

Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE -COMBINED PACK

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room, City Hall on Wednesday, 8th May, 2024 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

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

2. Restricted Items

- (a) Vacant to Vibrant Scheme (Pages 1 - 26)
- (b) Update on Coach Parking and Hop-on / Hop-off Operators (Pages 27 - 36)
- (c) Belfast Zoo - Collection Update (Pages 37 - 42)

3. Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

- (a) Request to Present - Belfast City and Region Place Partnership (Pages 43 - 46)
- (b) Department for Communities Correspondence - Regeneration Powers (Pages 47 - 54)

4. **Positioning Belfast to Compete**

- (a) Belfast 2024 - Verbal Update
- (b) UNESCO Creative Cities Network Annual Conference (Pages 55 - 58)

5. **Strategic and Operational Issues**

- (a) 2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans (Pages 59 - 136)
- (b) Approval for 2 Markets at 2RA (Pages 137 - 138)
- (c) Minutes of the Belfast Stories Working Group (Pages 139 - 142)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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Subject:	Request to Present – Belfast City & Region Place Partnership
Date:	8 May 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Marie Miller, Marketing Manager, City Regeneration & Development

Restricted Reports	
<p>Is this report restricted? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-left: 40px;"> <div> <p>After Committee Decision</p> <p>After Council Decision</p> <p>Some time in the future</p> <p>Never</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin-top: 20px; position: relative;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black;"></div> </div> </div>	
Call-in	
<p>Is the decision eligible for Call-in? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Committee to receive a presentation from representatives of the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership at the Committee Meeting in June 2024.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree to receive a presentation from representatives of the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership at the City Growth and Regeneration Committee meeting in June 2024.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Belfast City & Region Place Partnership (BCRPP), formerly Renewed Ambition Partnership (RAP), is a joint public-private initiative that is delivering a programme of work aimed at attracting inclusive investment for the delivery of regeneration, infrastructure, and a modern built environment for Belfast and the wider City Region.

3.2	The Belfast City & Region Place Partnership is supported by public, private and key anchor institution partners. Partners comprise of Belfast City Council, all Belfast City Region Deal partner Councils, Invest NI, Belfast Harbour, Translink, Housing Association representation, Queens University Belfast, and representatives from the local development community bringing forward regeneration and development projects.
3.3	The Partnership is governed via a Taskforce comprised of representatives of the public and private sector, including the Chief Executive and senior officers from Belfast City Council, and chaired by Joe O'Neill, Chief Executive, Belfast Harbour.
3.4	Members will recall that during the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on the 9 August 2023 they received a presentation from the RAP Taskforce which provided an update on the previous 2022 / 2023 programme of work and proposed approach to 2023 / 2024 programme. During this Committee meeting, Members agreed to approve extending the Council's participation within the Partnership Programme for 2023 / 2024 as part of a wider public-private approach.
3.5	The 2023 / 2024 programme commenced on the 1 September 2023 and is delivering a structured programme of work focussed on the key pillars of Research; Events; Advocacy and Engagement; and Communications aligned to securing investment and regeneration for Belfast, and the wider Belfast city region. The programme has included organising a Showcase event in Dublin; attendance at real estate conferences including UKREiF 2024 and MIPIM 2024; and advocacy and engagement activities. The 2023 / 2024 programme will end on 31 August 2024.
3.6	The BCRPP Taskforce has endorsed continuing the Partnership into 2024 / 2025; and the associated programme of activity is currently under development. It will continue to take the form of a pillared programme with a key objective of continuing to build awareness of the Belfast investment proposition aimed at attracting inclusive investment, creating employment opportunities and facilitating investor engagement to support the delivery of regeneration projects across the city, with a focus on creating the economic and social infrastructure/assets required to deliver inclusive sustainable growth.
3.7	From a Council perspective, this partnership is an important lever within our wider 'Position the City to Compete' proposition which seeks to build on the city's reputation

	as a unique destination for investment, tourism, development and supporting inclusive economic growth; and supporting delivery of housing-led regeneration and bringing forward strategic regeneration and development schemes to create a liveable and connected, vibrant and competitive city.
3.8	Representatives from the Belfast City & Region Place Partnership Taskforce have requested the opportunity to present at a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in order to update Members on the current programme of work; and proposed 2024 / 2025 activities, including priority issues and objectives for the Partnership moving forward.
4.0	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
5.0	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.
6.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	None

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Subject:	Correspondence received - Department for Communities (Regeneration Powers)
Date:	8th May, 2024
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

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1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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Call-in

Yes

☒

No

☐

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?
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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the correspondence received from the Department for Communities, in response to the request in relation to regeneration powers.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the update and correspondence as set out in the report and to consider if any further action is necessary.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.2	At its meeting in February, the Committee was provided with an update on the Regeneration Lobbying and Advocacy Paper and Regeneration Framework regarding the work which had been undertaken in relation to the Place Based Growth Proposition and Regeneration.
3.3	At the meeting, it was agreed that the Council would write to the Minister for Communities to request that work is undertaken with all the relevant stakeholders to achieve the conferring of regeneration powers to councils with the appropriate budgets within this Assembly mandate (Appendix 1).
3.4	Accordingly, a response has been received from Mr. P. Anderson, Director, on behalf of the Minister, which provides an update on the issue (Appendix 2). It notes that the Minister has indicated that he has no plans currently to devolve any additional powers to local councils as this would require a fundamental review of the current position across several Departments and would potentially require Executive referral.
3.5	It states that the issue of further work being required to revisit the potential transfer of regeneration powers to Councils was most recently raised at the Partnership Panel meeting in August 2022 at which it was agreed that Local Government and Central Government officials would engage to discuss what a future transformation of regeneration powers could look like.
3.6	The response outlines that, in October 2022, the PSG/SOLACE Engagement Forum co-chairs agreed that SOLACE would undertake scoping work to understand what is meant by regeneration powers. The Department awaits the outcome of that work.

3.7	In addition, a meeting has been scheduled by SOLACE for the end of May, to meet with the Director of City Regeneration and Development, NILGA, and Mid Ulster District Council to discuss the issue and next steps.
3.8	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – BCC Letter to DfC - Regeneration Powers - 28 March 24</p> <p>Appendix 2 – DfC Response = Regeneration Powers - 16 April 24</p>

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Legal and Civic Services Department

Democratic Services Section



Your reference

Being dealt with by Ms Eilish McGoldrick

Our reference EMcG280324

Email mcgoldricke@belfastcity.gov.uk

Date 28th March, 2024

Gordon Lyons
Minister for Communities

Via email: private.office@communities-ni.gov.uk

Dear Minister Lyons,

Regeneration Powers

At its meeting in February, Belfast City Council's City Growth and Regeneration Committee was provided with an update regarding the work which had been undertaken in relation to a Place Based Growth Proposition and Regeneration.

At the meeting, it was agreed that the Council would write to you to welcome you to your new role as Minister for Communities, and call on you to work with all the relevant stakeholders to achieve the conferring of regeneration powers to councils with the appropriate budgets within this Assembly mandate.

I wish to note that the Chief Executive has also written to you to discuss the aforementioned issue.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eilish McGoldrick', written in a cursive style.

Eilish McGoldrick
Democratic Services Officer

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Ms Eilish McGoldrick
Belfast City Council
Legal and Civic Services Department
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

Belfast Regeneration Directorate
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG
Phone: 028 9082 9274
email:
Patrick.Anderson@communities-ni.gov.uk

Your ref: EMcG280324

Our ref: TOF-1241-2024

Date: 16 April 2024

Dear Ms McGoldrick,

REGENERATION POWERS

Thank you for your letter of 28th of March 2024 to the Minister for Communities on whose behalf I am providing this response. You advised that Belfast City Council's City Growth and Regeneration Committee met in February and consequently agreed to write to the Minister requesting that he works with all the relevant stakeholders to achieve the conferring of regeneration powers to councils, with the appropriate budgets, within this Assembly mandate.

As Council will be aware, several attempts have been made to put the necessary legislation in place, but on each occasion have not progressed due to a lack of consensus, on the broader issue of local government reform, or on the content of the legislation itself. The last attempt saw the Regeneration Bill introduced in the Northern Ireland Assembly on the 8th of December 2014 (Bill 43/11-16). This was withdrawn in November 2015.

Due to the significant period, which has passed since the introduction of the last Regeneration Bill (2014), and the experience of recent initiatives in response to Covid-19

e.g. the Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation and Small Settlements Programmes in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the cross-departmental nature of regeneration activities has been clearly demonstrated. The Minister has indicated that he has no plans currently to devolve any additional powers to local councils as this would require a fundamental review of the current position across several Departments and would potentially require Executive referral.

The issue of further work being required to revisit the potential transfer of regeneration powers to Councils was most recently raised at the Partnership Panel meeting in August 2022 at which it was agreed that Local Government and Central Government officials would engage to discuss what a future transformation of regeneration powers could look like.

In October 2022, the PSG/SOLACE Engagement Forum co-chairs agreed that SOLACE would undertake scoping work to understand what is meant by regeneration powers. The Department awaits the outcome of that work.

Yours sincerely



PATRICK ANDERSON
DIRECTOR



Subject:	UCCN Annual Conference
Date:	8 th May 2024
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Chris McCreery, Culture Development Manager

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Call-in									
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>									

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	
1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to advise members of the planned UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) conference which takes place in early July 2024 and to seek approval for council engagement in and representation at the event.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the contents of report and agree the attendance of the Lord Mayor and relevant officials, up to a to a maximum estimated cost of £5000
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Background</p> <p>Members will be aware that Belfast gained UNESCO City of Music Status and membership to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in November 2021. The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) promotes cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.</p> <p>Officials have received the invitation letter to the XVI Annual Conference of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) to be held in Braga (Portugal), from 1 to 5 July 2024, under the theme “Bringing youth to the table for the next decade”.</p>
3.2	<p>About the UCCN Conference</p> <p>Launched in 2004, the UCCN comprises 350 cities in more than 100 countries and aims to strengthen cooperation between cities that have identified culture and creativity as strategic levers for sustainable urban development. The UCCN Annual Conference, a key component of the Network, offers all member cities a unique platform for dialogue and cooperation which has led to the establishment of long-term, impactful international partnerships and initiatives.</p>
3.3	<p>Organized this year in Braga, a UNESCO Creative City of Media arts since 2017, the 2024 Annual Conference will present an opportunity for member cities to share their respective experiences, create new synergies within the Network, and exchange with UNESCO, Mayors, municipal decision-makers and other stakeholders. The Conference is also an unparalleled moment to share good practices that have been successfully developed and implemented locally, and to discuss how to adapt and streamline them across cities around the world.</p>

3.4	Under the theme "Bringing youth to the table for the next decade", the Annual Conference will bring together Creative Cities to discuss how the voice of youth can be amplified as a vector for dialogue and change, and how the transformative power of culture and creativity can be leveraged to develop meaningful intergenerational collaborations to address global challenges. Through various plenary sessions, thematic panels and other sessions and activities, the Conference will explore ways in which local stakeholders can further foster an active participation and contribution of youth, to boost urban sustainability.
3.5	This year's Annual Conference will also reflect on the opportunities brought about by the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development - MONDIACULT 2022, to support UNESCO's advocacy for the full recognition of culture as a global public good, notably with a view to including culture as a stand-alone goal in the post-2030 international development agenda.
3.6	<p>Belfast involvement</p> <p>Whilst Belfast has been a member of the UCCN network since November 2021, the Creative Cities conference took place online and in person in 2022 and did not take place in 2023 after the event was cancelled. This event therefore represents the first opportunity to participate in the full UCCN network with all creative cities in attendance.</p>
3.7	The first day of the conference will also include a formal induction session with the official secretariat of UNESCO. This induction will be held in person for all cities (including Belfast) that have joined the network since 2021 and will require the attendance of the UCCN focal point, namely the Culture Development Manager. Alongside responding to reporting exercises, including the Membership Monitoring Report due in 2025, active participation in the UNESCO Network is a mandatory element of membership. Attendance at the conference is also mandatory for any city wishing to bid to host the event in future years.
3.8	As part of our UNESCO status and corresponding Music Strategy, an officer in the Culture Development Team is employed to lead on music development and relationships with other UNESCO cities. Through active participation in the Music Cities Cluster, this has resulted in a wide range of initiatives and music exchanges with international cities. As well as participating in supplementary events with the music cluster, the music officer has been asked to present on the wide range of exciting partnerships that Belfast has led on since joining the network.

3.9	In addition, the Lord Mayor has been invited to take part in the conference including the dedicated “Mayors Forum” taking place on 3 rd July. This element of the conference includes a full day of workshops and collaborative dialogue with Mayors across all cities in the UCCN network. The Lord Mayor is also invited to deliver a presentation on Belfast’s contribution and actions since becoming a UNESCO City of Music.
3.10	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> Members are asked to agree the participation of the Lord Mayor alongside relevant officers, up to a maximum estimated cost of £5,000. The above costs are set aside within the existing budgets allocated to music development.
3.11	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no direct Equality or Good Relations implications associated with this report. No specific rural impact.
4.0	Appendices
	None



Subject:	City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan 2024-2025, associated Work Plans and End of Year Report 2023-2024
Date:	8 May 2024
Reporting Officer:	Damien Martin, Strategic Director, Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Jamie Uprichard, Business Research and Development Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Insert number

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If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To provide an end of year report on the key actions contained in the 2023-24 City Growth and Regeneration (CG&R) Committee Plan, as agreed by this Committee in September 2023.
1.2	To present to Committee the draft City Growth & Regeneration Committee Plan for 2024-25 and associated programme workplans highlighting programme costs seeking committee approval.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of the end of year report as set out in Appendix 1; • Approve the City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan for 2024-25 attached at Appendix 2; • Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Enterprise and Business Growth workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 3; • Note and agree a financial commitment of £25,000 to HIRANI to support the delivery of the 'Health and Life Sciences Launchpad' in Northern Ireland; • Note and endorse the proposal to invest in the Way to Scale programme and extended support to innovation-focused businesses up to a maximum of £50,000 (work to be coordinated through Catalyst); • Note and endorse the contribution to support the ongoing development of the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor (work to be coordinated through Newry, Mourne and Down District Council) up to a maximum of £35,000; • Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Employability and Skills workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 4; • Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the European and International Relations workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 5; • Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Culture workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 6; and • Approve the priority work areas and budget allocations presented in the Tourism and Events workplan for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 7.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>CG&R Committee Plan 2023-24 End of Year Report</u></p> <p>While the Committee receives regular updates on progress for specific programmes and initiatives, Appendix 1 sets out an overview of progress against the main commitments in the CG&R Committee Plan 2023-24 as of the 31st March 2024. This builds on the report that</p>

	<p>members received at the November committee meeting which provided a six-monthly update. At the year end, officers undertook an assessment of individual projects and workstreams, allocating a traffic light rating as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green - actions have been delivered as expected, to budget and with no significant risks. • Amber - there have been some delays, impact on budget or risks that have emerged. • Red - work has been significantly delayed; the final outcome is not as expected; significant additional budget is required; or significant risks have emerged.
3.2	<p>In summary, from a total of 43 workstreams, 27 were rated as green, 15 as amber and 1 red. Committee should also note that due to the reporting timelines, some of the figures provided are provisional and subject to final audit.</p>
3.3	<p>Summary highlights of the year include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 56 organisations supported through the council's Cultural multi-annual funding including support for Arts/ Heritage organisations and Festivals/Events. ➤ 21 community festivals support ➤ 124,000 people attended our four signature City Events (check). ➤ 260 people progressed onto a job or better job via an employment academy. ➤ New NI Enterprise Support Service launched during Global Entrepreneurship Week. ➤ 119,135 Belfast Bike journeys during the 2023 calendar year. ➤ 18 applications approved for Vacant to Vibrant and assisted 33 businesses through our "Matchmaking" service, helping them to identify city centre rental units. ➤ Launched the process which seeks procurement for a long-term partner for the delivery of £630m GDV housing led placemaking regeneration.
3.4	<p><u>CG&R Committee Plan 2024-25</u></p> <p>Each year the Committee is tasked with agreeing a Committee Plan for the year ahead. This year's Committee Plan has been developed based on feedback received from the Committee Planning workshop held in October 2023 and decisions relevant to the Committee agreed through the rates setting process. It has also been structured to align to the recently approved Belfast Agenda and the council's draft Corporate Delivery Plan.</p>
3.5	<p>The Corporate Delivery Plan will be presented to the May meeting of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee. Should any changes be required, an update of the committee plan will be brought to the attention of members at a future meeting.</p>
3.6	<p>In particular, this Plan contains actions that make a contribution to the "Our Economy" and "Our Place" themes of the refreshed community plan. At its planning workshop in October</p>

