

Public Document Pack

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

18th March, 2021

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following items will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 a.m. on Friday, 19th March, 2021.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

5. Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

- (b) Programme for Government Outcomes Framework - Draft Consultation Response (Pages 1 - 74)
- (c) Inclusive Growth - Social Value Policy (Pages 75 - 92)

8. Equality and Good Relations

- (b) Update on Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021 and 80th Anniversary of the Belfast Blitz (Pages 93 - 96)

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Subject:	Programme for Government Outcomes Framework - Draft Consultation Response
Date:	19 th March 2021
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive John Tully, Director of City & Organisational Strategy
Contact Officers:	Christine Robinson, Strategy, Policy & Partnerships Manager Geoff Dickson, Strategic Planning & Policy Officer

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"/>
Sometime 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
1.1	To present the Committee with the draft response to the NI Executive's draft Programme for Government Outcomes Framework (Appendix 1).
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approve the draft consultation response (Appendix 2) for submission to The Executive Office; and • endorse the NILGA response to the draft PfG Outcomes Framework Consultation (Appendix 3).

2.2	Given the deadline for submission of responses by 22 nd March, the SP&R Committee is asked to give delegated authority to officers to submit the agreed response before the deadline, noting that it is subject to full Council ratification on 1 st April.
2.3	To support the co-ordination of the new community plan with the completion of the Programme for Government it is proposed that the Council renews its contribution to the work of the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre for a 2 year period.
3.0	Key Issues
3.1	The NI Executive is developing a new strategic, Outcomes-based Programme for Government (PfG). The Executive's aim for the PfG is to deliver real, lasting and positive change in people's lives. This consultation is seeking opinions on the draft framework of nine Outcomes upon which the PfG will be built. Together these Outcomes create a picture of the kind of society we all want to live in.
3.2	<p>The draft Outcomes are illustrated in the following diagram:</p> 
3.3	The Framework focuses on the 9 Outcomes, each with a number of draft priority areas for focus and associated strategy documents. It should be noted that this is intended to be a high level document which, once finalised, will be followed by more detailed priority plans. It should, therefore, be seen as the first step in the development of a PfG, not the complete picture.

	<p>Draft BCC Response</p>
3.4	<p>A draft BCC response has been attached in Appendix 2 that contains feedback on individual outcomes, along with a number of suggested priority areas. In general, it is recommended that the Council supports the draft Outcomes – they are broadly in line with the Outcomes contained within the Belfast Agenda and the aspirations of our Recovery Plan.</p>
3.5	<p>The key elements of our response are focused on more overarching comments in relation the PfG, the need for better partnership working between the government departments and local government and the need for further devolution. A summary of our main comments are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We encourage the NI Executive to recognise the important benefits a place based approach can bring and specifically recognise the importance of investing in the regional capital as a driver for economic regeneration for the entire region. • We recommend that the further devolution of neighbourhood services, regeneration and employability and skills powers would greatly help the public sector as a whole deliver on the aspirations articulated in the PfG Outcomes Framework. • We encourage greater collaboration between local government and government departments, in the planning, development, delivery and monitoring of interventions in order to increase their effectiveness for Belfast residents and, in turn, create a more cohesive society. • We strongly encourage the coordination of new community plans with the completion of the Programme for Government • We strongly encourage the NI Executive to consider establishing a coalesced implementation body that can help coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Programme for Government and the 11 community plans for Northern Ireland. • We would welcome further detail on the timeframes for regular review and a commitment to involve key stakeholders in the review, including Belfast City Council. • We strongly encourage that key government strategies are reviewed in light of the new PfG to ensure they are still fit for purpose in the post Covid landscape.
3.6	<p>It is recommended that this response is submitted to The Executive Office with the intent of following up with further communication as the PfG further develops.</p>
3.7	<p>The SP&R Committee is asked to note that the deadline for submissions is 22nd March. In order to meet this deadline, the Committee is asked to give delegated authority for Officers to submit</p>

	<p>this consultation response in advance of full Council ratification. Should the Council not ratify the response, officers will ask for the response to be withdrawn as a formal submission.</p>
3.8	<p>To support the co-ordination of the new community plan with the completion of the Programme for Government it is proposed that the Council renews its contribution to the work of the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre for a 2 year period, particularly in the post-COVID context. This will enable the Council to influence its research programme and support the connections between the new Programme for Government, community plan and the Belfast Region City Deal.</p>
3.9	<p>Endorsement of NILGA Response</p> <p>Appendix 3 contains the draft response from NILGA, who have formally requested that this response is distributed through a council standing committee or Full Council, and to senior council policy staff, for feedback / support. The Committee is therefore asked to support the attached response from NILGA. It should be noted this response has been written as a regional response, designed to emphasise local government's collective view on what needs to change through the PfG and recognising that individual councils will have local and strategic priorities.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Resources Implications</u></p> <p>The £40,000 contribution to the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre has been included in Departmental estimates.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Equality Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality implications in relation to our draft response.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Draft Programme for Government Outcomes Framework</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Draft Belfast City Council Consultation Response</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Draft NILGA Response.</p>

