group that the activities planned to be delivered by January, 2017, included Welfare Reform training on 30th November and Equality training.

She asked the Working Group to consider whether or not 'Information Governance' would be a suitable topic to develop as a pilot e-learning module (for refresher training purposes after a classroom session had been attended) and that any further suggestions on topics to be piloted would be welcomed.

During discussion the Town Solicitor raised the importance of the Data Protection Act training for Members.

**Meeting of Elected Member Development Working Group
Monday, 21st November, 2016**

The Working Group noted the contents of the report and agreed that 'Information Governance' would be a suitable topic to develop as a pilot e-learning module (for refresher training purposes).

Elected Member Role Profiles and Knowledge and Skills Framework

The Working Group was reminded that, at its meeting on 20th June, it had agreed that Council officers, working in consultation with elected Members, design and develop a range of bespoke Member Role Profiles and a Political Skills Framework for Belfast City Council.

The Director advised that the primary purpose of the proposed Role Profiles was to ensure clarity of the role and responsibilities that elected Members undertook as both a local representative and as civic leaders.

She outlined the draft set of suggested Member Profiles, as set out in Appendix One of the report, for the following roles:

- Elected Member;
- Civic Dignitaries - Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and High Sheriff;
- Party Leader;
- Committee Chairperson;
- Planning Committee Chairperson;
- Licensing Committee Chairperson;
- Audit and Risk Panel Chairperson;
- Member of Area Working Group; and
- Member Champion.

She explained that the draft roles had been developed in line with best practice Role Profiles of councils in England, Scotland and Wales that had Member Charters or Charter Plus accreditation for elected member development.

She provided an overview of the draft Knowledge and Skills Framework that had also been developed, as set out in Appendix Two of the report. The framework comprised six suggested core themes: 'understanding our city, our council and our customers'; 'strategic leadership'; 'community leadership'; 'working with others'; 'good governance and due diligence'; and 'personal impact'.

The Working Group noted the contents of the report, in particular:

- the suggested draft Role Profiles and Knowledge and Skills Framework;
- that the final documents agreed by the Working Group would be presented to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee; and
- that the agreed Role Profiles would be used to:
 - assist and support Members when they were first elected; to underpin and enhance the Members' Personal Development Planning (PDP) process from 2017 onwards;
 - inform the design and delivery of a Member capacity building programme for 2017-2018; and

**Meeting of Elected Member Development Working Group
Monday, 21st November, 2016**

- inform future capacity building activities and programmes to support Members.

Revision of the Personal Development Planning (PDP) Process

The Director outlined the proposed approach to the review of the current Personal Development Plan (PDP) process for Members and outlined the following options regarding the future implementation of the process:

- **Option 1:** Members continue to complete a self-assessment exercise with no independently facilitated PDP meeting;
- **Option 2:** Party Leaders conduct their respective party colleagues' PDP meetings with Party Leaders being able to choose a provider from a select list of expert external providers to facilitate their own PDP meetings;
- **Option 3:** Commission an independent facilitator to facilitate Members' PDP meetings;
- **Option 4:** Commission a number of independent facilitators, to create a select list of providers, for Members to select a provider to conduct their respective PDP meeting;
- **Option 5:** A combination of all of the above options.

During discussion, Members raised issues regarding current PDP practices, current criteria and usage of the process, the changing role of the Councillor, and the possibility for modular accredited qualifications and capacity building.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed to the following:

- Option 4: Commission a number of independent facilitators, to create a select list of providers, for members to select a provider to conduct their respective PDP meeting.

It was also agreed that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Group regarding current PDP practices, to include benchmarking of the current PDP budget, Member participation, potential criteria and range of possible uses.