	<p>2023, members requested that consideration be given to measuring progress and impact on agreed programmes. To that end, this year's committee plan includes a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which will be reported on a six-monthly basis together with a more detailed progress report against all commitments.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Workplans/ Programme Budgets</u></p> <p>Many of the activities outlined within the draft Committee Plan will be resourced through the respective departmental budgets for 2024-25 in line with the Scheme of Delegation and in accordance with section G of the Financial Regulations. On that note, priority work areas for the 2024-25 financial year and their allocation from their respective budgets are presented in Appendices 3-7.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The draft Committee Plan 2024-25 and the subsequent work plans are aligned with the budget agreed by the Special Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 9th February 2024, namely a cash limit for the CG&R Committee of £21.55 million as set out in Appendix 2.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Strategies, programmes and actions within the Committee Plan are developed and delivered in consultation with the Council's Equality & Diversity Officers and subject to appropriate equality, good relations and rural needs assessment.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 - CG&R Committee Plan 2023-24 End of Year Report</p> <p>Appendix 2 – CG&R Committee Plan 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Enterprise and Business Growth Workplan 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Employability & Skills Workplan 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 5 – European and International Relations Workplan 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 6 – Culture Work Plan 2024-25</p> <p>Appendix 7 – Tourism and Events Work Plan 2024-25</p>



City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan 2023- 24

End of Year Report

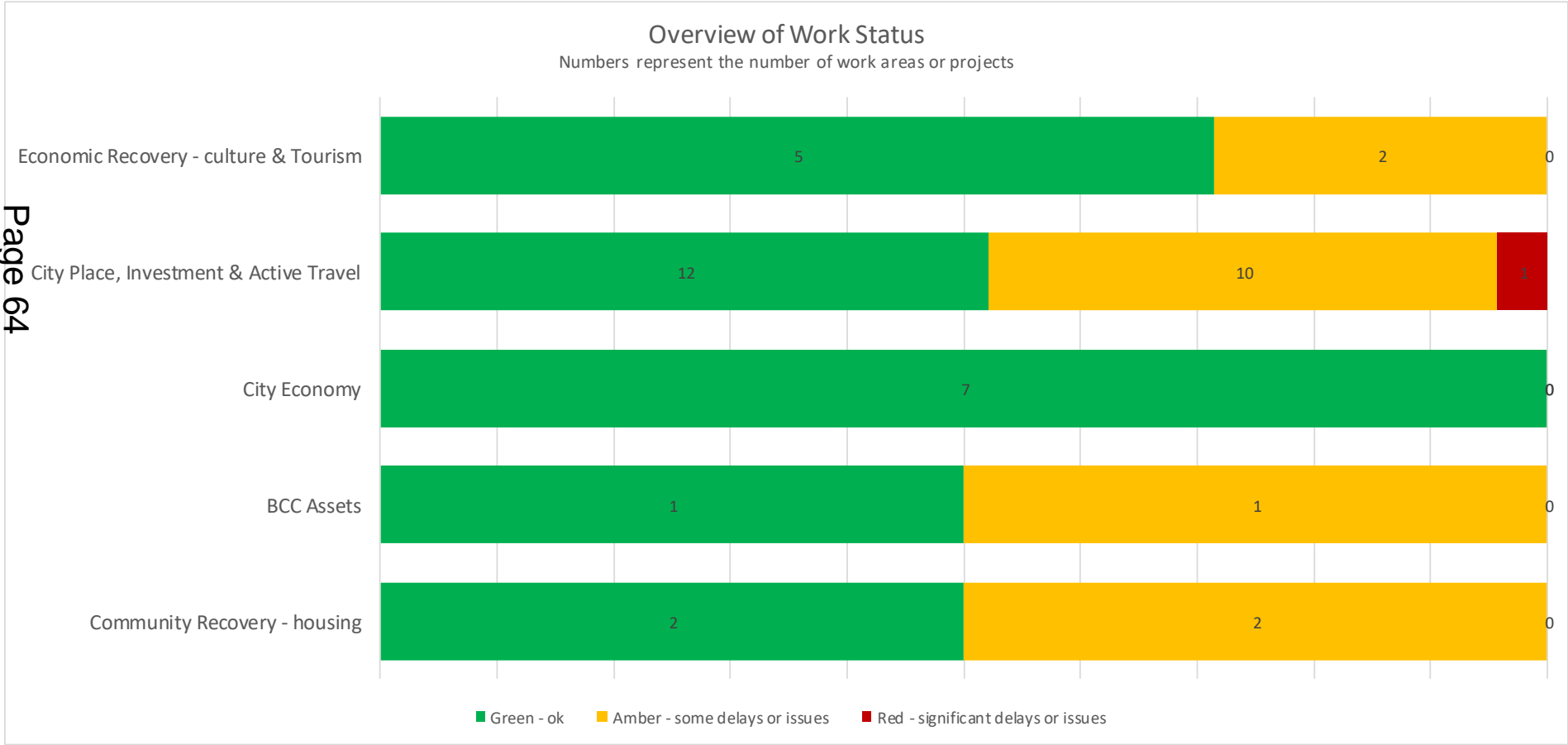


Belfast
City Council

Summary of performance

The following chart gives a high-level overview of progress at the end of the year. For each area of work, individual projects and workstreams have been allocated a traffic light rating based on the following assessment:

- Green – the actions have been delivered as expected, to budget and with no significant risks.
- Amber – there have been some delays, impact on budget or risks that have emerged.
- Red – the work has been significantly delayed; the final outcome is not as expected; significant additional budget is required; or significant risks have emerged.



2023-24 Summary of Key Achievements



Culture

- 119,135 Belfast Bike Journeys in 2023 (Calendar Year)



Tourism

- 124,000 people attended our four signature City Events



City Economy

- 260 people have progressed onto a job or better job via an Employment Academy.



City Assets

- 119,135 Belfast Bike Journeys in 2023 (Calendar Year)



City Place

- 18 applications approved for 'Vacant to Vibrant', to convert previously vacant city centre properties to become occupied.



Community Recovery (housing)

- Launched the process which seeks procurement for a long-term partner for the delivery of £630m GDV housing led placemaking regeneration.

2023-24 Key Programmes of work – End of Year Report

1. Inclusive Economic Recovery

Strategic Priority, Work Area (Year End RAG status)	2023-24 Progress
<div>Page 66</div> <p>Cultural Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress the 'A City Imagining Plan' (GREEN) • Implement “Music Matters” Music Strategy (GREEN) <p>Progress Belfast 2024 Year of Cultural Celebration for Belfast (AMBER)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural multi-annual funding including support for Arts/ Heritage organisations and Festivals/Events – 56 organisations supported. • Four Pathfinder awards for organisations not in receipt of core public sector support. • 21 Community Festivals supported in partnership with Department for Communities. • 22 organisations supported through Arts and Heritage small grants. • Access and Inclusion grants in partnership with the Department for Communities. • 10 organisations supported through Artist Studios and Maker Spaces Organisational Grants. • Creative Bursaries for 16 individuals. • Establishment of a Green Arts Forum to advance and promote sustainability in the sector. • 6 partnerships with key sectoral organisations. • A partnership with Theatre and Dance NI, including funding for 7 recipients, across various disciplines of the theatre and dance sector, as part of the INVEST programme. • Partnership with Craft NI to develop Craft NI Gallery including a programme of 8 craft exhibitions and 19 Belfast events for Craft Month. • A partnership with Thrive NI to continue the Audience Panel, representing 200 members, and provide tailored advice to embedding people-led approaches within cultural organisations. • A partnership with Ulster Architectural Heritage Society to deliver Open Heritage Belfast and other events, advocacy, advice & support. • Delivery of the Belfast Canvass Project and city animation projects across 30 sites across the city. • Continue with support to increase participation and representation at cultural events by disabled people through initiatives such as the Gig Buddies programme and a new partnership with the University of Atypical. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and funding for the Music Heritage Programme supporting 4 organisations to work with local musicians, citizens and communities in a developmental process that will lead to a showcase of contemporary traditional music as part of Belfast 2024. • Recruitment and selection of the Belfast Region Music Board. • Micro-bursaries pilot programme supporting 17 musicians with costs incurred within their artform. • Expansion of the Output Conference, Ireland’s biggest one-day music conference and live music showcase. • Gradam Ceoil bursaries for young musicians. • Financial support for the delivery of the NI Music Prize. • The Pipeline Investment Fund for music venues through a partnership with Music Venue Trust. • Promotion of our UNESCO City of Music status via dedicated Belfast Music marketing channels. • The development of a digital music support service developed in collaboration with Music Connections. • Partnerships with other UNESCO Cities of Music, including international exchanges with London, Ontario in Canada and Hannover, Germany.

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<div>Page 67</div>	<p>In addition, there are a range of initiatives due to launch in March and April 2024, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The launch of the Music Industry Mentoring Programme. • A strategic review of the NI Music Prize. • Programme to develop the production skills of women, female-identifying and non-binary music creators in a safe and trusted studio environment. • The implementation of Access Riders to improve disability access. • Health and Wellbeing sessions for musicians and the industry. <p>A “Go Green” toolkit with tangible recommendations and measures for implementation.</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work progressed to design and deliver “Belfast 2024” the large scale cultural and creative celebration, which will highlight and uplift the sector during the key visitor months of March to November 2024. Belfast 2024 has delivered so far; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 17 new pieces of work commissioned; 4 signature commissions. ○ 200+ events and opportunities. ○ 800+ opportunities for artists and production staff. ○ Over 100 volunteering opportunities. ○ 5 national and international collaborations and 10 international artist exchanges.
<p>City Recovery, reopening the city and support for businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalisation Fund: Physical interventions (AMBER) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant to Vibrant. Almost 400 application packs have been issued, and officers are currently working with a number of applicants, providing support to develop their proposals. A total of 18 applications have been approved with another 4 currently undergoing the assessment process, and a further 8 applicants are actively engaging with offices to finalise their applications with an expectation that these will be submitted over the coming months. A further 24 applicants are progressing with support via the matchmaking service. With the approved applications to date this has resulted in over 67 employment opportunities, estimated rates value of c£950k over the course of the lease periods and the reactivation to support 12 historic / heritage / buildings of interest.
<p>City Development and Investment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration Framework (AMBER) • Secure Belfast additional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the Regeneration Framework serves to underpin the lobbying case, with the interdependency to have a coherent approach to fundable propositions aligned to corporate priorities. The Regeneration Framework is currently being finalised, with officers currently testing its application. It is proposed to have further engagement with Members on the Framework, its application in the near future, with an objective of seeking agreement on city and Council priorities aligned to the Belfast Agenda and Corporate Plan. • The Advocacy and Lobby proposition is now being advanced supported by a detailed stakeholder engagement plan and lobbying strategy to have enhanced regeneration investment funding for Belfast in line with other cities as well as furthering the case for devolved powers. As agreed by Committee in Feb 2024 a letter has been sent to the Communities’ Minister welcoming him to his position and requesting that he would work with all stakeholders to achieve the conferring of regeneration powers to Councils with the appropriate budgets within this Assembly mandate.

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<div> <div>investment (AMBER)</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City centre investment fund (AMBER) Institutional investor / development partner (GREEN) Strategic direction to major projects (AMBER) Progress citywide strategic opportunities (GREEN) 2 Royal Avenue (AMBER) <div>The Sixth (GREEN)</div> <div>Regeneration Assets (GREEN)</div> <div>Belfast Campus (GREEN)</div> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the city centre investment fund is ongoing. This is aligned with the Council's corporate priorities and cognisance of the city's development aspirations as set outlined the Belfast Agenda. Council launched the process which seeks procurement for a long-term partner for the delivery of £630m GDV housing led placemaking regeneration in October 2023. This includes the inclusion of significant identified Council lands in the city centre, as part of a multi-site residential-led mixed-use regeneration development opportunity, with the potential for further sites across the city to be identified over the course of the partnership. Through this process Council are seeking a long-term partner to fund, develop and where appropriate to own and manage assets delivered through the partnership as part of a comprehensive regeneration scheme. The process is in line with the scheduled procurement programme. The Selection Questionnaire and de-selection stages have recently concluded, with 3 bidders now progressing through to the imminent Competitive Dialogue stage. The process is continuing in line with the procurement programme and is currently on schedule, with recommendations to be brought back to Members later in the year and with prior updates as this work progresses. Officers continued to engage on major private sector led regeneration schemes through the established Project Reference Groups to ensure alignment with Council's strategic corporate priorities. Specifically, in relation to Tribeca, decision by SP&R Committee in Jan 2024 agreeing that officers carry out further work in relation to the possibility of vesting and / or acquisition of the site by agreement including seeking a valuation of the site. Cross departmental work is ongoing in respect of this, noting that aligned to a NOM Castlebrooke met with Party Leaders and Party representatives in February 2024. Correspondence has been issued to the Ministers and Permanent Secretaries of the Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure and Department for Economy, as agreed by Council in respect to the decision of SP&R around carrying out further work in relation to the possibility of vesting and / or acquisition on this site. As reported to CGR Committee in Mar 2024, feasibility assessment including planning appraisals are currently being undertaken, these will be brought to Area Working Groups, with updates to Area Working Groups from May onwards. As agreed by CGR Committee in Mar 2024 an All Party Housing Led Regeneration Round Table meeting is being arranged which will provide an opportunity for Members to have a focused informed discussion and to consider ongoing activity, potential opportunities and the work of the Community Planning, Housing Led Regeneration Group. This will build on the engagement of previous City Growth and Regeneration workshops on Housing Led Regeneration which took place in Jan 2022 and Jan 2023 and allow an opportunity for specific Committee Plan priority updates. An update in relation to ongoing work in relation to 2 Royal Avenue was reported to the SP&R Committee in February 2024. This included the principles for acquisition; the current meanwhile use and the options and work undertaken to consider future uses including the need to consider the long term sustainability of the building and financial implications for Council; the LGBTQIA+ hub application to PEACEPLUS for space on the First Floor; and agreed to commence a without prejudice market wide Expressions of Interest (EOI) exercise for the ground floor of the building for both small occupiers to support and complement the current meanwhile use (until Dec 24) and a ground floor occupier(s) for longer term post 2024, cognisant of the proposed first floor PEACEPLUS Funding application. Work in respect of this EOI has commenced with an update to be reported to a future meeting of the Committee on the outcomes. DfC funded capital works to the rear of the buildings including opening up of the space at the rear with a new entrance and activation onto Bank Square improving connectivity from Royal Avenue to Bank Square were completed in March 2024. Work on the Sixth was also progressed via the BelTel LLP, which has included the recent submission of a renewed planning application that preserves the asset redevelopment potential. Ongoing management of the Regeneration Assets in line with the objectives of the CCIF. The Council are supporting the transition of CCRF in line with the opening of the Belfast Campus and transition to BAU. We continued to support the UU Community Campus Regeneration Forum, including its transition in line with the opening of the Belfast campus.