Programme for Government

Draft Outcomes Framework

Consultation Document



25 January 2021

Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction.....	5
Responding to the Consultation	10
Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework	12
Our children and young people have the best start in life.....	12
We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment.....	14
We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect	16
We all enjoy long, healthy active lives.....	18
Everyone can reach their potential.....	20
Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral.....	22
Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other.....	25
We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives.....	27
People want to live, work and visit here	29

The Outcomes in the Programme for Government Framework present a picture of the kind of society we want to see. An inclusive society in which people of all ages and backgrounds are respected and cared for and in which we all prosper. A society which has no barriers to prevent people from living fulfilling lives. The Outcomes apply equally to everyone, and no one is excluded.

The Programme for Government will be underpinned by a budget and supported by key Executive strategies including an investment strategy, an economic strategy and an anti-poverty strategy aimed at building a strong and prosperous society by tackling disadvantage and achieving sustainable economic growth.

Foreword

The Executive is united in its aim to improve the well-being of all of our people.

To do this we are developing an ambitious and comprehensive programme of work that will harness the full power of joined-up action across Departments.

We are committed to making sure that this is a Programme for Government that fully reflects and responds to the needs of our society and protects the environment in which we live and work.

A proposed strategic framework of nine Outcomes presents a picture of the kind of society we want to see. An inclusive society in which people of all ages and backgrounds are respected and supported. A society which has no barriers to people living prosperous and fulfilling lives.

This has been informed by engagement with representative groups across different sectors and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all involved for sharing with us their ideas, energy and expertise.

Now we want to hear your views on the Outcomes Framework which will guide our actions over the next business year and beyond.

This is what will drive any changes to laws, the delivery of our public services and investment in future projects.

It is the starting point for a real and positive transformation and we need you to help us get it right.

Tell us what your priorities are, share with us your knowledge and experience, work with us to create and innovate to help build and sustain a better society and a healthy, clean environment for everyone.

Although we are in the midst of the worst global health pandemic in 100 years, we are beginning to see and understand that, in the midst of the difficulties and challenges, there are emerging positives.

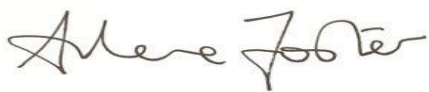
We have seen an awakening sense about the things that are most important in life: people's health and happiness. We have experienced a willingness to work in new and innovative ways, harnessing technologies and using them to best advantage to ensure business continuity and to find more efficient ways of working.

In responding to the pandemic we have learned a great deal about working in partnership with others - not just across central government, but with other sectors

too, including local government, the private sector and the community and voluntary sector. We have had to move quickly and decisively and we have seen that great success is possible when we get it right. This has helped us get things done and make a difference where it is needed most.

That is the vision we have for the new Programme for Government.

Signed:



The Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA
First Minister



Michelle O'Neill MLA
deputy First Minister

Introduction

Where are we now?

The 'New Decade New Approach' (NDNA) document set out the process and approach for developing the Executive's Programme for Government (PfG). The key points being that the Programme should:

- be developed through engagement and co-design, using an Outcomes-based approach;
- focus on prosperity and wellbeing for all;
- establish a shared and ambitious strategic vision for the future;
- provide for accountable and transparent monitoring and reporting arrangements.

The Executive had begun to develop the new Programme prior to the COVID-19 pandemic which, since March 2020, has been the predominant matter facing the Executive. The Executive has agreed that work to develop a long term, multi-year strategic PfG should now commence.

The Executive wants this to be a PfG that recognises and proactively responds to the dependencies and connections that exist between different strands of public policy – a Programme that focuses on the things that matter most to people (health, happiness and life-satisfaction) and which uses that focus to design, shape and deliver public services that will achieve the best possible Outcomes of societal wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has given the world a different perspective on the way we live our lives and it has shone a light on established principles and standards that we have taken for granted for so long but which are now falling out of favour. We have also been able to see and measure the impact of different governmental responses to the pandemic and, in doing so, have learned that those countries that have been most successful have acted responsibly by putting citizens first and by working collaboratively with those who have the skills, knowledge and expertise to bring about positive change and to get things done.

COVID-19 has exposed flaws in traditional models and approaches to public services, but it has also progressed thinking and practice around new and different ways of working. Most importantly, it has demonstrated very clearly that, when it comes to putting in place fast and effective responses to challenges and problems, governments cannot do it by acting alone. Rather, a whole societal approach is needed – an approach which draws together scientific and technical expertise, combines it with local knowledge and information about what might work at community or individual level, and which uses relevant data to target where need is greatest. That means government working across departmental boundaries and the wider public sector as well as with partners in other sectors – in local government, academia, the private sector, with the community and voluntary sector and beyond.