Chairperson

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Subject:	Requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality
Date:	Friday, 16th December, 2016
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 26th September, 2003, agreed to the criteria which would be used to assess requests from external organisations for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality. Subsequently the Committee at its meeting on 7th August, 2009, further amended the criteria so as to incorporate the new Key Themes as identified in the Council's Corporate Plan.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the recommendations as set out in the Appendix.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1.1	The revised criteria have been applied to each of the requests contained within the appendix and recommendations have been made to the Committee on this basis.
3.2	
3.2.1	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
3.3	Provision has been made in the revenue estimates for hospitality.
3.3.1	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> Not applicable
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached – Schedule of Applications

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Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
The Drascombe Association	Celebration of the Golden Anniversary of the Drascombe Lugger 25th March, 2017 Approximately 60 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	This event will celebrate the work of the Association while acknowledging the nautical heritage of the City. This is the first time the event has been held outside Great Britain and delegates will be shown the many sights and places of interest within the City. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Opportunities for Success Across the City'	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception Approximate cost £300
Tennis Ulster Branch Ireland	Belfast City ITF Junior Tournament 2017 Celebratory Event 23rd July, 2017 Approximately 205 attending	The use of the City Hall	The Ulster Branch of Tennis Ireland recently received a grant from the Council's Development Department to provide hospitality in the City Hall. This event will celebrate the achievements of their junior members throughout the past year and promote Belfast regionally and internationally in terms of sport and tourism. Approximately 130 athletes and their families will be travelling from across Europe and the USA and will be staying in accommodation within the city for up to 6 nights. This event will contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership – Strong, Fair, Together', 'Better Care for Belfast's Environment', 'Better Opportunities for Success Across the City' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'.	The use of the City Hall
Ulster Journals Limited	Ulster Tatler Dinner and Awards 2017 14th September, 2017 Approximately 360 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	This event aims to highlight and recognise those individuals who have excelled in their chosen field. The awards ceremony will recognise and acknowledge those individuals who have demonstrated significant achievement in categories such as Business Man/ Woman of the Year, Arts Personality of the Year and Hotelier/Publican of the Year. The event will also pay tribute to an individual by way of the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' Previous recipients have been Michael Longley, Barry	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500

			<p>McGuigan, Dame Mary Peters, Sir James Galway, Brian Friel, Phil Coulter, Gloria Hunniford and Terri Hooley.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	
Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry	<p>The Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry Annual Lunch</p> <p>16th June, 2017</p> <p>Approximately 400 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall.	<p>The Annual Lunch aims to provide a networking opportunity in order to encourage investment and business development opportunities for Belfast and beyond. The event, which will include representatives from both Local and Central Government, also seeks to facilitate discussion on economic and social regeneration.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	The use of the City Hall.
Belfast Pride	<p>Launch of Pride 2017 and Awards Presentation</p> <p>28th July, 2017</p> <p>Approximately 350 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	<p>This event will be the first official event of 2017 Belfast Pride Festival. The Festival will promote awareness of the arts, cultural heritage, history and experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered communities in Belfast and advance equality by offering a diverse and inclusive Festival open to all citizens of Belfast.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
Northern Ireland Children's Enterprise	<p>Celebration of Volunteers</p> <p>13th April, 2017</p> <p>Approximately 70 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall	<p>This event will highlight and celebrate the work of the volunteers and the benefits gained over the years through the organisation's many community relations programmes.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities' and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.</p>	The use of the City Hall

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Subject:	Proposals for the updated NI Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM 2017)
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Strategic Planning and Policy Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of the report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Update members on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency’s (NISRA) current consultation on proposals to update the Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM 2017).
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the details of the consultation, the deadline for responses and the event in Belfast on 19 December; and – Consider the initial observations at paragraph 3.6 which will form the basis of the council’s response to NISRA’s consultation. A copy of the draft response will be brought to January’s SP&R committee.
3.0	Key issues
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) has been commissioned by the Statistics Co-ordinating Group (SCG) of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, which comprises senior policy officials from Government Departments, to undertake an update of the current Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM 2010).</p>