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<p>Increase tourism spend through sustainable tourism products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver year 2 of the 10-year Tourism recovery plan “Make Yourself at Home” (GREEN) • Deliver the Annual Events programme (AMBER) <p><i>The Amber rating is in the context of Fleadh and Euros and associated resource dependencies on multi agency partners, Casement etc)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 52% of all visitors to NI came to Belfast. Overall, the city accounts for 32% of all overnight stays in NI and the city generates 40% of the region’s tourism spend. Belfast’s tourism and hospitality sectors directly support over 19,000 jobs in key tourism sectors such as Accommodation and Food Services, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation and Transportation. • The following activity has been delivered against the strategic theme of Grow Belfast: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Officers have undertaken management of the Visit Belfast contract in respect of the delivery of business and leisure marketing and visitor servicing, to support the aim of increasing visitor numbers, dwell time and spend, thereby supporting tourism jobs, economic impact and social benefits across Belfast. Work has been ongoing to deliver the KPI’s set for marketing of Belfast as leisure and business tourism destination, with agreements reached on a five-year extension of the Lease Sharing Agreement with Visit Belfast and a three-year sharing agreement with Translink for the operation of a ticketing desk within the Belfast Welcome Centre. ○ Visit Belfast has generated c. £117m for the local economy, securing £1.6m towards the marketing and visitor serving of the City Region. ○ Visit Belfast has dealt with 612,701 enquiries (year to date) generating £14m to the local economy. ○ Visit Belfast’s web and social media activity has generated circa 1.9m web visits, 40m social media impressions and 3.1m social media engagements inc. 11.5m video views. PR and comms have generated 157m WOTS, with an equivalent media profile worth £500k AVE. ○ Visit Belfast has delivered 9 campaigns, generating a minimum of 92.3m impacts, generating 314,342 bed nights securing £47.5m to the local economy. Of particular note was the 2023 Christmas campaign. With a reduced budget of £120k, it was a digital led campaign in ROI and GB, achieving significant results contributing over £25m to the local economy and a ROI of £1:209. ○ Visit Belfast has also won the Business Tourism Team securing the Best Conference Destination – International, 2023 (C&IT Awards). ○ The Visitor Servicing Team also secured the NI Travel and Tourism Award for Best Tourist Information Centre for the 19th time. ○ The organisation is now ranked joint second for the best performing DMMO out of 100 destinations and Belfast is ranked 11th out of 100 city destinations, increasing the city’s overall score by 2% this year in the Global Destinations Sustainability Index. ○ Officers have also continued to deliver the Conference Subvention Programme in partnership with TNI and VB. Our Subvention Scheme has contributed to supporting business tourism with an economic impact of £35.8m, equating to 76,172 bed nights and 29,261 delegates. • Under the strategic theme of Position Belfast officers have been working with Visit Belfast, Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland to strengthen the position of Belfast in national and international markets through marketing campaigns and PR activity. We have also worked to strengthen Belfast’s position as a Gateway city and a must-see urban destination on the island of Ireland by capturing GB and ROI city break market and attracting a greater share of out of state visitors to Ireland - primarily through contract management of Visit Belfast targeting leisure and business visitors. • Under the strategic theme of Experience Belfast, officer developed the Neighbourhood Tourism Programme, a new 2-year £500,000 investment programme (approved by Committee in June 2023), including £250,000 to develop and enhance market-led tourism products and experiences across the city, with a view to promoting enhanced visitor footfall, dwell time and spend across the city’s neighbourhoods and sharing tourism’s economic and social benefits to communities throughout the city. Throughout December 2023 to February 2024, officers have delivered sectoral engagement (internal and external) to identify needs, gaps and opportunities which has informed the investment criteria whilst aligning with ‘Belfast Stories’. • Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Programme - Belfast’s first Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Seminar was developed and delivered on 20th February 2024 at Titanic Belfast. Attended by over 100 delegates, the Seminar enabled experts and activists in access and inclusion to share their expertise and experience with an audience of businesses, decision makers, policy makers and influencers. A range of resources were developed and launched at the Seminar and have been added to the new Tourism NI eLearning Platform to ensure wide audience reach. The overall

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Young World - this major event was successfully delivered by the Tourism and Events Team with summit partners during October 2023, with delegates and corporates in attendance from over 190 countries which profiled Belfast on an international stage through world media and was a memorable week for all involved. The event attracted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,952 international delegates (2,903 total visitors) 282 speakers across all stages 95 journalists 187 partner organisations from corporate, government and NGO sectors 137 delegates from NI who are now lifelong Ambassadors. 155 volunteers over the course of the event, providing 2,198 volunteer hours. 410 pieces of high-quality coverage across NI, ROI, and GB markets, including front page and full-page spreads across print and broadcast media and media attention from EWS, ITV, Monocle, Sky News, CNBC, PA Media, Channel News Asia.

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<div>Page 71</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An evaluation of the event reported that 39% of non-NI delegates travelled within NI after the Summit. These delegates rated their travelling experience in NI 4.62 out of 5. Partner Executives reported an average rating of 4.25 out of 5 for Belfast event venues; 4.17 out of 5 for the city's accommodation; 3.67 out of 5 for its transport links; 4 out of 5 for its culture/entertainment and 3.54 out of 5 for its food/beverages. The team delivered 3 large-scale city events (Maritime Festival 2023, Christmas 2023 and St Patrick's Day 2024) attracting local audiences and out-of-state visitors. The Maritime Festival was successfully delivered in September 2023, including an audience of 80,000, securing TNI funding of £60,000. In lieu of a large-scale creative piece (Council decision), a Maritime village including craft, food and science fair was delivered as part of the wider programme. The out-of-state marcomms reach was 6,764,000 impacts with the overall Visit Belfast campaign being over 9.5 million impacts. Organic social media on Facebook also had 58,811 Impressions. Christmas Switch-On Event (November 2023) - The 'Let's Glow Belfast' Christmas Lights Switch-On successfully took place on Saturday 18th November 6.30pm-7.30pm, with a celebration of local music, theatre and dance, compered by the Cool FM Breakfast Team (media partnership) with Lord Mayor and special invited guest Dáithí Mac Gabhann officially switching on the lights. The free event (ticketed via Visit Belfast) attracted in excess of 10,000 citizens and visitors. Following on from 2022's model of uplifting the Christmas programme in 2 Royal Avenue, the Winters Den opened on Saturday 18th November and continued to Sunday 7th January 2024. The Winters Den season featured a selection of free entry festive activities. The Winter's Den attracted footfall of 30,255 between 18 Nov-13 Dec. The event evaluation found that 51% of attendees rating the overall event between 8 and 10 out of 10, including 19% who rated it as '10 - Extremely good'. At the other end of the scale, 14% gave it a rating between 1-3; 92% agreed that there should be more events like this in Belfast; and 83% of respondents stated the Let's Glow Belfast event improves the reputation of Belfast as a place to visit. St Patrick's Day 2024 - Council Officers have responsibility for direct delivery of the parade and have engaged widely to ensure community participation and co-design. Once finalised, a full event debrief will be presented to a future committee meeting. Belfast 2024 - the Events Team have worked in-year with the Belfast 2024 to support the operational roll out and delivery of the cultural programme. This is an ongoing workstream. The events team were successful in their bid to host the Oireachtas na Samhna Festival in 2025 and are establishing the appropriate working and governance groups to support its delivery. Euros 2028 – officers have continued to work towards the delivery of this event in 2028 As part of the international events programme for 2025-2028, Officers continue to participate in the ongoing bidding process for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann for 2026 and 2027.
Encourage business start-ups and support indigenous business growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide 'Starting a Business' services (GREEN) Support social enterprises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed the new Northern Ireland Enterprise Support Service (NIESS) with council as the lead partner for the region. Successfully launched the new multi-million pound scheme in November 2023. Enterprise awareness activity: 1759 individuals were engaged with a specific focus on underrepresented groups including people with disabilities, individuals who are economically inactive, females and young people. We also enabled test trading opportunities for 18 new businesses through our dedicated start up space at St George's Market and many of those are seeking to trade at the market on a more regular basis or are exploring alternative retail outlets for their products. Start a business activity: Since the launch of Go Succeed in November 2023, we have received 573 enquiries from individuals wishing to start a business in Belfast. This has progressed through to 278 completed diagnostics directly leading to business plan development and 1-1 mentoring. Support for Social Enterprises and Co-operatives: 57 organisations were supported with one-to-one mentoring, advice, and guidance. Four of these organisations were new co-operatives. The Social Enterprise and Co-operative Support programme has facilitated 28 events/workshops

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<p>and co-operatives (GREEN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide 'Growing a Business' services (GREEN) 	<p>with over 350 attendees including a regional networking event, virtual global best practice visit and workshops. The Social Economy Incentive Fund launched again in September 2023, with an available pot of almost £50,000 to support social economy businesses to bring forward their business growth plans. 30 applications for support were received, 14 of which were shortlisted to pitch with 11 winners selected. In recognition of our work, Belfast City Council won 'Council of the Year' at the Social Enterprise Northern Ireland Awards in October 2023 for the second consecutive year. Most recently we applied to Social Enterprise Northern Ireland to become recognised as an official Social Enterprise Place, part of a SENI & SEUK initiative and are awaiting the outcome of this. In March 2024 we launched the public 'Social Economy Directory' on the Belfast City Council website and have 40 organisations registered on this across the city.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing a Business: Since November 2023, we have supported 348 existing businesses with growth support. Under the service, we have also provided 20 masterclasses, engaging almost 420 Belfast based attendees. We have also successfully launched and administered grants to businesses to remove barriers to growth; to date 29 businesses have been supported to a value of almost £100,000. City vibrancy: in January 2022, we launched the Vibrant Business Destinations programme in partnership with DfC. This two-year pilot aimed to support local business associations to develop and deliver interventions to drive footfall and create vibrancy in areas outside of the city centre. Ten associations have now been supported to develop area-based action plans, with each organisation accessing funding to the value of £40,000 to deliver local marketing activity, events and small-scale environmental improvements. The programme is currently in the closing stages and a final report will be brought back to Committee for review and consideration. Officers are also engaging with DfC to explore the potential for future support. Innovation Factory: the centre averaged 62% occupancy over the course of the year. Whilst the occupancy rate has dropped back a little from the previous year, we have seen an increase in the price per square foot which is helping with financial performance. Over the past year, 261 businesses engaged in masterclasses and events at the centre. As part of their social and economic regeneration activity, 43 work placements have been facilitated by IF tenants, and a series of school engagement activities took place involving 586 young people. Scaling and growth: in partnership with Catalyst and Invest NI, the Way to Scale programme supported 10 SMEs to participate on a series of bootcamps to transform their businesses and support them to scale and grow to a turnover of more than £2million. 10 were supported to participate in a one week residential at MIT and access a peer-to-peer workshop series with Catalyst. We also put in place support for businesses in creative and digital industries and financial services sectors to build capacity and access opportunities for finance to support the growth and development of their businesses. In partnership with Digital Catapult, the Creative Digital Capacity programme supported 52 companies through a series of workshops, networking and mentoring activity. Through the BRCD supported Digital Transformation Flexible Fund, £135,000 has been allocated to 9 Belfast based SMEs, to support them implement new digital technologies and solutions into their business to support new product and service development and to ensure long term digital sustainability. Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor work: as previously reported to the committee at their December meeting the new staffing resources continue to progress the agreed action plan. The committee approved the Partnership and Collaboration agreement, and this was signed in January 2024. Staff from the Enterprise and Business Growth unit have worked closely with DBEC staff to progress several initiatives particularly feasibility studies funded by the Shared Island unit. This includes identification and consideration of appropriate external funding bids to progress this work, such as under Shared Island and Peace Plus.
<p>Support City Markets (GREEN)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St George's Market attracted over 1 million visitors and was awarded the Best Large Indoor Market in the UK at the Great British Market Awards, beating 20 other UK markets. Twilight Market took place over two evenings at the end of October and attracted over 25,000 visitors.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Christmas market took place from 18 November to 22 December 2023. It attracted in excess of 1 million visitors (actual figure: 1,026,267) over that period. This was slightly up on 2022 numbers (1,015,565) and similar to 2018 footfall estimates (1,083,692). Overall spend generated (not just spend on the market – survey respondents referred to the money that they spent/planned to spend in the city during their visit) was in the region of £60million.
<p>Promote and market the city inter-nationally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positioning the City to Compete (GREEN) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers supported the branding of the Renewed Ambition Partnership to the Belfast City and Region Place Partnership (BCRPP), which aligns to our collective public and private sector commitment to creating spaces and places where people want to invest, live, study, work and visit, and delivery of the BCRPP associated programme of activity. The launch of the 2023/24 programme took place on 14 Nov which brought together representatives from the public, private and third sectors to discuss the importance of place in the context of city regeneration and development, including the role that city regeneration and investment can play in increasing city vibrancy and delivering inclusive economic growth. Officers supported the delivery of the BCRPP 2023 / 2024 structured Programme of Activity which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Dublin Showcase Event which took place on the 6th March. This event was organised in association with the Urban Land Institute, Ireland Chapter, and showcased the city region, highlighting the positive aspects of the city and city region as well as the real estate investment opportunity. Over 120 investors, developers and partners were in attendance at the event, with follow up on-going. Leading a Belfast City Region delegation of over 30 representatives to MIPIM on the 12 – 15th March which included a concentrated programme of activity including investor engagement, participating on panel discussions and co-hosting a UK Cities Dinner with Liverpool, Cardiff and Department for Business & Trade. Follow up is on-going. Through our investor support activity, we continued to provide advice and connections to potential investors, including supporting the Northern Ireland Investment Summit which took place in the ICC Belfast on Wednesday 13 September 2023. This event was delivered by the Department for Business and Trade, in partnership with Invest NI and the Northern Ireland Office and attended by over 200 international investors from countries all around the world. Officers provided keynote presentations at industry conferences including Recharge 2024 -a hospitality and real estate focussed conference which took place in Belfast in January 2024, and attended the UK Cities & Partners Reception, February 2023. This event was organised in conjunction with City of London Corporation and convened a senior delegation of city leaders and institutional investors at Guildhall London to explore ways in which the UK can unlock long-term large scale capital investment. The Building Impact Report was shared with Committee following the Committee meeting in August 2023. Work is on-going to support the implementation of the report recommendations. Monitoring and analysis of valid planning applications to inform the City Development Tracker continues on an ongoing basis. Ongoing maintenance and updating of the Invest in Belfast website with information on Belfast, the key growth sectors and specific investment and development opportunities. Continued roll out of the investment CRM system, ongoing maintenance and management.
<p>Future City Centre Programme and Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Future City Centre (FCC) Programme was revised and a monitoring framework developed to measure the implementation of the programme. Work continues to develop a communications plan to support and amplify the positive messaging around the city centre linked to the FCC Monitoring Framework. Recent progress includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation from Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce to the City Centre All Party Working Group in March Supporting Queens University in consultation and engagement events in March 2024 with students on their lived experience of the city centre which will be fed back through Community Planning structures Completion of the Southwest Quarter scheme involving 4 business cluster & community grant schemes alongside an environmental improvement/connectivity scheme on Gt Victoria St & Shaftsbury Sq.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to progress the Future City Centre Programme (GREEN) BCCRIS - Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (AMBER) Developer Contributions (GREEN) Regeneration Projects (GREEN) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the 5 Cs Revitalisation scheme involving improving streetscape with imagery and lighting Final stages of completion on the final Entries project within this Phase, focusing on reopening Sugarhouse Entry. Completion of DfC funded capital works to the rear of 2 Royal Avenue involving opening the rear space and activating the building onto Bank Square, improving connections to and from Royal Avenue, Bank Square and the wider Castle Street area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of priorities and projects identified within Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy continue to be progressed via BCC and other private /public sector partners. Committee received an update in respect of Developer Contributions (historical contributions) in April 2023. These continue to be monitored and scheme proposals utilising the contributions are being delivered in line with the Section 76 agreements. The Joint Regeneration Group (BCC, DfC, DfI, NIHE) met on a monthly basis to co-ordinate the public sector approach to Housing-Led Regeneration, A Bolder Vision, public realm projects, refresh of the Belfast Agenda and the FCC programme. Updates were provided to Committee in February 2024 in relation externally funded active travel enabler, South West Quarter and Grey to Green. The council continued to lead the City Development Board with a focus on the refresh of the Belfast Agenda and associated emerging draft action plans aligned to the newly identified priorities of the City Development Board, ie, Housing Led Regeneration; Future City Centre Programme and Citywide Regeneration; Connectivity, Active & Sustainable Travel and supported the public consultation for this which closed on 2 October 2023, and engagement with the Board and sub groups around this.
<p>City Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion the Council's preferred position for major infrastructure projects. (AMBER) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continued to provide civic leadership and strategic input to the major city infrastructure projects, representing Council on citywide boards, enabling, facilitating, and influencing major infrastructure development and investment. In Nov 2023 Committee agreed the Council's response to the consultation on the Eastern Transport Plan, and Officers have continued to engage with DfI in the development of the Eastern Transport Plan to ensure alignment with the LDP process and A Bolder Vision. Committee received a presentation at the Special meeting of Committee in Nov 2023 from DfI Roads on their Autumn Report. Committee received a further presentation at the Special meeting of Committee in Jan 2024 from Translink on the Belfast Grand Central Station/ Weaver Cross developments including details of the street works program and public transport interventions as well as the communication plan and further stakeholder engagement. Committee subsequently agreed in Mar 2024 to receive a further presentation (and future presentations as appropriate) in relation to the development including an update on the Belfast Grand Central Station construction timelines including public realm works, Planned Traffic Management activities, Closure of Great Victoria Street Station and Planned Summer railway closures.
<p>Committee Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belfast Zoo (GREEN) Belfast Bikes (AMBER) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance at the Zoo has been on a par with previous years. Footfall has remained steady, and income is likely to increase by year end. A range of events and initiatives took place to increase footfall in the off-peak season which had a positive impact on income i.e., Boo at the Zoo, Wildlife Wonderland and NI Science Festival and animal encounters. Work has been ongoing around the proposed Elephant transfer with a visit from Burgers Zoo taking place in December and a visit to Burgers from Belfast being scheduled for the spring. There were 119,135 Belfast Bike Journeys 2023 (Calendar Year). Performance has been down during this period resulting in reduced income over the period. Poor weather and increased vandalism with the lack of a sponsor thought to have been responsible for the downturn in performance. A new sponsorship deal has been negotiated to go live in the new financial year. The current contract with NSL has been extended to allow for a transition period once a new operator has been procured. A new tender is scheduled to be published in the spring.