That is the essence of an Outcomes-based PfG – government partnering with civic society to respond to the needs of people and communities everywhere. An inclusive society where Outcomes of individual and collective wellbeing are the drivers for the government agenda.

The Outcomes-based concept is not new to the Executive, and the concept has gained currency internationally in recent years, with governments in a number of countries using the approach to set their agenda. The United Nations has set a series of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are part of an internationally agreed performance framework designed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. All countries are aiming to achieve these goals by 2030. The intention is that the Outcomes Framework will be our way to demonstrate progress towards the achievement of SDGs. The Executive has agreed on an approach which draws on the techniques set out by Mark Friedman in his book 'Trying Hard is Not Good Enough', which describes a range of practical techniques designed to help keep the focus on Outcomes.

Developing an Outcomes-based PfG requires the Executive to have a clear view of the things that matter most to people and to know what their aspirations are in relation to those things. In order to do that as fully as possible and to ensure that everyone is able to have their say, the Executive is opening a public conversation around the quality of life conditions people want to see and what those conditions would be like if we could experience them.

That is the critical first step in the development process, and getting it right is key to everything that follows from it – knowing how to measure success and understanding where as a society we are currently; identify partners that can help make improvements; and, learning and understanding what works well and what does not. That is the conversation the Executive wants to have right now so that it can reach an informed view on the actions which, taken together, it needs to incorporate in the new Programme for Government.

The Executive believes this is an approach with immense potential to transform public service delivery. The expectation is that it will help remove organisational barriers and be a strong driver for the collaborative working practices that are needed to effect real and lasting change and improvement. The key principle is the Executive working in partnership with people and communities everywhere to identify and deliver actions that will help achieve the quality of life conditions that go to the centre of people's wellbeing.

Previous Programmes for Government had been prepared on the basis of service inputs and outputs which, when it comes to measuring success, are strong on counting levels of activity but which are less good at the more fundamental assessment of

whether the activities are the right thing to be doing based on their effectiveness when it comes to achieving positive change and improvement. The old, traditional model also underpins rigid organisational structures in delivering public services which then makes it difficult to see the bigger picture and to present a whole of government response to societal challenges and needs.

Despite significant investment and effort, the core Indicators that signal economic and social progress and improvement in the areas that matter most to people and their elected representatives had been static for too long. Evidence, including from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and from progressive governments around the world points to Outcomes-based working being much more likely to drive innovation and creativity in how we do things and to deliver better results in the longer term.

What we are doing?

The Executive's approach to the Programme for Government begins with a draft Framework of Outcomes – statements of societal wellbeing which, taken together, are intended to capture the range of things that experience and research suggest matter most to people – good health; a fair, equal and inclusive society; the economy; climate change; being able to fulfil potential; feeling safe and secure; having respect for each other; living in a place where people want to live, work, visit and invest; being able to reach out and connect with others; ensuring children and young people have the best start in life.

However, the Executive recognises the need to determine the completeness of these Outcomes and wants to hear the views of people and communities, and test them against the experiences of people of different gender, age, with/without disabilities, marital status, race, religious belief, political opinion and with/without dependants.

The Executive also wants to know more about the challenges and problems that people face and what they would like to see done differently or better in order to make improvements that would enhance their wellbeing. The Executive also needs to know who can help deliver real and lasting improvements in those things that matter most.

As a basis for the public conversation about these matters, officials have prepared an outline Framework of Outcomes. This is intended only as an aid to the conversation – a starting point for discussion and debate. The Framework sets out draft wording for the Outcomes and incorporates some early thinking around what the key priority areas might be under each one.

It is crucially important to get the wording of the Outcomes right as they will provide the starting point for future long-term strategic policy planning by the Executive and act as a touchstone for its strategies and actions moving forward. A key feature of the approach is that the design and content of work plans will be directly dependent on

the contribution they make towards helping achieve one or more of the desired Outcomes within the Framework.

The intention is that new PfG will be maintained in a “live” format with work plans being continually evaluated and adjusted to ensure they are achieving the desired impact. New actions to achieve positive change and improvement can be introduced as and when it is appropriate to do so, for example in response to changing circumstances or to put innovative thinking into practice or to utilise new partnership approaches. By the same measure, old/completed actions or ineffective plans (those not contributing to desired improvements) will be halted and removed from the Programme.

The benchmark always will be the contribution that each action makes towards achieving the desired Outcomes, **and that is why it is so important to get the Outcomes right at this early stage, and why the Executive wants to take the views of others.** The purpose of this consultation is to find out what people (individuals, communities, groups, businesses, sectoral bodies) think – to give everyone an opportunity to provide forthright feedback on the draft Framework, the individual draft Outcomes and outline key priority areas – **Do people agree with the Outcomes and Key Priority Areas that have been identified? Are there things missing or which are not relevant?**

A survey questionnaire has been designed to help structure responses to the above questions. We would encourage respondents to use the online survey, but written responses are equally welcome.