3.2	<p>The updated measures will be hugely important to a wide variety of interested parties and users. They will continue to play a pivotal role in both informing the targeting of resources to the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland and the monitoring of the spatial impact of policy interventions. The current aim is to publish the updated measures in mid-2017, which will be referred to as NIMDM 2017 throughout this report.</p>
3.3	<p>In arriving at the proposals, consideration has been given to each of the 36 recommendations that arose following the last update in producing the NIMDM 2010. Positive action has been taken in respect of 17 recommendations, which it is considered will improve the updated measures. Six recommendations cannot be advanced at present due to data availability and/or quality issues and will be carried over. One recommendation was considered out of scope for this update, and a further 9 recommendations were rejected by the domain expert groups as not aligning with the agreed indicator principles. The remaining 3 recommendations will be addressed after the initial dissemination phase of the project.</p>
3.4	<p>In summary, the NIMDM 2010 consisted of 30 indicators, 20 of which are proposed to be retained in the updated measures. A further 7 are proposed to be modified in line with newly available data, while 3 are proposed to be omitted due to data quality and/or availability issues. A total of 12 new indicators are also proposed, as a result of addressing the 2010 NIMDM recommendations or as a result of new information having become available.</p>
3.5	<p>The consultation will run for 8 weeks and closes at midnight on 15 January 2017. Should members be interested they can register to attend a supporting Information Session that is being held in Belfast on Monday 19th December (venue to be confirmed).</p>
3.6	<p><u>Council Observations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultation document states that this is an update to the 2010 measure of deprivation and any significant revisions to the methodology are outside of the scope of this work. The council would suggest that with 12 new indicators and 7 existing indicators being modified, there are significant revisions, particularly around the “Income” and “Access to Services” domains. • In order to be considered for inclusion, indicators have to be “as <u>up-to-date</u> as possible”. The council would request clarification on this definition as the use of 2011

Census data does not fit well with this. Furthermore, it would be helpful if all indicators could be updated on a frequent (over a reasonable short period of time) and regular basis.

- The council would suggest that the Income domain may also benefit from a housing-cost or affordability indicator.
- The council is concerned with the Access to Service domain in that there appears to be a misconception that “distance” is equivalent to “access”. Two of the three indicators include travel time analysis using private and public transport. The Council would contend that this method of measurement needs to take into consideration the congestion within Belfast and other urban areas, especially during peak travel times.
- The Council would again highlight comments made in previous responses to MDM consultations that a measure of distance to a service is not necessarily a measure of accessibility of that service given the community geography of Belfast. The segregated patterns of life in the city are marked at all levels and the perception of territory and safety have an impact on residents’ access to services. The Council believes that this domain should therefore take peace lines and physical barriers into account when measuring these indicators.
- The Access to Services domain includes an indicator which measures the proportion of properties with a broadband speed below 10 Mbs. It should be noted that schemes such as the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project and the Superfast Extension Programme are rapidly expanding the availability of high speed broadband across the region, which may make this measure irrelevant in the short-term.

3.7

Geographies Consultation

In April, the council submitted a response to NISRA’s consultation on the output geography upon which the updated NIMDM 2017 would be produced, recommending that the new measure should be based on geographies that nest within the new 462 Electoral Wards. While NISRA recommended Super Output Areas as the output geography for the updated NIMDM 2017, they did recognise the user need for deprivation statistics for the new Electoral Wards and will endeavour to create deprivation measures for this geography.

3.8

Financial Implications

There are no specific financial or resource implications.

3.9	<u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u> There are no specific equality or good relations implications.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None



Subject:	Apprenticeship Levy Consultation
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources, Jill Minne, Director of Organisational Development
Contact Officers:	Catherine Christy, Human Resources Manager; Mark McBride, Head of Finance and Performance

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To seek Members' approval of the council's response to the Consultation on Northern Ireland response to the Apprenticeship Levy.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the council's consultation response for submission to the Department for the Economy in order to meet the response deadline of 23 December 2016.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Apprenticeship Levy will impact on private and public sector employers in Northern Ireland with a pay bill of over £3million. The levy, which is set at a rate of 0.5 per cent of an employer's pay bill, will be payable along with income tax and National Insurance through a PAYE system on a monthly basis from May 2017. Large employers such as Belfast City Council will have a levy allowance of £15,000 per year to offset against the levy that they</p>