Strategic Priority, Work Area (Year End RAG status)	2023-24 Progress
Belfast Stories (GREEN)	<p><i>Expert Teams</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus for 2023 was the procurement of the design teams to deliver Belfast Stories. In 2024 the design teams will develop the concept design for the Belfast Stories experience and build and prepare the Outline Business Case (OBC) for submission to TNI and DfE to secure the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) contract for funding. Gleeds was appointed in October 2023 to lead the Project Management and Design Assurance Team (MAT). This team includes project managers, cost consultants, business case consultant and design assurers. Following an International Design Competition, an architect led Integrated Design Team (IDT) was appointed in October 2023 consisting of Snøhetta and Todd architects and ARUP engineering and technical consultants to support the design development process. <p><i>Belfast Stories Experience</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Experience Design Team (EDT) has been assembled to develop an interpretive masterplan for the site and develop the concept design for the Belfast Stories experience in 2024. The collection of Belfast's stories underpins the concept and a stories gathering pilot was launched in October 23 to consider story collection. <p><i>Inclusive Economic Growth</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belfast Stories is piloting the BCC Inclusive growth Toolkit to see how we can support greater social mobility, more inclusive labour markets and more inclusive places and services. Social value delivery plans have been received from the professional services teams with opportunities for paid employment, apprenticeships and student placement/trainees. The Belfast Stories Members Working Group was established in October 2023 to support ongoing Member engagement. Two meetings have been held to date and the group continues to meet quarterly. The Stories Network was established in Mar 2024 to support wider stakeholder engagement, with the objective of creating a safe and open space for ongoing dialogue, debate and challenge that will help shape the programme as it develops. Sustainability expertise is being provided by Arup with input from BCC Climate Team ensuring the project maximises the opportunity for net zero carbon exemplar for the city. <p>Note a report has been produced which summarises Belfast Stories progress - the Story So Far Report - which can access via https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/9582/widgets/27494/documents/55443</p>
Access, Connectivity, Active and Sustainable Travel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Travel and Connectivity (AMBER) A Bolder Vision for Belfast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Connectivity, Active and Sustainable Travel Members All Party Roundtable discussion took place on 25 January 2024. Discussion focussed on the Belfast Agenda priority area of CAST and the Waterfront Framework. This group will continue to meet to prioritise and position the delivery of Connectivity, Active and Sustainable Travel. Council continues to take a civic lead on A Bolder Vision (ABV). With the re-establishment of the Executive the governance groups have been reconvened to finalise the Strategy in line with Council Priorities and the emerging Eastern Transport Plan, which reflects heavily the work of ABV. A number of early projects have been delivered under the banner of ABV including the Waterfront Promenade Framework, Sugarhouse Entry, the delivery of the Green to Grey programme and Active Travel Enablers, Little York Little Patrick Street, the 5C's and Blackstaff Sq. Work continues, including with private sector & public sector partners to develop a pipeline of projects to deliver out the objectives of ABV.

Strategic Priority, Work Area (Year End RAG status)	2023-24 Progress
<div>Page 76</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (AMBER) Car Parking Strategy (RED) Horizon Europe Urban Planning 2030 (GREEN) Waterfront Proposition – Belfast Waterfront Promenade (GREEN) Belfast – Cork Harbour Cities (GREEN) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As agreed by CG&R Committee in June 2022 the refresh of the Car Parking Strategy is deferred pending the finalisation of the LDP & ETP. The Car Parking Working Group has been reconvened in light of the adopted LDP and consultation on the Eastern Transport Plan (former BMTP). Officers continue to work with DfI to establish the implications of the emerging ETP work on the Car Parking Strategy. The Horizon Europe Urban Planning 2030 project is underway including regular attendance and reporting to the UP2030 consortium and liaison partner, Mapping for Change. An update was brought to the consortium conference in November 2023 in Lisbon. Further to the initial strategic and thematic workshops, engagement has taken place with strategic partners, partners and representatives from the geographical areas covered within the pilot, Falls, Sandy Row, Markets, Donegall Pass and Linen Quarter; a series of visioning workshops are scheduled for April to agree the thematic visions and objective setting for the project and begin work on the adaptive pathways to identify the short/long term sequence of actions that would be required to deliver the vision. In addition, further engagement is scheduled over spring/summer including workshops with BCC staff, young people and residents. Alongside this, work has taken place on the geospatial analysis of the pilot area, using interactive mapping software to overlay current information on the area such as CENSUS data, tree data, deprivation data etc. as well as projected climate impacts such as flooding and heat risk to help steer and inform the work of the project through the pillars of climate neutrality, resilience and a fair and just transition. Officers have continued to support the Waterfront Task Group on the Waterfront Proposition – Belfast Waterfront Promenade including the launch in December 2023 which involved the Chair of Committee. The Consultation on the Framework was launched also in December 2023 and closed on 31 January 2024. A working group is now in place to deliver on the Actions of the Framework doc including feasibility work complete on the ‘Under the Bridges’ & ‘Sailortown to Queens Island’ footbridges. Work is ongoing with stakeholders in Cork following on from the Shared Island initiative to support the feasibility bid for the Cork Belfast Harbour Cities proposal with the agreed prioritised project for the Belfast Dockside Regeneration as the Sailortown to Titanic Quarter Active Travel Bridge. Work continues to identify funding opportunities to further develop and deliver these projects.
Educational underachievement (GREEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GCSE Maths and English Support Programme was delivered with 238 GCSE Eng/Maths places allocated.
Access to employment (GREEN) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Employment academies. Improving demand side support: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been 816 Employment Academy participants who have started this year. There have been 331 Employment Academy participants who have completed training. There have been 251 participants have had a successful outcome – obtaining a job or a better job as a result of an Employment Academy. There have also been new delivery agents recruited and new programmes developed during the past year. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People 1st delivering new bespoke academies to help support migrants in to paid employment within the Health & Social Care sector. Additional funding and resources have been allocated to this provision to help reduce barriers and maximise the impact of this largely untapped talent pool. Stranmillis delivering Level 4 training for 100 x classroom assistants which provides access to a ‘better job’ or a pathway to higher education. Gaelchursai delivering 6 x new employment and upskilling academies which help to support people leaving an Irish Medium education setting to move into employment or a ‘better job’.
Upskilling opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gateway to Choices Services – There have been 867 residents supported (120 with a disability); 88 progressed into employment and 170 moved into further education/training.

Strategic Priority, Work Area (Year End RAG status)	2023-24 Progress
<p>(GREEN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress the Belfast Labour Market Partnership (LMP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridges to Progression (Supporting Young People) – There have been 134 young people supported (target 120) – 51% of participants seeking help with their mental health. Scoping/Research completed – There have been three projects completed researching Employer Navigation Service, People-based Approaches and Place-based Approaches. Jobs Fair - 850 participants, 64 employers, 85% intended to apply for a job

2. Community Recovery (housing)

Strategic Priority, Work Area (Year End RAG status)	2023-24 Progress
<div> <div>Maximising housing development and regeneration opportunities</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCC Housing-Led Regeneration Programme (AMBER) Citywide strategic opportunities (AMBER) <div> <div>Strategic City Centre Cluster Sites (GREEN)</div> <div>City Centre Living Vision (GREEN)</div> </div> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been ongoing work with city partners to overcome obstacles to increasing residential development, including City Centre living. A joint People & Communities and City Growth & Regeneration Committee workshop took place on 20 February 2024 with the NIHE in relation to housing supply and demand. The CG&R Committee in March 2024 agreed to convene an All-Party Round Table regarding Housing-Led Regeneration work strands across the city that will provide an opportunity for Members to have a focused and informed discussion around this strategic priority, with representation from Party Group Leaders or their nominees. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility assessment including planning appraisals are currently being undertaken in respect of the Citywide Strategic Site Assessments. These will be brought to Area Working Groups, with updates from May onwards. It is worth noting that this forms part of wider work with the Housing Led Regeneration Group which is also assessing other public sector lands inc NIHE and DfC lands and this wider assessment work will also be brought to Members aligned to the governance mechanisms for the other public sector bodies. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reframed Inner North-West Development Brief was re issued in March 2024 with a deadline to return in June 2024. Council launched the process which seeks procurement for a long-term partner for the delivery of £630m GDV housing led placemaking regeneration in October 2023. This includes the inclusion of significant identified Council lands in the city centre (formed part of the initial Phase 1 Strategic Site Assessments), as part of a multi-site residential-led mixed-use regeneration development opportunity, with the potential for further sites across the city to be identified over the course of the partnership. Through this process Council are seeking a long-term partner to fund, develop and where appropriate to own and manage assets delivered through the partnership as part of a comprehensive regeneration scheme. The process is in line with the scheduled procurement programme. The Selection Questionnaire and de-selection stages have recently concluded, with 3 bidders now progressing through to the imminent Competitive Dialogue stage. The process is continuing in line with the procurement programme and is currently on schedule, with recommendations to be brought back to Members later in the year and with prior updates as this work progresses. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City Centre Living Vision work has now completed. This is supporting an evidenced based approach to building a sustainable city centre residential vision; producing clear recommendations acknowledging the role of Council and its partners in delivering this vision; recognising the current and emerging social, demographic, economic and political landscape of the city and region; considering demand, supply, community and social infrastructure, urban design, viability and case studies from elsewhere. As agreed by CGR Committee in March 2024 the summary findings and recommendations on this City Centre Living Vision will be brought to HLR All Party Round Table.



City Growth and Regeneration

Committee Plan 2024- 2025



Belfast
City Council

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Introduction

The City Growth and Regeneration Committee is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed to the regeneration and growth of the city in the context of the outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy.

Its specific functions, as outlined within the Belfast City Council Constitution Appendix 3 – Standing Orders, include:

- Influencing and contributing to regional regeneration and growth strategies and activities
- Developing and implementing city-wide economic strategies and policies
- Managing and maximising the impact of major physical developments in the city
- Coordinating and promoting major city-wide events
- Sourcing and providing support to attract and utilise European and other grants which contribute to the growth of the city
- Providing support for economic development initiatives
- Supporting the development of culture, heritage and the arts
- Working with other agencies to promote Belfast as a key investment and tourism opportunity
- Developing programmes and actions to support local businesses and attract inward investment
- Managing the Council's markets and maximising their benefit to the city
- Influencing and contributing to strategies and policies affecting skills, employability, transportation and energy in the City
- Overseeing the delivery of the following services:
 - Economic Development;
 - Tourism;
 - Culture and Arts;
 - European and International Relations;
 - City Markets;
 - City Events;
 - Belfast Castle;
 - Malone House;
 - Belfast Zoo;
 - City Centre Development; and
 - The transferring car parks.

Committee Members



Councillor Clíodhna Nic Bhranair (Chair)
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Collin



Councillor Matt Garrett
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Collin



Councillor Andrew McCormick
Party: DUP
DEA: Ormiston



Alderman Ron McDowell (Deputy Chair)
Party: TUV
DEA: Court



Councillor Conor McKay
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Botanic



Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown Gormley
Party: Alliance Party
Ward: Botanic



Councillor Sarah Bunting
Party: DUP
DEA: Balmoral



Alderman James Lawlor
Party: DUP
DEA: Ormiston



Councillor Ian McLaughlin
Party: DUP
DEA: Court



Councillor Claire Canavan
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Court



Councillor Donal Lyons
Party: SDLP
DEA: Balmoral



Councillor Ross McMullan
Party: Alliance Party
DEA: Ormiston



Councillor Sammy Douglas
Party: DUP
DEA: Titanic



Councillor Conor Maskey
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Castle



Councillor Micky Murray
Party: Alliance Party
DEA: Balmoral



Councillor Joe Duffy
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Collin



Councillor Fiona McAteer
Party: Alliance Party
DEA: Titanic



Councillor Séanna Walsh
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Collin



Councillor Anthony Flynn
Party: Green Party
DEA: Ormiston



Councillor Áine McCabe
Party: Sinn Fein
DEA: Black Mountain

Belfast City Council Priorities

Since it was launched in 2017, the [Belfast Agenda](#) has been a key city framework, coalescing partners beyond the core legislative requirements of community planning with a shared focus on addressing key city challenges. The approach adopted has enhanced the relationship between the public/statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors to drive forward real change, address inequalities and improve quality of life within and across the city

The refreshed Belfast Agenda 2024-28, maintains the same level of ambition and collective leadership commitment to deliver the long-term vision and outcomes previously agreed. It is delivery and outcome focused and is positioned as an overarching city strategy which identifies the major transformational programmes and investment opportunities for the city.

The strategy also sets out a number of specific 'calls to action' for local, regional and national partners to work together to bring forward important strategies, programmes and investment which will help deliver the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda.