When completing the survey or in providing written comments, it might be helpful to think in terms of how to make this a Programme for Government that makes real and lasting positive change towards improving wellbeing for all – Think about what you or your group can bring to the Programme? What could be the game-changing actions? Who can help show the way forward? Who should the Executive partner and invest with to get the most impact from our collective efforts? Who is best placed to deliver programmes on the ground? What ideas are there for innovative new things or for seeing problems in a new light or for working in different ways?

Next Steps

This initial consultation is open for the next eight weeks to Monday 22 March 2021. The results will then be analysed and, where appropriate, adjustments made. More detailed action plans will then be developed and there will be further engagement with stakeholders and delivery partners.

To support the fact that this is to be a Programme for Government that is maintained in a “live” format responsive to changing circumstances and always open to new ideas and ways of working, and with a view to making it a programme that is impactful, responsive and inclusive, the Executive recognises the importance of continuous civic

engagement and it sees that as an essential aspect of the Outcomes-based approach moving forward. In that respect, consultation about the Programme and its monitoring processes will never close.

Responding to the Consultation

The best way to respond to this consultation is online, through our survey which can be accessed here:

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nisra-pfg-analytics/pfg-consultation/>

This is quick and simple to complete, and provides for views on the Outcomes and Key Priority Areas for Action that form the Framework.

A copy of the survey is also available for you to download at the following link:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-downloads

Completed hard copy survey questionnaires and general written responses can be sent to us by:

E-mail at: pfg@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Or

Post at: Programme for Government Team,
The Executive Office
Block E, Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SR

Separate easy read and children's versions of the consultation document, and a children's survey questionnaire are available here:

Easy Read Version Consultation Document:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-consultation-documents

Children's Version Consultation Document:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-consultation-documents

Children's Version Survey Questionnaire:

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nisra-pfg-analytics/pfg-childrens-consultation>

Responses to this consultation are invited until 11.59pm on 22 March 2021.

We look forward to hearing from you and are keen to engage with you. If you want to speak to a member of the Team about the PfG or the approach being taken, or if you or a group you are involved with would like to participate in a PfG engagement event, please do let us know.

Note – Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all engagement activities will be conducted using a virtual platform.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Consultation Responses

To support transparency in our decision making process, all responses to this consultation will be made public (subject to our Moderation Policy). This will include the name of the responding organisation (if applicable). However, names of individuals will only be published if you give consent. Your contact details will not be published.

For more information about what we do with personal data please see our consultation privacy notice at Annex A.

Your response, and all other responses to this consultation, may also be disclosed on request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR); however all disclosures will be in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential, so that this may be considered if the Department should receive a request for the information under the FOIA or EIR.

For further information:

TEO Data Protection Officer
Dr David Lammey
Room A.5.16 Castle Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3SR

TEL: 028 9052 8242 (or NICS internal number: 28242)

EMAIL: david.lammey@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework

Our children and young people have the best start in life

We know there is a strong relationship between what happens in the earliest years of life and future health and wellbeing. It is our responsibility to ensure our young people get the best start in life and grow up safe, healthy and happy.

This Outcome is about ensuring all our children and young people grow up in a society which provides the support they need to achieve their potential.

We want to ensure all our children and young people have access to the high quality education they all deserve and are equipped with the skills to help them make the best life choices. We also recognise the importance of ensuring our children and young people have good health, quality physical environments with space to play, opportunities for cultural and artistic expression and to make a positive contribution to society, and protection from violence and harm.

We want to make sure that families, childcare and education providers and those responsible for meeting the needs of more vulnerable children and young people are equipped to provide the high quality level of care and support required of them, so that all our children and young people enjoy their childhood and adolescence and grow to become resilient, confident and well equipped to take on the challenges and opportunities that adulthood brings.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Education

Addressing resourcing pressures, taking a strategic approach to area planning i.e. ensuring all have access to fit for purpose schools and supporting our education sector, including integrated and shared education.

(Department of Education, Department of Finance)

Capability and Resilience

Equipping children and young people with the knowledge and support to make safe, healthy and sustainable life choices, building their social, cultural and environmental awareness and self-confidence through team sports, and cross community activities.

(Department of Health, Department of Justice, Department for Communities, Department of Education, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Care

Providing stable, nurturing environments for looked after children, those formerly in care, and 'newcomer' children, and giving them the best possible standards of support.
(Department of Education, Department of Health)

Early Years

High quality healthcare provision for parents and infants, supporting and enabling parents into work with accessible and affordable childcare, meeting the complex needs of children, addressing child poverty with appropriate welfare and support, and supporting learning and development with universal and targeted services.
(Department of Health, Department for Communities, Department of Education)

Skills and Attainment

Delivering a high quality curriculum and an enhanced approach to careers advice, improving educational achievement and life chances, addressing persistent underachievement, and supporting children with specific needs, such as SEN and those with English as an additional language to access the curriculum.
(Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas
(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- Childcare Strategy (NDNA),
- Child Poverty Strategy (NDNA)
- Food Strategy Framework
- Strategy for Looked After Children
- Road Safety Strategy
- Sports Strategy
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

Our health and wellbeing are directly affected by the quality of the environment around us. We have a collective responsibility to tackle climate change to ensure that our children and future generations can draw benefit and enjoyment from our environment, and each of us must play a part in ensuring that happens.