	<p>have paid</p> <p>The consultation exercise seeks employers' views on five questions:</p> <p>3.2 Q1. What do you think are the main issues for Northern Ireland employers from the introduction of the Levy?</p> <p>Q2. As a result of the Levy, what factors should the Department take into account to ensure appropriate training support is available in Northern Ireland?</p> <p>Q3. Will the Levy have an impact on your recruitment of apprenticeships? In what way?</p> <p>Q4. As a result of the Levy would you be more likely to use the programmes described in Annex B? In what way?</p> <p>Q5. Do you have any further comments on the introduction of the UK wide Apprenticeship Levy?</p> <p>3.3 The council's draft responses to these five questions are set out in Appendix 1, but the key overriding message set out in this proposed response is that since 2005, Belfast City Council has offered 37 full apprentice opportunities for electricians, fleet technicians, joiners, painters, gardeners and since the launch of our Investment Programme in 2012, the council has provided over 1000 work placements and delivered 6 pre- recruitment and training programmes for job opportunities ring fenced to the long term unemployed. We are working to build on this success by co-designing and working with community planning partners and central government through a 'local works' approach to remove the barriers of those furthest removed from the labour market into employment – a key strand of the Programme for Government.</p> <p>3.4 To 'turn the curve' and achieve the real outcomes set out in the PfG and the Council's community plan around economic inactivity and inequalities will however require significant resources and this new, mandatory taxation could negatively impact on the ability of the council to do this work.</p> <p>3.5 Funds should therefore be devolved locally in order to ensure that people get the right skills, experience and advice to move into and progress in work, helping to remove inequalities and deprivation where it is most needed, particularly important given the likely impact of welfare reform.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
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3.6	<p>Belfast City Council's levy is estimated at £455,000 per annum. In financial terms, however, its description as "Apprentice Levy" is debateable, as the consultation document highlights that the levy will not result in any noticeable additional funding being made to Northern Ireland Block. The levy is therefore essentially an additional employee overhead cost.</p> <p>As the amount of the levy directly correlates to the organisation's pay bill (calculated as 0.5%) it could also potentially discourage the creation of new jobs, as that would increase the value of the levy paid.</p> <p>The Levy will therefore mean an additional uncontrollable cost to Belfast City Council which will have to be passed to the ratepayer or be financed by diverting funds from front line services. The additional financial burden of the Apprentice Levy will also limit the ability of the council to fund investment in the key priorities for the city as set out in the "Belfast Agenda", in particular that of improving employability and skills in the city.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>Given the indication that the levy will not result in any noticeable additional funding being made to Northern Ireland Block, and is essentially an additional employee overhead cost, the potential negative impact of the levy on Council's ambition for inclusive growth for the city must be highlighted.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - BCC draft consultation response

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Appendix 1 Apprenticeship Levy Consultation - Belfast City Council

Please note this form must be returned with your response

1. Are you responding as an:

- Employer likely to pay the Levy
- Employer unlikely to pay the Levy
- Training Provider
- Other (please state)

Belfast City Council is responding as an employer likely to pay the levy.

1. Full name or Organisation name: **Belfast City Council**
2. Do you employ;
Fewer than 10 employees Fewer
than 50 employees Fewer than
250 employees Greater than 250
employees

Belfast City Council employs more than 250 employees

3. Phone Number: **028 90320202**
4. Address: **City Hall, Donegall Square**
5. Postcode: **BT1 5GS**
6. Email: **minnej@belfastcity.gov.uk**

The Department for the Economy would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- Publish response with name;
- Publish response only (anonymous);
- Do not publish response.

Belfast City Council permits this response to be published with name.

We will share your response internally with other Northern Ireland Government officials who may be addressing the issues you discuss. We may wish to contact you again in the future but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Department to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

Consultation Response

Q1. What do you think are the main issues for Northern Ireland employers from the introduction of the Levy?