The council's corporate plan is a reflection of what people in Belfast have told us they want and the type of leadership they feel the city needs. It takes the priorities of the Belfast Agenda and sets out the ways in which the council will support and deliver these to grow a sustainable, inclusive economy and equitable society and sets out the work we will do as an organisation to continually improve and develop to continue to deliver excellent services. The council's strategic themes are cascaded down from the Belfast Agenda and include:



- **Theme 1: Our people and communities** - Making life better for all our residents
- **Theme 2: Our economy** - Creating inclusive, innovative and sustainable growth, learning and opportunity
- **Theme 3: Our place** - Creating a liveable and connected, vibrant and competitive city
- **Theme 4: Our planet** - Creating a sustainable, nature-positive city
- **Theme 5: Compassionate city** - Making Belfast a welcoming, caring, fair and inclusive city – leaving no one behind

The City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan is aligned to both the recently refreshed Belfast Agenda 2024-28 and newly developed Corporate Plan 2024-2028. It identifies the priorities that this committee will be focussed on over the year ahead and primarily relate to the ‘**Our economy**’ and ‘**Our place**’ themes. The key areas of work have been identified and specific in-year deliverables are set out in section that follows.



Key Programmes of work

Our Economy

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will
Support access to sustainable employment opportunities and improve skills levels for target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver employment and upskilling academies in priority sectors in line with industry demand, focusing on inclusive growth target areas. ▪ Extend the Digital Badging scheme to enhance employer engagement and provide opportunities for people to build their skills portfolio. ▪ Support management of Labour Market Partnership including delivery of key projects (Gateways to Choices, Bridges to Progression, Multiply) and working with LMP partners to identify opportunities for new interventions that deliver city priorities. ▪ Engage with relevant statutory and VCSE partners to create greater cohesiveness across the E&S ecosystem and to shape future economic inactivity support (from April 2025). ▪ Explore opportunities to use social value and developer contributions to support skills development and employment activities. ▪ Support delivery of the benefits of first phase of BRCD delivery by integration and alignment with economic development and skills programmes. ▪ Develop an updated economic proposition demonstrating the critical role of Belfast and the Belfast Region in creating good jobs, supporting innovation and driving productivity.
Support business start-up and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver Northern Ireland Enterprise Support Service (NIESS) to increase the number of new business-starts and to support business growth. ▪ Undertake the 'Lead Council' role on NIESS, in line with funder MoU obligations. ▪ Secure financial support for NIESS extension beyond March 2025. ▪ Support the operation of the Innovation Factory, in line with agreed Annual Service Plan obligations. ▪ Support the delivery of the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) with at least 114 businesses accessing support over two financial years. ▪ Support the development and integration of BRCD digital and challenge fund programmes with business support programmes. ▪ Develop a targeted approach to social enterprise support in order to meet the target of 10% social enterprises engaging on NIESS. ▪ Continue to work with Community Finance Ireland CFI to improve the financial management skills of new and growing social enterprises.
Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the corridor strategy to agree priority areas of focus and support the delivery of targeted economic development interventions.
Support city markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure delivery of the annual business plan for St George's Market. ▪ Support the delivery of the Christmas Continental Market. ▪ Review the markets rights policy in order to ensure that it supports the operation of independent markets across the city, to enhance animation and vibrancy. ▪ Ensure effective management of Smithfield Market.
Belfast Business Promise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extend business engagement in Belfast Business Promise, supporting 50 companies to engage in the programme. ▪ Undertake interim evaluation to identify optimal approach to future resourcing and delivery.

Our Place

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
Housing-Led Regeneration - Support and work with partners to address housing challenges	<p>Competitive Dialogue Process to attract private sector partner / investor to take forward Housing Led Regeneration mixed use development opportunities:</p> <p>Appointment of Private Sector Development /Investor Partner (on completion of the current Competitive Dialogue Exercise) in respect of a number of BCC strategic sites that will act as a master developer to deliver residential-led, mixed-use developments in support of the city’s growth targets, delivering on key regeneration objectives, social value and economic impact.</p> <p>Strategic Site Assessments Phase 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete planning, site appraisals and feasibility studies for BCC lands identified within the city-wide Strategic Site Assessments. Progress site development and/or disposal options as appropriate following Member engagement and approvals and embedding social value and maximising the economic impact of such development. ▪ Continue to work through the Community Planning Partnership Housing-Led Regeneration Group to complete collation of all public sector land data and analysis of housing led opportunities utilising the LDP Urban Capacity Study and Housing Monitor. Progress, as appropriate, with other public sector partners opportunities for placemaking pilots and housing-led regeneration on wider public sector lands. ▪ Continue working with relevant public and private sector bodies to identify wider potential housing development opportunities and bring forward proposals that may unblock challenges to delivery. <p>Inner North-West Development Brief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage the Development Brief, alongside DfC (as joint landowner) and development process for lands in the Inner North-West (INW) Northern Cluster to bring forward a Housing-Led Regeneration scheme. <p>Funding models to deliver housing based placemaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advance the Place-Based Growth Proposition including the lobbying and advocacy work aimed at devolving and increasing regeneration funding and with a focus on Housing-Led Regeneration and placemaking purposes. ▪ Progress proposal for the reframing of the City Centre Investment Fund to support Housing Led Regeneration.
Connectivity and City Infrastructure	<p>A Bolder Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update and finalise A Bolder Vision (ABV) in line with the Eastern Transport Plan, including the SEA consultation. ▪ Secure Council and Ministerial approval. ▪ Align delivery with Corporate and PfG priorities including Belfast Agenda, LDP and corporate /city project prioritisation processes. ▪ Maintain public visibility and engagement with stakeholders through comms and engagement programme. ▪ Agree and commence city centre partnership projects with key stakeholders in line with ABV interventions. ▪ Work with DfC and DfI to ensure public realm projects are delivered in line with ABV, adopting an integrated placemaking and sustainable mobility approach.

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under “Embracing the River” and through the Waterfront Taskforce progress implementation of the Waterfront Promenade Framework including progressing the agreed priority projects for delivery including the Under the Bridge and Sailortown Bridge projects as well as working with communities to realise the full potential of the Waterfront opportunities. <p>Citywide Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to create a more connected city by using existing and new greenways, urban greenways and existing and enhanced green spaces connecting the North, South, East and West of the city as well as the city centre. Agree and progress partnership projects with key stakeholders (QUB, UU, BIDs, BHC) in line with ABV interventions including Under the Bridges project and Active Travel Enablers as well as projects emerging from the Eastern Transport Plan. <p>Belfast Bikes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the development and delivery of the public bike hire scheme. Undertake a tender exercise to procure a new operator for scheme from Dec 2024 onwards. <p>City Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to champion the Council's preferred position for major infrastructure projects. Continue to represent Council and play a key role on city-wide boards facilitating, enabling and influencing major infrastructure development and investment including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> York Street Interchange; BRT Phase 2; Belfast Cycle Network; Living With Water project; Belfast Streets Ahead; and Weaver’s Cross.
<p>Strategic regeneration and investment schemes</p>	<p>Tribeca</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress options for vesting and /or acquisition by agreement of the Tribeca site including valuation and funding options, subject to agreement on a commercial and resourcing strategy. Explore options to bring the Assembly Rooms into Council ownership and consideration of future development and use options. <p>2 Royal Avenue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure the Long-term use of 2 Royal Avenue in line with council’s objectives. <p>The Sixth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress options for the future use and development of the Sixth in partnership with the council’s LLP partner. <p>Dunbar Regeneration Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress comprehensive regeneration scheme at Dunbar bringing together council and private sector assets to deliver comprehensive placemaking redevelopment co-ordinated through a joint master-planning approach.

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
	<p>Arterial Routes Regeneration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop proposals to address the regeneration of arterial routes aligned to existing and proposed programmes of work (including Vibrant Business Destinations, Housing-Led Placemaking pilots, Neighbourhood Regeneration and Area-Based Community Plans) in the context of previous initiatives including Renewing the Routes, Business Cluster & Community Grants and Dereliction, in line with the emerging ambitions of the Eastern Transport Plan. <p>Regeneration Framework and Place Based Growth Proposition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress and embed the Regeneration Framework approach to prioritise city and council priorities. Progress the Advocacy and Lobbying programme of work aligned to the Place Based Growth Proposition for Belfast and ensure alignment with priorities identified by the Regeneration Framework process. <p>Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (BCCRIS).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to progress (with partners) projects and interventions identified within BCCRIS. Take forward a ten-year review of BCCRIS building on the work of the recent Regeneration Trackers, to inform city and council priorities going forward. <p>Regeneration activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively with colleagues in Planning and across Council to support regeneration plans and secure and deliver schemes aligned to Developer Contributions as appropriate. Delivery of the Vacant to Vibrant Pilot Capital Grant Scheme as a tool to address vacancy and dereliction while supporting SME's/ Independents to better utilise space aligned to council priorities. Engage with public and private sector in respect of major regeneration schemes including facilitating and leading project reference groups for specified major schemes, including Tribeca and Waterside (Sirocco). Lead the Joint Regeneration Group, Community Planning Partnership and City Development Boards with other partners to prioritise and drive key regeneration initiatives. Management of identified Regeneration Assets (including 2 Royal Avenue, Commission House, Site 10, Corporation Street) in line with the objectives of the City Centre Investment Fund and ongoing regeneration proposals.
<p>Promote and Position the City for Inclusive Investment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support a joint public private approach, including via the Belfast Place Partnership, aimed at ensuring Belfast is positioned to continue to attract inclusive investment to underpin regeneration, development and infrastructure activities in the city required to deliver our inclusive growth ambitions. Facilitating investment and development related visits aimed at positioning the city to compete and promote inclusive growth and development for the city. Maintaining and developing the Invest in Belfast website and associated promotion platforms (investment guide etc).

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
Future City Centre Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oversee the delivery of the Future City Centre (FCC) Programme five pillars, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regeneration and connectivity ○ Business and investment proposition ○ Animation and distinctive offering ○ Clean, Green, Inclusive & Safe Vulnerability ▪ Ongoing management and development of the Programme OBA performance measures (strategic and operational indicators) in the form of a FCC Performance Measures Dashboard. ▪ Partnership working and engagement with city stakeholders across the public, private and third sectors.
Deliver year 3 of the Tourism Strategy 'Make Yourself at Home'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch and deliver the Neighbourhood Tourism Development Programme. ▪ Development of visitor experience of Council Assets (visitor attractions). ▪ Delivery of Accessible Tourism programme. ▪ Delivery of Food Tourism programme. ▪ Delivery of Business Tourism - Conference Subvention. ▪ Position Belfast in national and international markets through Visit Belfast.
City Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver the annual programme of events including Christmas 2024, St Patrick's Day 2025, Maritime 2025, Made in Belfast and Lord Mayors Day. ▪ Development and delivery work towards the Fleadh ▪ Development and delivery work towards the Oireachtas 2025 ▪ Development and delivery work towards the Euros 2028, including establishing and servicing governance structures for both. ▪ Development of Event Management Plans, including mobility plans (pedestrian/ traffic management) for larger events. ▪ Securing associated permissions and land rental. ▪ Continue working with partners to plan & develop future International Events bids.
Cultural Strategy	<p>'A City Imagining Plan'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing the cultural multi-annual funding programme (CMAG) and other grant streams. ▪ Deliver a programme of sectoral development and strategic partnerships. ▪ Implementation of heritage audit and roadmap for development. ▪ Progress cultural animations activities including Belfast Canvass, City as a Gallery. ▪ Design and deliver wraparound support programmes including leading sector forums for festivals, visual arts and sustainability. ▪ Deliver a range of capacity building initiatives for the sector including initiatives designed to increase accessibility and cultural participation. ▪ Complete the strategic review of artist studios and maker-spaces in Belfast and identify support to these organisations. ▪ Develop and Deliver report on the impact of culture and cultural participation. <p>Implementation of "Music Matters" Music Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver actions within the Music Strategy 4 strands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Theme 1: Place artists at the heart ○ Theme 2: Nurture the Sector ○ Theme 3: Ignite the IRL experience ○ Theme 4: Unlock the unifying power of UN ▪ Support 10 Artists through the creative bursary programme.

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
Belfast 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Belfast 2024, the city's biggest ever cultural and creative celebration, during the key visitor months of March to November. The celebration includes a combination of world-class activities and grassroots programmes, which will be shaped by community input. • Deliver a vibrant and diverse arts calendar. The Belfast 2024 programme includes three strands of work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Over 20+ unique commissions, including 'come and see' activities, world-class collaborations and partnerships and locally-led projects. ○ Creative Citizens programme, forging new links with all communities to encourage them to get involved and develop our programme further. ○ Participatory budgeting scheme where residents will be able to put forward ideas for local projects they want to see in their areas.
Belfast Stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appoint Interpretive Planner and Concept Design Team. ▪ Commence recruitment of Contract Manager. ▪ RIBA Stage 1 Report. ▪ RIBA Stage 2 draft designs – experience and buildings ▪ RIBA Stage 2 Report ▪ RIBA Stage 3 commence. ▪ Members Study Visit. ▪ Ongoing Stories Network and Panels. ▪ Public Consultation and report findings. ▪ Submit Outline Business Case to TNI and DfE.
Commercial Assets	<p>Manage the delivery of Commercial Assets including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Belfast Zoo; ▪ Malone House; ▪ Belfast Castle; and ▪ Council owned Car Parks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contract management of enforcement contractor to recover the income from car parking in consideration with the emerging SSA work. ○ Continue to work with the Department for Infrastructure on taking forward the Belfast off-street Parking Order for the city.

Our Planet

Strategic Priority	In Year Deliverables (In 2024-25 we will:)
Net Zero Neighbourhoods Framework: UP2030 Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress the UP2030 Net Zero Neighbourhoods Framework project, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder engagement and community involvement in shaping and delivery of Net Zero Neighbourhoods Framework. Identification of phased Net Zero interventions in UP2030 areas for Framework. Finalise the Net Zero Framework and opportunities to scale in other areas of Belfast. Capture learning and development to support integration of Net Zero considerations across key workstream to lead our transition to an inclusive low-carbon economy. Ensure alignment with and implement other department responsibilities within the council’s Climate Action Plan for 2024-25.

Progress reporting

The council's corporate plan includes a commitment to develop and implement a performance management framework which supports the implementation of the corporate, departmental and service plans through regular monitoring, reporting and review. While the framework is developed, the success of this plan will be measured and monitoring via a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) identified below.

Our economy

- Number of individuals accessing employment and upskilling academies.
- % of those who move into a job/better job.
- Business start-up & growth – number of jobs promoted/business plans produced.
- Innovation Factory occupancy levels and jobs supported.
- Number of social enterprises and co-operatives supported.
- St George's Market Visitor Numbers.
- Number of organisations signed up to the Belfast Business Promise accreditation.

Our Place

- Number of Belfast Bikes journeys
- The total number of previously vacant city centre properties that have been awarded the Vacant to Vibrant grant and will become occupied as a result of the intervention.
- The total amount of funding (£) awarded to city centre traders to address vacancy.
- The total number of people engaged (traders, developers, business owners, landlords etc) in assisting with the completion of applications to the Vacant 2 Vibrant intervention.
- Attendance levels at City events.
- Total value (£) of cultural funding facilitated.
- Number of new works commissioned (as part of Belfast 2024).
- Number of events and activities delivered (as part of Belfast 2024).
- Number of creative organisations engaged (as part of Belfast 2024).
- Visitor Numbers to the Zoo.