By taking a Green Growth approach we will manage our resources efficiently and effectively, reducing our carbon emissions to ensure our environment is protected and enhanced while achieving sustainable economic growth to create a living and working active landscape that can be enjoyed and valued by everyone.

We need to ensure our infrastructure is integrated, efficient and sustainable and people are encouraged to make environmentally responsible choices.

Key Priority Areas

Natural Environment

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and the natural environment, supporting sustainable practices and resource use in the energy, agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors and ensuring human, animal and plant health.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Green Economy

Creating economic opportunity through tackling climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (including energy decarbonisation).

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Built Environment

Creating and shaping high quality, sustainable, places for people to live, work and spend leisure time. Furthering sustainable development and supporting positive place-making and effective stewardship.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Housing

Maintaining and redeveloping our current housing stock and ensuring new houses are built in an energy-efficient, sustainable way that protects our natural environment and built heritage.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Active and Sustainable Transport

Promotion of and access to safe, active and sustainable transport to encourage people to make environmentally responsible choices about transport.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department of Education)

Waste Management

Reducing and reusing the waste we produce by improving the services and infrastructure to enable the processing of waste materials and increasing awareness and understanding to drive cultural and behavioural change to result in less waste being generated, and a greater proportion of waste being reused or recycled.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Water and Wastewater Management

Enhancing and improving the existing network and infrastructure to ensure service delivery and sustainable environmental management.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Green Growth Strategy
- Environment Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Future Agriculture Policy Framework
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Sustainable Land Management Strategy
- NI Forestry A Strategy for Sustainability and Growth
- Marine Strategy
- Fisheries Strategy
- R&D Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy
- Energy Strategy
- Regional Development Strategy
- Circular Economy Strategy
- Economic Strategy
- Education and Skills Strategy
- Invest NI Strategy
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- NIHE draft Supporting People Strategy
- Investment Strategy
- Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Future Clean Air Strategy
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

It is important that everyone in our society feels included and valued and that we can all respect and celebrate the diversity of our society.

This Outcome is about tackling inequality and discrimination, increasing trust and respect, promoting understanding, ensuring that a person's background or identity is not a barrier to their participation in society.

We want to address the legacy of the past and create space for sharing between traditionally divided and new communities.

Key Priority Areas

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Tackling the issues that lead to inequality and disadvantage in terms of welfare and poverty, and providing support where it is needed in both urban and rural communities.
(Department for Communities, The Executive Office, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Rights and Equality

Promoting and protecting the rights of individuals to ensure we are recognizing and respecting diversity, ensuring everyone feels included.
(Department for Communities, The Executive Office, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Legacy

Delivering for those affected by the legacy of the Troubles, seeking to promote a shared and reconciled future for all, and recognizing and valuing the achievements of the peace process to date.
(The Executive Office, Department of Justice)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Tackling the issues of the past and ending sectarianism. Promoting, protecting and providing education on the rights of individuals across our public services to ensure different values and identities are respected and welcomed in society.
(The Executive Office, Department for Communities, Department of Justice, Department of Education)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas
(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Anti-poverty strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty (NDNA)

- Childcare Strategy
- Racial Equality Strategy
- Active Ageing Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy
- T:BUC Strategy
- Disability Strategy
- Gender Strategy
- Sexual Orientation Strategy
- Irish Language Strategy
- Ulster Scots Strategy
- Anti-poverty Strategy
- Strategy for Looked After Children
- Food Strategy Framework

We all enjoy long, healthy active lives

Our physical and mental health impacts on every aspect of our lives.

This Outcome is about enabling and supporting people to maintain their health and lead healthy, active lives, addressing the factors which impact on mental and physical health.

We want to ensure everyone has access to high quality care when they need it throughout their lives.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Health

Taking forward health and social care reform to ensure we can deliver safe, high quality services to meet the challenges of the future, and provide the right services where they are needed.

(Department of Health, Department of Finance)

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Address the issues that lead to inequality and disadvantage in terms of health and healthcare.

(Department of Health, Department for Communities)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive attitudes towards mental health and wellbeing. Ensuring access to a comprehensive array of early intervention and healthcare services to address mental health issues where they present.

(Department of Health, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Older People

Considering the health and social care needs of an ageing population, promoting positive attitudes to older people and tailoring support to enable them to enjoy better health and active lifestyles.

(Department of Health, Department for Communities)

Physical Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive public health measures, increasing awareness and supporting safe, active and healthy lives.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Anti-poverty strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty (NDNA)
- Active Ageing Strategy
- Mental Health Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together
- Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy 2026: Delivering for Our People
- Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
- Disability Strategy
- Cancer Strategy
- Substance Misuse Strategy
- Making Life Better 2012-23
- Green Growth Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Anti-poverty Strategy
- Mental Health Action Plan
- Protect Life 2 – Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- Sports Strategy
- Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Tackling Rural Poverty and Isolation Framework

Everyone can reach their potential

It is important that everyone in society is supported to help them realise and achieve their potential.