1. One of the main issues is that this is an additional employee overhead cost applied at a time of budget austerity when Belfast City Council is already committed as part of its Efficiency Programme to achieving a £2million cash saving per annum for the period 2017/2018 to 2019/2020, in order to minimise the burden on the ratepayer of any increase in costs.
2. For Belfast City Council, the annual Levy is estimated at around £455,000 per annum.
3. While Belfast City Council is totally committed to realising the potential of its people and its economy by improving skills and employability as set out in the Council's draft community plan, the "Belfast Agenda and the Belfast Employability and Skills Framework 2015 to 2025 – it is concerned that the Levy payment of c. £455,000 per annum will have to be taken out of services' budgets – including economic development and skills development services already co-ordinated by the council.
4. The Levy also has the potential to compromise existing interventions which it has already put in place to enhance the local economy and foster employability and skills development.
5. There is also the potential for the Levy to reduce the quality and quantity of apprenticeships as some employers already contribute to existing levy funds , for example the Construction Industry Training Board Levy, set up to address the training needs of the construction industry, where employers already contribute 0.5% of payroll costs.
6. The ambiguity around the proposed collection methodology and how much of the collected levy will be distributed locally (within NI) is a major issue.
7. The levy represents an additional cost for employers whose employee costs are greater than over £3m. It is the Council's opinion that it is incorrectly described as an apprentice levy as it will not result in any noticeable funding to the Northern Ireland Block.
8. Belfast City Council is also aware that exemptions are being sought in neighbouring jurisdictions regarding public sector bodies providing (i) public services generally and (ii) skills development services specifically and it supports the exploration of these exemptions in the interests of avoiding administrative, fiscal and service duplication and negative service impact.

Q2. As a result of the Levy, what factors should the Department take into account to ensure appropriate training support is available in Northern Ireland?

1. Funds should be devolved locally in order for partners (e.g. councils, schools, colleges and employers) to increase the number and quality of apprenticeships and ensure citizens get the right skills, experience and advice to move into and progress in work, helping to remove inequalities and deprivation in those areas where this is most needed. This will be particularly important in light of the impact of welfare reform. A locally coordinated system would also lighten the burden of business allowing them to focus on increasing productivity and driving economic growth.
2. NI councils could, in a regionally coordinated way, be enabled as is the case in England, Scotland and Wales, to develop Local Government Apprenticeships through co-ordination (by councils) and investment of the Levy within local authorities.

Q3. Will the Levy have an impact on your recruitment of apprenticeships? In what way?

Since 2005, Belfast City Council has offered 37 full apprentice opportunities for electricians, fleet technicians, joiners, painters, gardeners. Since the launch of our Investment Programme in 2012, the council has provided over 1000 work placements and delivered 6 pre- recruitment and training programmes for job opportunities ring fenced to the long term unemployed. It is seeking to build on this success by co-designing and working with community planning partners and central government through a 'local works' approach to remove the barriers of those furthest removed from the labour market into employment – a key strand of the Programme for Government. To 'turn the curve' and achieve the real outcomes set out in the PfG and the Council's community plan around economic inactivity and inequalities will however require significant resources. This new, mandatory taxation could negatively impact on the ability of the council to do so.

Q4. As a result of the Levy would you be more likely to use the programmes described in Annex B? In what way?

Belfast City Council wants to co-design and work with community planning partners and central government through a 'local works' approach to remove the barriers of those furthest removed from the labour market into employment. We are keen to engage with government apprenticeship and higher apprenticeship programmes; with a levy in place, Belfast City Council would wish to see more access to government funded programmes to offset against levy charges.

Q5. Do you have any further comments on the introduction of the UK wide Apprenticeship Levy?

Belfast City Council is fully supportive of government ambitions to improve the number and quality of apprenticeships but this levy has unfortunately, the potential to negatively impact on the ability of Belfast City Council to fund investment in the key priorities of the “Belfast Agenda”, one of which is improving employability and skills in the city and assisting those furthest removed from the about market into real and good jobs.