Key Expenditure

The expenditure for the 2024-25 City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan is based on a total planned investment of £21.55 million, as agreed at the Strategic Policy & Resources committee meeting on 9th February 2024, as follows:

Service	Budget (£) 2024 - 25
Off-Street Car Parking	-973,719
City Regeneration	1,979,242
Place and Economy Directorate	2,389,527
Economic Development	18,155,877
Total	21,550,927



Belfast
City Council

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Enterprise & Business Growth Workplan 2024/25

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Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Starting a business	Through the Enterprise Support Service (“Go Succeed”), we will deliver a flexible menu of support to drive new more start-ups. The service aims to attract more people into the “pipeline” and to help more growth-focused start-ups to get the help they need to grow and scale. The ability to attract more people into the “pipeline” will require innovative approaches, particularly where there is a need for cultural change amongst under-represented groups.	<p>362 participants engaged</p> <p>119 new businesses created, supporting 143 new jobs</p> <p>50% engagement with female entrepreneurs</p> <p>10% engagement with participants in the social economy sector</p>	April 2024 – March 2025	To support delivery of the numbers highlighted above, Belfast City Council will make a payment of £314,415 in match funding to the PMO. The main funder of this work is DLUHC, using Shared Prosperity Funding
Growing a Business	The Enterprise Support Service also includes growth support for existing businesses. As with the start-up support, this will be more flexible and in keeping with business needs. We will also work to deliver a series of workshops and events on issues such as financial planning and forecasting, e-commerce essentials, sales and marketing, accessing finance, writing a winning bid, strategy and business planning. We will also establish a range of peer support networks to target under-represented groups including minority ethnic groups and female entrepreneurs. Go Succeed grants will continue to support this work.	<p>760 individuals engaged</p> <p>171 new jobs created</p> <p>114 grants awarded to support growing businesses</p> <p>50% engagement with female entrepreneurs</p> <p>10% engagement with participants in the social economy sector</p>		

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Scaling Support and Innovation	<p>Research identifies the need to focus on key technologies and priority sectors. These include Fintech and Financial Services, Creative and Digital, Life and Health Sciences, and Advanced Manufacturing, as well as identifying opportunities as part of the green transition and a drive for more sustainable investment. Working with the City Innovation Team, we are delivering a new intervention to build capacity among local businesses, with a particular focus on helping them to access challenge funds and alternative funding sources, including those coming from the Belfast Region City Deal. We will also continue to work with key partners including Digital Catapult, Ulster University, Queen's University, Catalyst, and Invest NI to increase the number of innovation driven enterprises and scaling businesses. This will include support for investment in the Way to Scale Programme. This is an MIT-based intervention that has been successful in significantly enhancing the growth and innovation ambitions of local businesses. We are working with Catalyst and Invest NI to create a collective funding allocation to support delivery – with the expectation that participating businesses will also contribute towards programme costs. Catalyst will act as the contract lead for this intervention and all expenditure will be managed through them.</p>	<p>230 companies engaged through bespoke digital and creative programmes.</p> <p>Develop advanced media production capacity building programme to support local SMEs to avail of Studio Ulster facilities and opportunities.</p> <p>Increasing awareness and access to new collaboration, innovation and finance/funding opportunities for Belfast based SMEs.</p> <p>Support 30 SMEs access finance to support investment and growth through the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF).</p>	<p>April 2024 – March 2025</p>	<p>£100,000</p>

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Social Enterprise and Cooperative Development	<p>In the next financial year, we will refine our social economy action plan based on research and engagement with sector partners such as SENI, Cooperative Alternatives and Trademark. A continued area of activity will be the administration of the financial incentive working alongside Community Finance Ireland (CFI). This is a hybrid funding model (part loan; part grant funding) to improve the financial management skills of new and growing social enterprises. Belfast City Council will make an allocation of up to £60,000 towards the grant element (likely to be up to 25% of overall financial awards to social enterprises) while the remaining element 75% will come from CFI in the form of a loan. In addition to the new financial mechanism, a budget of £120,000 has been set aside for dedicated social enterprise and co-operative support. This will cover a range of support interventions including mentoring, workshops, and events. Social Enterprise support will also underpin the Enterprise Support Service with a target of 10% engagement with participants from the social economy sector.</p>	<p>Increase participation rates by long term unemployed, economically inactive, and other underrepresented groups such as females, young people, and migrants.</p> <p>At least 240 individuals/organisations engaged</p> <p>Facilitate 3 best practice knowledge sharing events</p> <p>Deliver 6 outreach sessions</p> <p>Deliver 1 cooperative outreach session</p> <p>50 client referrals to “Go Succeed” intervention to complete business planning/generic business advice</p>	<p>April 2024 – March 2025</p>	<p>£180,000</p>

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Supporting events	Sponsorship support for conferences and events that support the objectives and ambitions of the council's Enterprise and Business Growth activity. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis and officers will undertake an assessment process to measure and score these requests based on their alignment to the "Our Economy" pillar of the Belfast Agenda, the contribution to the work of the team as set out in this report and the potential to profile the Council activities and generate interest and demand for the services.	Objectives and outputs will be agreed through a funding agreement with the event organisers. This approach has been effective in the past and has helped ensure that our resources are focused on areas of maximum return. Any events that will have wider corporate impact will be brought back to the relevant Committee for consideration and endorsement.	April 2024 – March 2025	£62,000 (each application capped at a maximum of £10,000)
Investing in Belfast	<p>We will continue to build on our partnerships in London and Dublin to develop co-operation and investment promotion opportunities for mutual benefit.</p> <p>Following development of the strategy and action plan, the work on the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor will focus on delivery of key interventions within the plan, supported by the recruitment of dedicated support staff. Belfast City Council will contribute £35,000 towards the work, which is being led by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council who are acting as the chair and secretariat to the partnership. The partnership will also work to complete the feasibility studies on innovation and circular economy that have been funded through the Shared Island Unit.</p>	<p>Two City to City visits aiming to facilitate knowledge exchange.</p> <p>Continuing to work on the analysis of the completed feasibility studies leading to the development of a new programme.</p>	April 2024 – March 2025	£35,000 contribution to annual workplan, payable to NMDDC as lead council

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Belfast Business Promise	Continue to recruit new organisations to sign up to the Belfast Business Promise	50 new supporters signed up	By March 2025	
	Progression of supporter organisations through the accreditation process	Site visits carried out to verify evidence presented in reports and support improvement Technical panel sittings	Ongoing Quarterly meetings	
	Design and delivery of Promise Learning days addressing key issues and gaps identified by supporter organisations to support progression. Ensure Go Succeed supports are layered into BBP supporter offer and consider Learning Days in light of this	6 Promise Learning days delivered	Ongoing	
	BCC Internal Working Group meetings to identify and progress improvement actions to ensure that BCC reach Ambassador status by Autumn 2024	Bi-monthly meetings	October/ November 24	
	Undertake evaluation of progress to date and make recommendations around next steps in terms of approach and resourcing	Independent evaluation to be commissioned summer 2024; complete Autumn 2024	Evaluate complete Autumn 2024	Programme budget approved

Financial & Resource Implications

The activities outlined within this report will be resourced through the existing Enterprise and Business Growth budget for 2024/25.

Work area	Amount
Starting a Business (Including Social Enterprise and Co-operatives)	£621,823
Growing a Business, Scaling and Innovation	£438,230
Investing in Belfast (including DBEC and City of London engagement)	£78,300
Contribution to events and conferences	£62,000
Belfast Business Promise	£50,000
Economic Development Research & Tender Ads	£61,000

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City for
working and
learning

Building an inclusive labour market:

Employability and Skills Workplan 2024/25

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget										
Employment Academies	<p>Delivery of Employment Academies (<i>into work</i>) within:</p> <table><tr><td>Tech</td><td>Logistics & Transport</td></tr><tr><td>Fibre</td><td>Health & Social Care</td></tr><tr><td>Construction</td><td>Classroom Assistants</td></tr><tr><td>Working at Sea</td><td>Childcare & Childminding</td></tr><tr><td>Irish Medium</td><td>Business Services</td></tr></table> <p>Medical (for migrants)</p> <p>Delivery of Upskilling Academies targeting those working in low paid sectors to achieve Level 2-5 qualifications and gain a better job (where no appropriate delivery exists): Health & Social Care, Childcare and Classroom Assistants.</p> <p>Additionally, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Keep a watching brief on other sectors where demand is identified with good jobs - such as manufacturing, creative sector and green economy – and new academies delivered where inclusive pathways can be developed in conjunction with employersEnsure all Academies have digital badges within a bespoke and recognised digital pathwayDesign and embed a Quality Assurance Framework within all Employment Academies, undertake QA assessment, and produce a quality improvement plan to ensure a focus on continuous improvementRe-commission Employment Academy Framework whilst keeping in place the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the flexibility this provides to respond to demand and provide bespoke solutions.	Tech	Logistics & Transport	Fibre	Health & Social Care	Construction	Classroom Assistants	Working at Sea	Childcare & Childminding	Irish Medium	Business Services	<p># participants dependent on jobs identified. Higher value jobs prioritised although these have higher training cost per person, which lowers participant numbers</p> <p>520 participants (plus LMP funding covering 210 participants subject to receiving LMP resources)</p> <p>Maximum attrition rate of 10% (based on experience)</p> <p>Minimum new job/better job rate of 75% (also based on experience)</p> <p>Level 2-5 qualifications achieved: 200 BCC resources plus 50 LMP resources (subject to receiving LMP resources)</p> <p>Industry-specific licences: BCC funding 80; LMP funding 40 (subject to receiving LMP resources)</p>	<p>Ongoing and triggered by employer demand</p> <p>Peak delivery periods occurring in September/October 2024 and January 2025</p>	<p>BCC Budget: £842,250 delivery costs across various academies</p> <p>£30,000 for Quality Assurance work</p>
Tech	Logistics & Transport													
Fibre	Health & Social Care													
Construction	Classroom Assistants													
Working at Sea	Childcare & Childminding													
Irish Medium	Business Services													

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Labour Market Partnership – management and development NB All DfC funding is currently waiting for Minister to agree budget, with position expected to be clarified in June 24. Provisional allocation of 25% of admin overheads released for period to end June 2024.	Convene/chair LMP meetings to identify key LM challenges and co-design solutions, expanding to include additional members such as TEO and EPIC Futures as an observer	6 LMP meetings held	Ongoing	-
	Continue to deliver Gateway to Choices service, providing independent advice and guidance, encourage informed decision making to find the right provision for people	1200 participants with 25% into work, 25% progressing to education/training (subject to receiving LMP resources)	Ongoing	
	Work with DfE and DfC to secure funding for Bridges to Progression as a ‘test and learn’ for future Skills for Life & Work provision using same approach to selecting providers scoring quality criteria through an application form and as in previous delivery.	120 participants with 83% gaining confidence as a result of the project (subject to receiving LMP resources)	Oct 2024 onboarding with delivery continuing until June 2025	
	Engage with partners to explore the development of a sustainable and effective investment model to address economic inactivity challenges. Activities to include research and engagement; hosting events including follow up to January 2024 Inclusive labour market conference – working in collaboration with statutory, third sector and employer partners	100 conference attendees across conference/summits; development of research/insights pieces for engagement with partners	Ongoing	
	Host Belfast Jobsfair in partnership with DfC in St. George’s Market and explore other jobs and skills events	60 employers at jobsfair with vacancies for 750 attendees	Oct 2024	
	Design and delivery of Multiply, bolting on to existing delivery across a number of themes including community-based learning, upskilling those in work to L2, budgeting for work, maths for speakers of other languages, etc.	Working with delivery partners to enhance existing service – KPIs to be finalised once funding agreement is received from DfE	May 2024 – Mar 2025 IRO £200,000 available to LMPs from UKSPF via DfE	-

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Social Value & Supporting the Ecosystem	Continue to expand and consolidate the Employability and Skills Provider Network. This currently has 358 members from 115 organisations in every part of the city covering key target groups (disability, women, young people, justice leavers, ethnic minorities, care leavers etc.).	Grow E&S Provider Network to 400 members	Ongoing	-
	Following our successful pilot with RSA Cities of Learning, commission Digital Badging platform as well as quality standards service for individual badge writing and publishing. Provide access to Digital Badging for organisations within the employability and skills ecosystem	Enable 20 organisations to access Digital Badging for their own services with participants/employees	Commissioning April 2024 with new organisations onboarded from June 2024	£45,000 (including own access to digital badging platform)
	Work with colleagues in Planning for E&S considerations within Developer Contributions by providing statistical data and analysis on labour market shortages as well as reviewing and recommending interventions regarding Skills Plans where applied	Provide skills assessments and act as a consultee within Developer Contributions	Ongoing	-
	Support contractors to meet their Social Value job requirements and work with Enterprise and Business Growth colleagues to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support inclusive recruitment practices for providers and employers on current labour market issues such as visa requirements, employing people with disabilities etc. Build provider capacity in tendering/procurement and facilitate Meet the Broker events for contractors 	Provide advice and guidance on Social Value within BCC contracts Increase access to public procurement opportunities for local companies	Ongoing	-

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
GCSE Support Programme	The expectation is that delivery can be 'lifted and shifted' within the context of Fair Start and Reducing Education Disadvantage (RED) policy initiatives led by the Department for Education. However, financial pressures caused by the lack of an NI Executive have had a knock-on impact to these new policy/funding streams. We will therefore continue to resource the GCSE Support Programme on an interim basis for a further year and – in partnership with Belfast Area Partnerships – work closely with DE to transfer this programme to the Department.	250 pupils supported with predicted grades below a C in English and/or Maths 162 achieving at least Grade C in English/Maths	New participants onboarded October 2024 for May/June 2025 exam period	£40,000 from 2024/25 budget

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EU & International Relations Workplan 2024/25

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Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Belfast International Homecoming 24-25th Oct 2024	Two day programme to showcase Belfast's economic trade strengths and international FDI proposition to an inward delegation of 40 targeted recruited attendees. Tbc but will include bespoke parallel programmes for bus, govt and education delegates	Unit Role: Event Sponsor, manage BCC role for LM and CX at the gala dinner and discussion panels on 24th, as well as input into pitching opportunities and programming for the conference on 25th. Maximise Belfast promotion via the various NI and US media opportunities	24-25 th Oct 2024	£5,000
Inward International Visits 1) Nashville	Nashville Inward Economic Mission Host a delegation of 10-15 target Nashville/TN State businesses and education leaders who are looking for trade opportunities with Belfast/NI and/or FDI UK/EU investment opportunities. Working closely with Invest NI, DBT, Catalyst and Go Succeed client companies and Belfast/NI Chambers to provide targeted Business to Business meetings and follow up Hosting a civic programme for Sister City delegates including Mayor of Nashville and other elected members as well as Nashville/Belfast Sister City Board members Facilitating education meeting with representatives from Belmont and Vanderbilt Universities who have existing and growing relationships and working agreements with QUB and Ulster University, St Marys, Stanmillis and Belfast Met Colleges.	Host 15 Companies and Govt/ education representatives Promote a very targeted and compelling Belfast Economic Proposition and embed the new enhanced approach by Invest NI to promote the city and Region for FDI but also wider international trade /export/import partnerships, particularly with our IDEs	Early Oct 2024	£5000
2) Inward civic, economic/educational fact finding missions	Throughout each year the Unit collaborates with local stakeholders via the China and US Stakeholder groups (existing since 2003 and comprised of senior reps from QUB, UU, St Marys, Stranmillis, Belfast Met Colleges, Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland, Visit Belfast, NI Tourism Alliance, The NI Executive Office, Invest NI, both Chambers, Catalyst, US and Chinese Consulates, relevant BCC	Assess and provide relevant input into each inward visit to the city, working closely with partners. Ensuring follow up to any leads made and secure linkages with relevant players.	April 2023-March 2024	£20,000