This Outcome is about giving people access to better jobs across different sectors by developing more opportunities, supporting personal development, addressing the issues that lead to underachievement and strengthening links between industry and academia.

We want to help people achieve their ambitions and to feel confident and empowered to pursue their goals and interests.

Key Priority Areas

Capability and Resilience

Supporting personal development opportunities for everyone, and building confidence and capacity.

(Department for Communities, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Better Jobs

Creation and development of more opportunities and better jobs, by tackling issues such as job security, wages and flexibility and giving employees a voice. Improving employability and helping those who are unemployed into work and ensuring we develop a workforce that is equipped and ready for employment. Protecting workers' rights, addressing "zero hours" contracts and barriers to employment.

(Department for Communities, Department for the Economy)

Skills and Attainment

Addressing underachievement alongside skills shortages, aligning Further Education and Higher Education to labour market demand, supporting vocational training and apprenticeships, as well as qualifications and tertiary education and continuing professional development.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Sports, Arts & Culture

Supporting creative industries, oversight and delivery for the arts, cultural and language sectors. Promoting cohesive communities through the culture, arts and language sectors

(Department for the Economy, Department for Communities, The Executive Office)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Economic Strategy
- Skills Strategy
- Childcare Strategy
- DfC employability NI
- Disability Strategy (NDNA)
- Gender Strategy (NDNA)
- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty Strategy (NDNA)
- Securing our Success – Apprenticeship Strategy
- Generating our Success the Youth Training Strategy Preparing for Success
- Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral

A strong, regionally balanced, inclusive economy is essential if we are to tackle the social and economic challenges facing us. This will be very significant in terms of the impacts of exit from the EU and recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. It is also important that our economy grows in a sustainable way that supports and protects our environment.

It is internationally recognised that a sustainable development approach seeks to progress economic and social ambitions while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

This Outcome is about creating the conditions required to achieve a strong, competitive economy that helps Northern Ireland compete on the global stage, attract investment and stimulate innovation and creativity.

The production of high quality, nutritious food is a crucially important factor for our economy. We want to provide the tools to enable the industry to pursue increased productivity in international terms. The intention is to grow an industry that is environmentally sustainable, supporting high quality air, water, and soil. An industry with a low carbon footprint which promotes biodiversity; is resilient to external shocks and operates within an integrated, efficient, sustainable, competitive and responsive supply chain.

We want to develop our infrastructure to enhance opportunities for growth and ensure growth in our economy is undertaken in an environmentally friendly way to help tackle climate change, striving for low-carbon/zero-carbon alternatives.

Key Priority Areas

Competing Globally

Dealing with the outworking of the EU Exit Protocol and developing internationalisation to help Northern Ireland compete on the global stage, and to promote Northern Ireland as a sector to visit and invest in.

(Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Green Economy

Developing our economy and energy supply in an environmentally friendly way, recognising the impacts industry has on climate change and striving for low-carbon / zero-carbon alternatives.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Growth

Growing the economy to attract and stimulate investment across Northern Ireland, including building sustainable investment, encouraging business start-ups and development through City and Growth Deals and supporting sustainable development of rural industries.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Food, Farming and Fishing

Providing the tools under a future agricultural policy to increase productivity, enhance environmental sustainability, improve resilience and supply chain integration of the agrifood industry.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Infrastructure

Developing our digital, energy and physical infrastructure to provide opportunities to grow business in all areas.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for the Economy, Department of Finance)

Innovation

Helping companies engage in innovation and research, and develop creativity and entrepreneurship.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- NI Innovation Strategy
- UK R&D Roadmap
- UK R&D Place Strategy
- Economic Strategy
- EU Exit Protocol
- Tourism Strategy
- Circular Economy Strategy
- Investment Strategy
- International Relations Strategy

- Exports Strategy
- Energy Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Future Agricultural Policy Framework
- City and Growth Deals
- Environment Strategy
- DAERA Innovation Strategy
- DAERA Digital Strategy
- NI Forest Service Strategy
- Marine Strategy
- Fisheries Strategy

Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other

This Outcome is about ensuring we all have a safe community and feel respected.

We need to tackle crime, reduce reoffending and divert people, especially young people, from entering the justice system by challenging and supporting people to change and assisting those in custody to make better life-choices when they are released.

It is important that we address the harm and vulnerability caused by crime and make the justice system more effective; the speed that cases progress through the system matters to victims and witnesses, their families and their communities and can help offenders to better understand the implications of their actions.

We need to promote understanding of different cultural identities to help build respect for each other.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Justice

Improving the effectiveness and accessibility of justice at all levels, speeding up justice and supporting the PSNI in bringing about transformational change, and delivering for victims and survivors of historical abuse and for those affected by the legacy of the Troubles.