It is critical that the money raised from the levy is used in the most effective way – supporting local government and its community planning partners to play a leading role in improving employability and skills and consequently impacting on the economy, deprivation, and inequalities. Apprenticeship Levy money should be used to support local interventions to help achieve the economic and social outcomes set out in the PfG .

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Subject:	Consultation Response on Future Delivery of Electoral Services in Northern Ireland
Date:	16 th December, 2016
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider making a corporate response to the consultation document on Future Delivery of Electoral Services in Northern Ireland
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the draft response to the consultation document on Future Delivery of Electoral Services in Northern Ireland.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Northern Ireland Office and the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland are currently consulting on the options for the future delivery of Electoral services in Northern Ireland.
3.2	The Chief Electoral Officer, Mr Graham Shields, attended a special meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 11 th November to answer Members

<p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p> <p>3.5</p> <p>3.6</p>	<p>questions on the consultation exercise. The Committee agreed that a draft response be prepared and submitted for consideration.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that there might well be different views amongst the political parties as to whether or not the options for consideration in the review are acceptable in a regional context and, therefore, this response deals only with the practical issues which will arise for Belfast City Council should the proposals contained in the consultation paper proceed.</p> <p>A draft response is attached for Members' consideration.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report. However, one of the main points of the response is to ensure that any proposed changes to how elections are delivered in future do not result in the Council having to fund them.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Appendix 1 – Draft response to the consultation document on Future Delivery of Electoral Services in Northern Ireland.</p>

Belfast City Council Response to the Consultation on the Future Delivery of Electoral Services in Northern Ireland

Introduction

Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to provide a response to the consultation on the future delivery of electoral services in Northern Ireland.

The Council recognises that there may well be different views on the regional impact of the proposals amongst the political parties in Northern Ireland. The Council notes that the Northern Ireland Assembly passed the following motion in June, 2016:

“This Assembly notes with concern the proposals from the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland to close regional electoral offices in Ballymena, Banbridge, Londonderry, Newtownabbey, Newtownards and Omagh; believes that this will damage democracy in Northern Ireland, lead to fewer people on the electoral register and to a diminished role for the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland in local schools and communities; and calls on the Secretary of State, the Northern Ireland Office and the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland to retain and fund all regional offices currently under threat of closure”.

Accordingly, this response is from Belfast City Council alone and should not be taken to represent the views of all or any of the political parties represented on it.

Digital Registration and Enhancing Local Services

The Council welcomes the proposals to move to digital registration in Northern Ireland as it considers that this has the potential, combined with the traditional methods of registration, to maximise the opportunities for citizens to participate in the future elections and referendums. This will be particularly attractive to younger people.

The Council would urge that all reasonable steps must be taken when designing the digital registration system to provide reassurance that electoral fraud will be eliminated.

The Council notes that the proposals do not envisage the provision of counter services in Belfast, unlike other parts of Northern Ireland where several District Councils may be required to undertake the provision of advice and support. Should this change and should the Council be requested to provide this service, then the Council would strongly be of the opinion that the necessary financial and human resources must be transferred or made available to it on an ongoing basis. The transfer of the proposed functions from the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (EONI) must not impose additional costs on the Council.

An Increased Role for the Council at all Elections and Referendums

The Council agrees with the assertion in the consultation document that it has the relevant expertise to assume greater responsibility for all elections and referendums in Northern Ireland, including Parliamentary and Northern Ireland Assembly elections. Belfast City Council is well placed to manage the delivery of the nomination and local count functions outlined in paragraph 2.5.3.

The Council welcomes the guarantee that it will be fully funded for taking on these additional responsibilities through the UK and NI Consolidated Funds and that there will not be any additional costs to local ratepayers. The Council would request that this guarantee is enshrined in any new

legislation required for the transfer of functions so as to provide assurance for it and for local ratepayers that there will not be any additional financial burden to be borne at a local level.

The Council does not have any concerns that its Chief Executive or other senior officers involved in the delivery of elections will be subject to any political interference in undertaking these roles. This has not been the case during many local elections where the Chief Executive has acted as the Deputy Returning Officer under the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer.