<p>New York New Belfast</p>	<p>sections,)to host varying types of inward visits. These come from USA, China, Europe and the rest of the world and reach up to 40 per year with different levels of work intensity. Some involve businesses or Govt /Education /Tourism leaders or a mix of all sectors. BCC's role is to lead or facilitate appropriate input into these programmes and ensure BCC's strong compelling investment proposition as well as the full City narrative is pitched to incoming guests. Many of the above partners lead their own inward visits nad BCC inputs into these according to importance/relevance/value Many are simply Ambassadorial and the Unit works with TEO nad Lord Mayors Office</p> <p>Co Sponsor and participate in the annual June event in NYC along with partners including private sector, Invest NI, TEO and others. Ensure BCC has a prominent role at the main economic event to promote new annual city messaging and make direct requests for support from the highly influential NYC attendees including investment, partnership, opening doors for stakeholders. Develop and deliver a very bespoke annual side programme of meetings including -companies within Invest NI's FDI pipeline on the cusp on investment to show BCC support and the tight eco system available to investors/city newcomers -as of 2024, begin to target and meet companies who wish to trade in NI and return with new contacts for our growth /scaling companies within the Go Succeed portfolio to open up the US market -promotion of the updated Belfast culture/tourism and music offering through a bespoke side programme for the Lord Mayor in NYC</p>	<p>Each year BCC works closely with Invest NI and key, influential friends of Neka's including State Comptroller Di Napoli and the East Coast Advisory Committee of high wealth diaspora to deliver an updated compelling economic message. 2024 will include progress on the City Deal programme and high tech capability in the city through the new Innovation Centres, Tourism investment opportunities, continued FDI proposition, emphasizing the uniqueness of the Windsor Framework and finally the new angle of promoting the City region for international trade for indigenous co opportunity</p>	<p>4-7th June 2024</p>	<p>£13,000</p>
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Outward Missions	<p>Boston- re igniting the Sister City relationship post Covid and under the leadership of a new Boston City Mayor</p> <p>Date depending on agreement with INI and CGR MedTech focus and promotion of City Deal assets and other investment propositions using USPs and Windsor Framework</p> <p>Unit Role- lead on programming for BCC including the anchor event, NI Bureau/ NI Connections engagement, business to business programme, civic programme with Govt and stakeholders in Boston and side programming with INI and Boston's Econ Dev office.</p>	<p>With respect to both Sister Cities – Boston and Nashville, BCC will work closely with Invest NI here and in the US, TEO, Catalyst (who have 3 annual economic outward programmes with Boston, assisted by BCC) and Chambers as well as both Universities to identify a valuable outward mission proposition</p> <p>The overall aim will be to re engage with the Boston/MA State/Nashville/TN State markets, to promote the city for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -continued FDI -trade/import/export opportunities for Belfast cos -increased tourism into Belfast both leisure and business -increased education links by way of international student recruitment for Belfast, as well as research partnerships 	Tbc	£15,000
	<p>Nashville -re igniting the Sister City relationship post Covid and under the leadership of a new Nashville City Mayor and Sister City Board</p> <p>Date-tbc depending on Boston above, to potentially combine both</p> <p>Neurotech focussed and potentially UNESCO and 2024 promotion-Irish Songbook</p> <p>Unit Role – lead as above</p>		Tbc	£15,000
	<p>China</p> <p>Date- tbc</p> <p>Potential to participate in TEO/INI led mission to China to reignite NI/China relations and specially for BCC to identify 1-2 strong economic cooperation areas in trade and investment</p> <p>The new Stormont Govt is actively developing a new NI International Relations Framework as part of the new Programme for Govt and has undertaken 2 recce visits to reignite China/NI relations and are likely to have Ministerial outward visits involving TEO,DfE, DfF</p>	<p>Same as above on US activity</p>	Tbc	£20,000

	<p>Unit Role – overall coordination of BCC engagement working with NI Bureau Beijing, INI, DBT</p> <p>Europe</p> <p>Using long standing EuroCities network membership and working with NI Bureau Brussels and Invest NI</p> <p>Seek opportunity to profile Belfast EG City Deal assets, Trade and Investment proposition ink capital, UNESCO and Year of Culture to targeted EU audiences</p> <p>Unit Role – overall coordination of programming</p>	Same as above activity	Tbc	£7,000
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Cultural Development 2024/2025 Workplan

Place and Economy Department
Economic Division



Culture Update – 2024-25 Priorities

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Core multi-annual funding	<p>Management of year 4 of cultural multi-annual funding programme (CMAG)</p> <p>Two year funding 2022-2024: £473,425 to 15 Festivals and Events organisations and £ 587,462 to 30 Arts and Heritage organisations</p> <p>Four year funding 2020-2024: £600,240 to four Festivals and Events organisations and £791,783 to ten Arts and Heritage organisations</p>	59 organisations supported to deliver annual programme of activities in Belfast.	Ongoing	£2,452,910
Small Grants Arts and Heritage Community Festivals Funding	Programme of project grant support for cultural organisations as a new strand of investment programme to support cultural strategy outcomes.	Support a minimum 15 cultural projects and 15 community festivals.	April 2024 to March 2025	£132,344 (A&H) £69,000 (CFF) + DfC match funding £10,000 Grants admin linked to CFF
Artist Studio and Creative Workspaces	A continuation of scheme to support Belfast based artist studios and maker spaces to ensure a stable infrastructure for 2024/25.	Artist studios and maker spaces programme – at least 15 organisations, collectives and artists supported	April 2024 to March 2025 Launched in June 2025	£100,000
Artist Studio and Creative Workspaces	Development of targeted capacity building programme with Artist Studio and Creative workspace sector in partnership with Arts and Business NI.	At least 15 organisations, collectives and artists supported	April 2024 to March 2025	£30,000

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Sector Support Programme	Design and deliver wraparound support programme aligned to investment model. Includes support for Festivals Forum, Visual Arts Forum and Green Arts Forum.	Support a minimum of 50 cultural organisations. Development work to support late night art	April 2024 to March 2025	£65,000
Research and development	Commission further research and engagement, collect and analyse data to ensure strategic approach to investment and delivery.	Development of stage one research and stakeholder mapping on public art.	April 2024 to March 2025	£25,000
Heritage Development	Development of phase two of Heritage Audit and Roadmap for development, including development of capacity building programmes and designing action plans through a co-design process.	Heritage Audit and Roadmap for Development	April 2024 to March 2025	£45,000
Cultural animation and Art in Public Realm	Further develop a 'City as a Gallery' or 'Art in the Public Realm' initiatives including Belfast Canvas. Development of a "legal walls" pilot programme and development of mentoring programme for Street Art Community.	At least 20 key sites across the city Street Art mentoring programme reaching a minimum of 30 artists	April 2024 to March 2025	£15,000 £30,000

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Sectoral Development and Strategic Partnerships	Delivery of Blueprint Programme (yr 3) in partnership with Arts and Business NI	Organisations supported through a pipeline to develop assets that has commercial potential	April 2024 to March 2025	£30,000
Sectoral Development and Strategic Partnerships	Continue partnership with University of Atypical to promote accessibility in cultural spaces and support training for disability champions within the cultural sector.	Support for a minimum of 20 organisations and artists to enhance accessibility provision. A minimum of 6 Venues supported with Social Narrative Videos	April 2024 to March 2025	£25,000
Capacity Building	<p>Support capacity building programmes including co-design of programmes for underrepresented groups or where gaps are identified.</p> <p>Support established organisations to adapt to change and to support new organisations and practitioners to take longer term risks in programming or creative development.</p> <p>Development and delivery of catalyst projects and programmes with community partners.</p>	<p>A minimum of 50 cultural organisations or creative practitioners supported.</p> <p>Development and delivery of action plans following R&D and co-design programme development.</p>	April 2024 to March 2025	£50,000
Sectoral Development and Strategic Partnerships	Develop schemes to support higher participation and representation at cultural events by disabled people including Gig Buddies programme 2021 – 2024 in partnership with the Black Box.	Delivery of year three of the Gig Buddies programme.	April 2024 to March 2025	£45,000

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/Targets	Timeline and Milestones	Budget
Sectoral Development and Strategic Partnerships	Work in partnership with Theatre & Dance NI to deliver a professional 3 year development and capacity building programme 'Transform' for artists in theatre & dance sector at differing career stages, focusing on networking, mentoring and creation.	Delivery of Transform - theatre and dance sector development programme.	April 2024 to March 2025	£30,000
Sectoral Development and Strategic Partnerships	Work in partnership with Craft NI to deliver inclusive programme of showcase and professional development events for makers in Belfast including growth of August craft month	Delivery of support and development programme for craft makers in Belfast.	April 2024 to March 2025	£18,000
Sectoral Development and Strategic Partnerships	Partnership with Thrive audience development agency to support audience development across the sector.	A minimum of 20 organisations supported.	April 2024 to March 2025	£20,000
Networking	Support active participation in relevant local, regional and international cultural networks including but not limited to IETM, Eurocities Culture Forum, and other relevant international networks	Support for at least eight cultural exchanges, events and networking opportunities.	April 2024 to March 2025	£10,000

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**MAKE
YOURSELF
AT HOME**

Belfast

Tourism & Events Workplan 2024-25

Make Yourself At Home Year 3 Action Plan 2024–2025 – Tourism and Events

Project Name	Project Description	Actions/ Targets	Timeline	Budget
Experience Belfast				
Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Development Programme	<p>Year two of the Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Programme has brought to Belfast’s tourism industry a suite of assets to educate and motivate the industry to make their offer more accessible and inclusive. As well as the first Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Seminar which attracted over 100 delegates the session launched:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six on-line training videos for the tourism industry (accessed via Visit Belfast) • an inspirational and motivational video that will showcase the best practice • three Living Library events where staff meet people with disabilities to learn about the challenges they face • three ‘day in the life’ video itineraries to inspire disabled visitors to explore our city <p>The overall programme is supported via a partner advisory group including Visit Belfast, Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland, BCC and the Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance. It attracted 33% funding from TNI as well as support from Visit Belfast and other partners.</p>	<p>Year 3 programme will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual seminar to bring the industry together and measure developments and growth. Seminar to attract up to 100 key decision makers in the industry as well as key stakeholders and policy makers. • Promotion of the free resources aiming to maximise completion of the courses by up to 200 businesses. • 20 new tourism venues featured on our partner site Access Able • Co-design with the industry further training and content for trade and consumers in partnership with TNI and Visit Belfast; number and content of workshops to be confirmed. 	April 2024 - March 2025	£45,000
Food and Drink Tourism Development Programme	<p>The draft ten-year tourism strategy identifies food and drink as a key part of the travel experience and contributes to some of the strongest memory triggers. Importantly, food & drink expenditure accounts for around a third of total overnight visitor spend.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to facilitate the Belfast Food and Drink Tourism Network and programme with the appointment of Network facilitator. • Positioning Programme launched and rolled out to the industry 	April 2024 - March 2025	£45,000

	<p>MYAH identifies the need to support this important economic driver and market-led tourism experience for the city.</p> <p>Focus on year two supported the industry through the Food and Drink Tourism Network. The Belfast Food and Drink Programme 23-24 delivered a series of masterclasses including two learning journeys as well as a Food and Drink Tourism Connection Summit.</p> <p>The Summit attracted over 100 delegates from the industry and provided learning opportunities from experts in food tourism development. It facilitated business connections with restaurateurs and distributors to buy from local producers, supporting our journey to be recognised as a sustainable tourism destination.</p> <p>Over 200 businesses have benefited through participation in the programme, and the events delivered will support ambitions to achieve a quality mark.</p> <p>The programme attracted 40% funding support from DEARA via the NI Regional Food Programme as well as in kind support from the Network Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a strategic action plan to explore opportunities for 5-year period ahead. • Access funding via DAERA Regional Food Programme and seek other sources of funding and support • Scope the potential of a food and drink international accredited quality mark for Belfast / NI • Ensure events and festivals food and drink provisions adhere to Council criteria around food tourism and sustainability best practice 		
Visitor Signage, Wayfinding, Street Dressing	<p>To date, there has been an investment of over £3m in visitor interpretative signage and wayfinding in Belfast. In Year 2, an initial assessment of existing tourism signage to identify essential repairs and update of interpretation, including Belfast Zoo, Belfast Castle, Cathedral Quarter and city centre, with interventions to review, update interpretation, maps and design for 11 interpretative blade signs with overlays. In addition, the review of 233 signage assets – building blades,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a detailed report with recommendations for future investment in visitor signage, wayfinding and street dressing across the city that will enhance the visitor welcome to and experience of Belfast; which can be used to attract investment and access funding as it becomes available. 	April 2024 - March 2025	£26,000

	<p>finger posts, navigation blades, primary hubs, secondary hubs, viewpoints and welcome signs which will be detailed in a final report soon to be completed.</p> <p>There is a now a requirement to undertake a study of visitor signage to examine a range of solutions, including digital options, that will ensure that the visitor signage is fit for purpose to provide wayfinding, interpretation and enhance the visitor experience in Belfast and reflects the changing landscape of the city including 2 Royal Avenue, City Cemetery, Cathedral Gardens and as Belfast Stories is established and other relevant visitor attractions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This study will include detailed investment requirements to upgrade, update and future-proof our visitor signage, with particular consideration to be given to the use of appropriate digital mechanisms, as well as investment into city dressing; and will examine innovative case studies from other cities. • This will include future-proofing for Fleadh Cheoil and other large-scale international events. 		
Signage upkeep	Upkeep, cleaning and repair of tourism signage network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of contract and delivery of services 	April 2024 - March 2025	£50,000
Christmas lights	Christmas Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of current contractor to deliver final year of Christmas lights programme • Development of new tender for 2025 onwards <p>Delivery, management and programme integration for switch on event</p>	April 2024 - March 2025	£300,000
Enhancing the Visitor Experience Priority Actions	A Visitor Experience Action Plan has been developed mapping out actions and priorities for enhancing the visitor experience across the city for the next 4 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of prioritised strands of work identified in the plan, as per approved recommendations based on report to be submitted to Council Officers in March / April 2024 	April 2024 - March 2025	£36,000
Tourism General Management	Sharing of content with key partners to embed cultural vibrancy messaging into tourism, investment and education positioning, to include the establishment of a Tourism Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree terms of reference, scope, governance and membership of the Tourism Panel to facilitate sectoral collaboration and identify opportunities 	April 2024- March 2025	£15,800

	with city-wide commitment, as identified in <i>Make Yourself At Home</i> .	<p>for development and delivery of Tourism projects, investment and <i>MYAH</i> ambitions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene Tourism Panel to facilitate discussion of sectoral-specific issues and challenges arising and enhance communications between Council and key external stakeholders. • Preparation for key tourism milestones – e.g. Fleadh, Euros, Belfast Stories • Host Belfast Tourism, Culture and arts networking event with the aim to make new connections, inspire new experiential development and packaging of new products as well as track progress 		
POSITIONING OF BELFAST				
Business Tourism – Conference Subvention	<p>Members will be aware that in January 2021 CGR agreed ongoing support for Conference Support in line with an updated criteria and support to ensure that Belfast can compete internationally to win conferences for Belfast in an everchanging marketplace.</p> <p>This fund is administered by Visit Belfast and match funded by our partner Tourism NI. The purpose of the fund is to ensure that Belfast, including ICC remains competitive as a business tourism destination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Conference Support Scheme in partnership with TNI and Visit Belfast to ensure that Belfast can compete internationally in winning conferences for Belfast. • Through the level of conference support deliver a minimum of 4,000 out of state conference delegates for Belfast which will result in significant economic impact for Belfast • Continue to review the Scheme to ensure it is “fit for purpose” in an everchanging market and competitive environment. 	April 2024-March 2025	£200,000