(Department of Justice, Department of Finance, The Executive Office)

Address Harm and Vulnerability

Supporting and putting protections in place for those who are vulnerable, meeting the needs of those who have experienced serious crime, including the complex needs of children, and delivering for victims and survivors.

(Department of Justice, Department of Health)

Early Intervention and Rehabilitation

Addressing offensive behaviors and tackling organized crime, supporting rehabilitation, intervening early, meeting the often complex needs of both children and adults throughout the justice system.

(Department of Justice, Department of Health, Department for Communities, Department of Education)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Supporting safe and resilient communities, building respect for cultural identities and rights of individuals, providing integrated and shared education, addressing hate crime, tackling sectarianism, ending paramilitary activity and addressing the harm and vulnerabilities caused by it.

(Department of Justice, Department of Education, The Executive Office, Department for Communities)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Organised Crime Strategy
- Racial Equality Strategy (NDNA)
- T:BUC Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- A multi-agency three year victim and witness action plan
- 7 year Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy
- Justice and Health Initiatives
- Executive Mental Health Strategy
- Digital Justice Strategy
- Reviews of Family and Civil Justice
- Committal Reform Programme (NDNA)
- Review of sentencing policy
- Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime

We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives

It is important that we as a society care for those who need our support.

This Outcome is about enabling everyone to live their life in a fulfilling way as valued members of an inclusive society.

We need to tackle the issues that lead to disadvantage and provide the services and support people need, when they need it.

Key Priority Areas

Disability

Improving the quality of life for those of us with disabilities, empowering people to have more influence over their own lives and providing opportunities to participate in decisions that affect them.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for the Economy, Department for Infrastructure)

Housing

Tackling homelessness. Facilitating and supporting housing associations, provision and maintenance of appropriate social housing, investment in new social and affordable homes.

(Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Supporting people to build a route out of poverty, administering an effective social security / benefits system to those who need it, tackling the issues that lead to inequality.

(Department for Communities)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, and addressing social issues, risk factors and environmental impacts, such as social isolation and loneliness. Providing access to supportive services and promoting early intervention.

(Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Older People

Considering the health and social care needs of an ageing population, promoting positive attitudes to older people and tailoring support to enable them to participate fully in society.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for Infrastructure)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- NIHE's draft Supporting People strategy
- Disability Strategy (NDNA)
- Active Ageing (NDNA)
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Child Poverty Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy

People want to live, work and visit here

This Outcome is about promoting Northern Ireland as a place where people want to live, work and visit.

We want to retain and attract people to live and work here by having attractive employment, a healthy and clean environment, recreation and housing opportunities where people feel respected and safe.

We want to build on international relations and enhance our reputation, deal with the impacts of EU Exit and the COVID-19 pandemic, attract investment and help grow our economy.

We want to promote our built and natural environment our sports, arts and culture sectors to encourage tourism and provide opportunities for people to take part in the things they enjoy.

Key Priority Areas

Competing Globally

Retaining our workforce and attracting newcomers and inward investment. Dealing with the impacts of EU Exit. Meeting international environmental standards. Promotion of Northern Ireland as a place to live, study, work and visit.

(Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Better Jobs

Creating varied, fulfilling and quality employment opportunities for our workforce to support retention of our workforce, and attracting skilled workers to Northern Ireland's industries.

(Department for the Economy)

Growth

Growing the economy to attract and stimulate investment across Northern Ireland, including building sustainable investment, encouraging business start-ups and development through City and Growth Deals and supporting sustainable development of rural industries, including increased digital access.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Finance, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Housing

Tackling the issues to ensure everyone has access to good-quality, affordable housing and in promoting an integrated, shared society.

(Department for Communities, The Executive Office)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Supporting safe and resilient communities, building respect for cultural identities and rights of individuals, providing shared/integrated education, tackling sectarianism, ending paramilitary activity and addressing the harm and vulnerabilities caused by it.

(Department of Justice, Department of Education, The Executive Office, Department for Communities)

Sports, Arts and Culture

Providing access to sports, arts and culture and encouraging and facilitating opportunities for people to get involved. Promoting built heritage, eco-tourism and outdoor recreation. Providing spaces and facilities for sports, arts and culture events and activities to take place.

(Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Planning

Creating and shaping high quality, sustainable, places for people to live, work and spend leisure time. Furthering sustainable development and supporting positive place-making and effective stewardship.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Investment strategy
- Economic strategy
- T:BUC Strategy
- Tourism Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy
- City and Growth Deals
- Food Strategy Framework
- Rural Policy Framework (under development)

PFG Consultation Privacy Notice

[EU General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) 2016](#) and [Data Protection Act \(DPA\) 2018](#)

The Executive Office (TEO) is committed to protecting your privacy. This privacy notice explains how TEO uses information about you and the ways in which we will safeguard your data.