Conclusion

The Council believes that the reform proposals have the potential to normalise local democratic processes and bring Northern Ireland more in line with neighbouring jurisdictions. The Council will stand ready to work closely with the Northern Ireland Office and the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland to ensure the future delivery of efficient, effective and accessible electoral services.



Subject:	Consultation Response to Education Authority's Providing Pathways Draft Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020
Date:	16 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Strategic Planning and Policy Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of the report is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Update members on the Education Authority's (EA) current consultation on their draft strategic area plan for school provision.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the details of the consultation and approve a high level response as detailed in paragraph 3.10.
3.0	Key issues
3.1	The Education Authority (EA) has launched a consultation on Northern Ireland's first regional area plan for education, 'Providing Pathways 2017-2020'. The plan aims to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs in sustainable schools that are of the right type, of the right size, located in the right place. It sets out the key priorities and objectives for the EA, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and other sectoral bodies, in light of the Department of Education's goals to create sustainable schools throughout Northern Ireland.
3.2	The Area Plan for 2017-2020 establishes Local Planning Districts which align with the 11 Local Government Districts, allowing education to make a contribution to the 11 LGD Community Plans.

3.3

For each Local Government District the plan sets out:

- Population projections;
- Summary data for Primary Schools;
- Summary Data for Post-primary schools;
- Key issues emerging from analysis of current local provision;
- What will we do?

3.4

The Belfast LG district data is set out below:

- The population in the age range 0-15 years is projected to increase by 7.6% by 2024.
- The population in the age range 16-19 years is projected to decrease by 1.4% by 2024.

3.5

Summary Data for Primary Schools

Management type	Number of schools	Total approved enrolments	Total actual enrolments	Super-numerary admissions	Number of available places	Number of schools with > 5% surplus or > £75,000	Number of schools with > 5% deficit or >£75,000
Controlled	44	16,031	11,884	506	4,642	22	4
Catholic Maintained	36	18,050	14,618	530	3,963	19	1
Irish Medium	9	1,617	1,204	32	445	2	3
Controlled Integrated	2	678	619	17	76	-	-
Grant Maintained Integrated	3	1,015	1,044	46	17	-	-
Totals	94	37,373	29,369	1,131	9,143	43	8

3.6

Summary Data for Post-Primary Schools

Management type	Number of schools	Total approved enrolments	Total actual enrolments	Super-numerary admissions	Number of available places	Number of schools with >5% Surplus or >£75,000)	Number of schools with >5% Deficit or >£75,000)	Entitlement Framework - Number of schools compliant KS4	Entitlement Framework Number of schools compliant Post-16
Controlled	7	5,670	5,894	233	124	3	1	5	4
Voluntary	14	15,106	15,113	306	351	n/a		12	8
Catholic Maintained	11	9,654	7,575	465	2,571	6	2	5	3
Irish Medium	1	600	605	24	19	1	-	-	-
Grant Maintained Integrated	2	1,650	1,491	98	257	n/a		1	1
Totals	35	32,680	30,678	1,126	3,322	10	3	23	16

3.7

The Plan identifies the following key issues emerging from their analysis of current provision across Belfast:

- Number of available places
- Location of available places
- Schools facing sustainability challenges
- Equitable access to Entitlement Framework pathways
- Potential for Irish Medium and Integrated school development
- Potential opportunities for shared education
- Need to establish learning support provision in mainstream schools

3.8

In order to address the issues, the EA says that it will develop proposals to:

- ensure that school places are located as required;
- address school provision where sustainability is an issue (primary and post-primary) - (reviews will take account of six Sustainable Schools criteria – see below);
- establish additional learning support and autism specific provision within primary and post-primary schools;
- ensure equitable access to the Entitlement Framework pathways at Key Stage 4;
- reconfigure primary school provision to reduce the number of available places in schools;
- reconfigure post-16 provision to give pupils equitable access to the Entitlement Framework pathways in collaboration with the Further Education sector;
- encourage and facilitate sustainable Irish Medium and Integrated schools; and
- promote shared education solutions which provide sustainable schools.