Neighbourhood Tourism Investment programme	<p>The Neighbourhood Tourism Investment Programme aims to:</p> <p>Provide short term support (over a period of 2 years) to develop authentic and financially sustainable new cultural tourism products, or enhancements to existing offers, which will bring vitality to local neighbourhoods, local residents and visitors.</p> <p>Encourage the development of plans which build capacity for city neighbourhoods to connect to the broader tourism offer, enabling local communities to become part of the Belfast visitor experience.</p> <p>Promote enhanced visitor dwell time in the city and extend the economic benefits beyond the city centre.</p> <p>Extend the journey of visitors to <i>Belfast Stories</i>, encouraging further exploration of its narratives across wider city neighbourhoods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Neighbourhood Tourism Investment Programme will, in the long-term, support the delivery of the Visitor Experience Framework through the development of financially sustainable tourism products which draw visitors into local neighbourhoods, immersing them actively in the locale, promoting increased dwell time and spend in the area and uplifting skill, capacity and confidence in local communities. • Provide continued support to EastSide Partnership and Fáilte Feirste Thiar, in recognition of their current capacity to deliver on objectives relating to neighbourhood tourism. (Agreed at CGR April 2024) • Develop and deliver new Neighbourhood Tourism Investment Programme • Communicate and deliver alignment opportunities available within the existing Go Succeed programme. 	April 2024 - March 2025	
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT				
Tourism baselines and measurement of tourism in Belfast and contribution to the NI Economy	<p>Belfast's <i>Make Yourself at Home</i>, Tourism Plan recognises both the challenges to increase tourism and to maximise the positive impact that it can have on the city; whilst the updated Belfast Agenda has set a target to double the value of tourism from £400m to £800m per year by 2030.</p> <p>The reporting of tourism statistics and meaningful visitor analysis at a local level continues to be impacted by the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Research baselines and examine digital opportunities for data capture. • Undertake an audit with detailed investment recommendation and action plan for a dashboard of measurement. 	April 2024 - March 2025	£70,000

	<p>delayed resumption of surveys and statistics by our national statistics agency NISRA. While tourism related surveys including passenger and household travel surveys have resumed, it remains unclear when we will see a full return of annual government tourism statistics particularly at a local level so it is important that Belfast can establish its own baselines and measure the social and economic impact of tourism to ensure that the contribution of Belfast to the NI economy is recognised and that ongoing investment in Belfast is secured.</p> <p>The most recent local government statistics available for Belfast are 2019 - 52% of all visitors to Northern Ireland came to Belfast. Overall, the city accounts for 32% of all overnight stays in NI and the city generates 40% of the region's tourism spend.</p> <p>Council is currently engaging with key agencies around the establishment of Tourism baselines for the City and new ways of measuring tourism around traditional economic indicators – dedicated financial resource is essential to enable this to be undertaken. Additional data and robust benchmarking must be developed and supported to gather trend data and inform planning and business case development. Data from benchmarking, in market consumer data and future trends is central to understand where investments should be made going forward. Robust more localised data would give confidence to tourism businesses regarding the 'risk' in the step towards starting, developing or growing a business.</p> <p>The use of quantitative measures also needs to be reflected to measure all aspects of tourism impact (social/economic/environmental) as we implement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with NISRA, NITA, Tourism NI and Visit Belfast to share insights and establish a dashboard of measurement of social, economic, environmental impact of tourism in Belfast – quantitative and qualitative. Explore opportunities to partner with TNI on a Belfast pilot • KPIs and next steps to be agreed for period Q1 and Q2 in year ahead. • Utilise data led insights to inform positioning of Belfast 		
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	regenerative and sustainable tourism plans and strategies. CSO in RoI provide monthly updates on inbound tourism – there are no plans for this in NI currently.			
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM				
Sustainable Tourism: Global Destination Sustainability Index & Actions for Sustainable Tourism work including Green Tourism certification	<p>Belfast completed its index benchmarking and application in 2022 and an application was made for 2023 which placed Belfast 11th out of 100 cities as a sustainable tourism destination under the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS Index).</p> <p>In 2023 the continued implementation of the Green Tourism Accreditation Programme which provides access to the GreenChecktool, enabling tourism businesses including accommodation, hospitality, events and attractions to complete assessments and take steps to achieve accreditation. 100 businesses signed up to the Green Tourism programme supported by Council and 59 are accredited to date, including some of our own assets such as Belfast Castle and ICC Belfast.</p> <p>Currently 75% of hotel bedrooms in Belfast have achieved Green Tourism accreditation. Ongoing work with the supply chain to incentivise change programmes, raise awareness and pilot projects that ensure Belfast is a sustainable tourism destination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward Planning for Climate Change: Update to GDS Index and application for 2024 including Environmental Impact Audit and Action Plan with the aim to maintain at a minimum 11th place in the world as a sustainable tourism destination. • Provide support in partnership with Green Tourism UK and Visit Belfast, to the tourism sector to increase those achieving accreditation for the first time and to encourage others to move from bronze status to silver. • Further work with the industry to raise awareness and pilot initiatives that ensure Belfast strengthens its position as a sustainable tourism destination, including green meetings accreditation • Collaboratively deliver sustainable tourism initiatives including set up a Belfast Sustainable Giants group to share knowledge and continue to position Belfast at the forefront of green and sustainable practices. 	April 2024-March 2025	£30,000

VISIT BELFAST				
Visit Belfast	Visit Belfast leads on the tourism marketing activities and targets both the leisure and business tourism markets. It is a membership organisation with more than 460 partner businesses across the wider hospitality industry. Visit Belfast works on behalf of its funders and partners and with a range of public and private partners including Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland and Belfast Chamber to promote Belfast as a tourism destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage visit Belfast contract as per CGR committee approval March 2024 • Visit Belfast's new three-year strategy (2024-2027) and one-year business plan (2024-2025) are aligned to the four themes of Belfast's Tourism Plan: <i>Make Yourself at Home</i>, focused on delivering for the city. • Delivery as per year one of Visit Belfast business plan 	April 2024- March 2025	£2,076,424

City Events				
	<p>On an annual/biannual basis, the Council's City Events Unit delivers a series of large - scale public events, which are free to access by both citizens and visitors to the city, on behalf of Belfast City Council.</p> <p>The Tourism, Culture & Events also support a number of annual programmes and activities. Our cultural and tourism strategic priorities sets out long term recommendations for events in the city including better alignment across the Council in the design, delivery and funding of events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 large - scale city events attracting local audiences and out – of - state visitors (for St. Patrick's Day and Maritime) measuring socio economic impact. • Lord Mayors Day - Civic Event will now be aligned to a key event within the 2024 Programme. 	April 2024 – March 2025	As detailed below.
Maritime / Made in Belfast	Following a strategic review the rebranded 'Maritime' Festival is now delivered on a biennial basis in order to grow ambition, budget and impact of the Festival. Last delivered in 2023, the next edition is now due to take place in 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and development for commissioning a large-scale creative piece for the Festival – ideally home grown. • Potential codesigns or programme pieces will be carried forward to the Programme Board for recommendations. Any large- 	April 2024 – March 2025	£217,000

	However, the planning of the 2025 event has now commenced. Recommendations from a recent review will be implemented. There is a new approach to governance. The festival will be delivered in partnership with Belfast Harbour Commissioners & Maritime Belfast Trust. The festival will be delivered with an additional creative piece.	<p>scale creative options should be reviewed in 2024. Updates will be provided to CG&R</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing TNI funding • Planning session early 2024 with partners to establish the date, footprint and wider governance structure for the event going forward. Options to be put forward on different models. 		
Christmas	This will be a continuation of the agreed 'traditional' switch on format of the 2023 Christmas event - friendly activity on a focal stage at City Hall. This will be supplemented by further animation on subsequent weekends throughout November and December.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research & Development initiatives with local creatives to enhance co-design of on-stage creative offering • 	April 2024 – December 2024	£152,864
St Patricks Day	The new model of commissioning the creative sector to deliver projects over this period continued in March 2024. Over the week of citywide celebrations, Belfast hosted a St Patrick's eve concert, a parade, traditional cross City music trail, music and traditional dance in St George's Market, Cathedral, 2 Royal Ave and many other venues. An evaluation of 2024 and the next steps detailing the proposed approach for 2025 will be presented at a future committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build on the development of the St Patrick's Day Celebrations by expanding the programme beyond the traditional elements e.g. parade, music • Work with Good Relations to enhance budget and provide an inclusive cross community programme 	April 2024 – March 2025	£300,000
Lord Mayors Day	This event will celebrate Belfast, and the groups that the Lord Mayor was engaged with throughout her year in office. This event focuses on a day of family - friendly activity and animation around City Hall. This will involve live music, dance, circus, street theatre, arts and craft, sports. In 2023, satellite activity took place at 2 Royal Ave and the two sites will be linked by animation in Donegall Place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop the offering by engaging the Lord Mayor's networks. Probable alignment to 2024 programme activity. 	April 2024 – June 2024	£42,000

Events Development				
International Events	<p>Working with city partners to plan ahead for & developing/submitting bids for international events that best align to strategic priorities and maximise legacy.</p> <p>Ongoing review of Council delivered events and collaboration with extensive range of events and festival funded by Council across the city and across the year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per committee agreement, Belfast continues to participate in the Bid process to host the All Ireland Fleadh Cheoil na Eireann. Working in partnership with Ards C.C.E, the bid is continually refined and Belfast is being profiled at a series of Comhaltas events. In addition to this bid development and liaison with the wider stakeholders, officers continue to scope the delivery requirements of the event. UEFA European Football Championships 2028 – The year 2024 sees a significant period of transition; from the successful bid phase to the delivery of the football championships and Host City obligations in Belfast. Officers are now engaging with wider NI stakeholders via interim governance arrangements. Furthermore, there is considerable engagement with the Central Transition Team / UK Sport in preparation of meeting UEFA set milestones, and scoping delivery requirements. 	April 2024 - March 2025	£40,000
Small Grants				
Project Funding	Support for Sport grants to ensure development and delivery of community-based sporting events.	Support for local organisations with up to 10-12 projects supported	April 2024 - March 2025	£80,000

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Belfast
City Council

Subject:	Approval for 2 Markets at 2RA		
Date:	8 May 2024		
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development		
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland / Clodagh Cassin		
Restricted Reports			
Is this report restricted?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?			
After Committee Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>	
After Council Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Some time in the future		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Never		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Call-in			
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 update members on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek approval for two external markets 		
2.0	Recommendations		
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve two external markets to take place in 2RA. 		
3.0	Main Report		
3.1	Belfast City Council has exclusive rights to hold markets in Belfast. Anyone wishing to operate a market or car boot sale within Belfast must apply to Council for permission.		
3.2	The Markets Unit have received an application from Belfast Pride for a 'Crafted with Pride' market at 2RA. The date of the market is Saturday 21 July 2024 and it will run from 10am - 3pm. This is a one-off market to coincide with Belfast Pride Festival. The event supports local		

	<p>entrepreneurs and small businesses in Northern Ireland, all showcased under one roof for one day only. Approx 30 stalls for shopping, crafts and food will take part in this market. Visitors will be able to purchase goods on the day.</p>
3.3	<p>Background</p> <p>This market is proposed for 2RA and will run as part of the Belfast Pride Community festival. The organisers are hoping to attract 30 traders. It is anticipated that these traders will be arts and crafts stalls. The organisers decided to do a market as part of Belfast Pride so that they could open it up to queer crafters. Crafters who may not feel comfortable displaying their products when they cannot be sure if the visitors will be LGBTQIA friendly. It was felt that this would be the perfect time, during the Belfast Pride festival, to showcase the crafters in their community where they could be sure of positive reactions from the buyers and not feel that they have to hide their identity.</p>
3.4	<p>The Markets unit have also received an application from Mud Ireland requesting a market licence for the Belfast Potters Market to take place in 2RA on Saturday 10th August 2024 from 10-5pm. It is anticipated that 40 of Irelands top potters will be gathered together to exhibit and sell their pottery on that date.</p>
3.5	<p>Background</p> <p>This is an annual event now and each year it has been held in a variety of different venues. The primary objective of the market is to showcase the amazing craft pottery industry in Northern Ireland. The market has grown in traders each year and continues to be a huge success.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>This market will bring a potential income to the council of £200.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>No specific equality/good relations implications. No negative impact on rural areas.</p>

Belfast Stories Working Group

Wednesday, 24th April, 2024

MEETING OF THE BELFAST STORIES WORKING GROUP

HELD IN THE CONOR ROOM AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Smyth (Chairperson); and
Councillors Bunting, de Faoite, Duffy and Maghie.

In attendance: Ms. W. Langham, Programme Director;
Ms. E. Henry, Strategic Lead;
Ms. N. McElroy, Programme Support Assistant;
Mrs. L. Holmes, Marketing & Communications
Coordinator; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 23rd January, 2024 were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Progress since the Last Meeting

The Chairperson welcomed Mr D. Berlin, Snohetta Architects, and Mr. P. Crowe, Todd Architects, to the meeting.

Together, Mr. Berlin and Mr. Crowe outlined that they were both excited to be partnering as the integrated design team for the major project. The Members were advised that the RIBA Stage 1 report had been submitted and that they were collectively working towards RIBA Stage 2, which was the concept design stage. It was envisaged that RIBA Stage 2 would be completed by the end of 2024.

It was reported that Ralph Applebaum Associates (RAA) had been appointed to lead on the development of the interpretive masterplan and content and stories related design for the whole site. The Members were advised that RAA was one of the world's

largest museum exhibition design firms, who had recently worked on the newly opened International African American Museum in Charleston, South Carolina.

The Members were advised that Gleeds, a property and construction consultancy, had been appointed to oversee the project management and design assurance.

The Programme Director and the Strategic Lead provided the Working Group with an overview of the engagement programme and targeted initiatives which would be undertaken in respect of story gathering. The Members were provided with an overview of the story gathering pilot project and of the successful Stories Network which had been held on 13th March, 2024.

During discussion, a number of Members stated that community consultation was key and the Strategic Lead outlined that they had been engaging with stakeholders across the city including neighbouring groups in Carrick Hill and the Shankill.

The Strategic Lead provided the Working Group with an overview of Augment the City, a project to explore the potential of immersive technology to effectively facilitate the gathering and holding of first person stories for future curation, presentation and publication.

It was reported that up to 1,200 jobs, direct and indirect, could be supported as a result of the project, including during construction. A Member requested that officers would work with their colleagues in the Economic Development Unit to ensure that the opportunities were communicated to those in the employment academies and through local schools, universities and colleges.

The Programme Director outlined that skills audits considering opportunities in construction, tourism and hospitality, and creative and digital technologies were being completed by the Belfast Region City Deal team. The Members were advised that officers were mindful to ensure that support was being considered in terms of neighbourhood tourism capacity building.

In response to a Member's query, the Strategic Lead reported that an important aspect of the wider benefits of Belfast Stories was the social value opportunities, including better jobs and skills, building ethical and resilient supply chains and promoting wellbeing for citizens. The Working Group was advised that an independent evaluator would support the Belfast Stories team to ensure an ongoing review of the benefits and outcomes with an evaluation report due by the end of 2024.

The Working Group thanked the officers and Mr. Berlin and Mr. Crowe for the update.

(Mr. Berlin and Mr. Crowe left the meeting at this point in proceedings)

Members' Communications Toolkit

The Members were presented with a draft Communications Toolkit, as had been requested at the meeting on 23rd January, 2024. The purpose of the Toolkit was so that Members could communicate the Belfast Stories project in a succinct way.

A number of Members stated that the section with the Frequently Asked Questions, at Appendix 2, was particularly useful.

The Working Group noted the contents of the Communications Toolkit and agreed to forward any feedback or questions which they felt should be included to the Belfast Stories team.

Noted.

**Next meeting(s) - including discussion
on a Members' Study Visit proposal**

The Programme Director advised the Working Group that the Belfast Stories Team proposed to arrange a 3 day and 2 night study visit to a variety of venues, possibly in Manchester, Liverpool and Chester, for the end of August, 2024.

The Working Group agreed, in principle, and agreed that the dates of the study visit would be agreed with the Chairperson and circulated in due course.

The Working Group further agreed that its next meeting would take place on the "Brink!" site, to be held at the end of July.

Chairperson

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