3.9	<p>Sustainability criteria</p> <p>The six criteria of the Sustainable Schools policy are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality educational experience 2. Stable enrolment trends 3. Sound financial position 4. Strong leadership and management by Board of Governors and principals 5. Accessibility 6. Strong links with the community <p>The documents also provides a profile of current special school provision across the EA and proposals.</p> <p>Proposed feedback</p>
3.10	<p>It is proposed that the Council makes the following comments in relation to the Draft Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020.</p> <p>Belfast’s community plan – the Belfast Agenda</p>
3.11	<p>Education is at the heart of Belfast’s new community plan – the Belfast Agenda. It is seen as fundamental to removing barriers to opportunity for people across the city, reducing life inequalities and ensuring our young people fulfil their potential.</p>
3.12	<p>The Council notes the Area Plan’s alignment with the Programme for Government and in particular – its contribution to improving educational outcomes; addressing educational inequalities; improving the quality of education and improving child development.</p>
3.13	<p>The Council, with its partners, which include the Education Authority, CCMS and the Department for Education has just begun public consultation on the Belfast Agenda. The Agenda also prioritises addressing educational inequalities and improving educational attainment within Belfast. Some of the starkest figures with respect to educational inequality are within Belfast, with figures for achievement of at least 5 GCSE Grades A*-C (including English and Maths) ranging between 19 per cent and 100 per cent between wards (2014/15). There is a significant gap in attainment between those children entitled to free school meals and those who are not.</p>

3.14	<p>The Council therefore welcomes the intention to align the area planning process with the community planning process from 2017 onwards and would like more detail and discussion as to how it is intended this will be progressed; in particular whether it is intended that local government districts will be represented in area planning structures going forward or whether community planning structures will play a specific role. A partnership approach will be important so that we maximise the benefit of the school estate and other complementary local investment at a local level. The council notes that at present there is no local government district representation within the support structures for area planning.</p>
3.15	<p>Evidence and information emerging from the Local Development Planning process should also inform the development of local area plans.</p>
	<p>Population Projections</p>
3.16	<p>As noted in paragraph 3.4 above, the official 2014-based population projections identify a 7.6% increase in the Belfast population in the age range 0-15 years and a 1.4% decrease in the age range 16-19 years by 2024. However, the Council's own research found that the continuation of existing demographic trends would serve to restrain economic and employment growth.</p>
3.17	<p>The council has undertaken its own population modelling work to inform the preparation for the new Local Development Plan for the City. This is reflected in the Belfast Agenda's aspiration to grow the population of the city so that by 2035 Belfast will be home to 70,000 more people. This would represent a total increase in the Belfast population of more than 47,000 above the official 2014-based projections produced by NISRA, which if achieved would have significant implications for population profile and consequently the education provision required.</p>
3.18	<p>Details of the projected population change as a result of these policy aspirations, including the growth within the 0-15 and 16-19 age groups, should therefore be taken into consideration when finalising the area plan.</p>

<p>3.19</p> <p>3.20</p> <p>3.21</p> <p>3.22</p>	<p>Proposal to reconfigure primary school places</p> <p>The council is unclear about the impact of the proposal to “reconfigure primary school provision to reduce the number of available places in schools” in Belfast which is included within section 4.9 “Emerging Issues and Proposed Actions for each Local Government District”. The council would like clarification of this statement given the Education Authority’s own projection of population growth of 7.6% within the age-range 0-15 to 2024 and given community planning partners’ ambition to grow the population of the city by 70,000 by 2035.</p> <p>Special Education Needs Categories</p> <p>The Council notes in section 5.3 of the document with respect to special schools which support pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD). The draft plan states that with respect to SLD schools, ‘...work will be required to bring enhanced consistency across the Belfast City Council area in particular’. The council would welcome further information about this and about the development of any regional model with respect to special schools, particularly where this impacts on Belfast.</p> <p><u>Financial Implications</u></p> <p>There are no specific financial or resource implications.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no specific equality or good relations implications.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>None</p>