Why we process personal information

We will process personal data provided in response to consultations for the purpose of informing the development of our policy, guidance, or other regulatory work in the subject area of the request for views. We will publish a summary of the consultation responses and, in some cases, the responses themselves but these will not contain any personal data. We will not publish the names or contact details of respondents, but will include the names of organisations responding along with those of individuals working in a private capacity.

If you have indicated that you would be interested in contributing to further departmental work on the subject matter covered by the consultation, then we might process your contact details to get in touch with you.

Lawful basis for processing

In order to comply with data protection legislation, we must have a lawful basis for processing any personal data. The processing that this Department carries out is on a 'Public Task' basis (i.e. Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR: the processing is necessary for the Department to perform a task in the public interest or for our official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law).

We will only process any special category (sensitive) personal data you provide, which reveals racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious belief, health or sexual life/orientation when it is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest under Article 9(2)(g) of the GDPR, in the exercise of the function of the department, and to monitor equality.

The type of personal data we process

We process personal data relating to:

- Names
- Telephone Numbers

- Postal addresses
- E-mail addresses

How will your information be used and shared

We process the information internally for the above stated purpose. We don't intend to share your personal data with any third party. Any specific requests from a third party for us to share your personal data with them will be dealt with in accordance the provisions of the data protection legislation.

How long will we keep your information

Information from responses to a consultation will be retained until our work on the subject matter of the consultation is complete. Data will be retained for five years in line with TEO's approved retention and disposal schedule.

What are your rights

- You have the right to obtain confirmation that your data is being [processed, and access to your personal data](#)
- You are entitled to have personal data [rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete](#)
- You have a right to have personal data [erased and to prevent processing](#), in specific circumstances
- You have the right [to 'block' or suppress processing](#) of personal data, in specific circumstances
- You have the right to [data portability](#), in specific circumstances
- You have the right to [object to the processing](#), in specific circumstances
- You have rights in relation to [automated decision making and profiling](#).

Alternative formats/General enquires

If you have any other queries about this Privacy Notice or need a copy in an alternative format or language, please contact the PFG Team at the address below.

Programme for Government Team,
The Executive Office
Rm A5.01, Block E
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast, BT4 3SR

Telephone: 028 9052 3466
E-mail: pfg@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Complaints

If you wish to request access, object or raise a complaint about how we have handled your data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer using the details provided below.

Dr David Lammey
Data Protection Officer
The Executive Office
Room A5.16, Castle Buildings
Belfast, BT4 3SL

Telephone: 028 9052 0694

Email: David.Lammey@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Email: casework@ico.org.uk

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

Changes to this privacy notice

We keep this Privacy Notice under regular review. This Privacy Notice was last updated on 22 December 2020.

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Draft Programme for Government – Outcome Consultation: Belfast City Council Response

Consultation Deadline: 22nd March 2021.

NI Executive Overview

The NI Executive is developing a new strategic, Outcomes-based Programme for Government (PfG). It aims to deliver real, lasting and positive change in people's lives. This consultation is seeking opinions on the draft framework of nine Outcomes upon which the PfG will be built. Together these Outcomes create a picture of the kind of society we all want to live in.

Government cannot work in isolation to solve the wide ranging and long-term issues that face all of us as a society. We need to work with citizens, organisations and representatives from across Northern Ireland and use their knowledge and expertise to help guide and develop a PfG that benefits everyone.

To reach this stage of public consultation, many conversations have already taken place. We've taken on board these views and produced this draft Framework, along with some early thinking around Key Priority Areas and associated strategies that will help deliver the PfG.

We want to continue to co-design the PfG and you now have the opportunity to influence it further; tell us what you think, as getting it right is key to everything that follows. You can do this by completing this online consultation. Links to alternative formats can be found at the end of this page.



Key BCC Comments

Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the draft PfG Outcomes Framework. As the elected representative body for Belfast, we believe that the ambitions we have for the city must complement the outcomes of the Programme for Government, and vice versa.

The Covid-19 pandemic has tested the public sector like nothing before it. It has tested our resilience, our ability to mobilise at pace, to transgress silos and to deliver for citizens. It has shown how partnership working can overcome almost any problem. Whilst we are still navigating through the pandemic, it is essential that this collective approach continues through to the health, economic and social recovery from covid-19.

The strategic challenges of covid-19 that we must address are accelerating transition to a different future economy, confronting us with a choice: deal with persistent challenges and grow, or risk entrenching inequality and low productivity. We believe the Programme for Government should lead this strategic challenge and encourage the NI Executive to be brave in addressing these strategic challenges. As a city, we have produced a recovery plan that identifies a framework for recovery focused on:

- **Our city.** Safe, vibrant, connected spaces and places. We will provide leadership to future proof and ensure the safe use of public spaces, and seek to sustain Belfast's social and cultural infrastructure.
- **Our services.** The city, and how we work in it, is changing dramatically because of COVID-19. We will consider and adapt our services accordingly in the short and longer term.
- **Our communities.** Strengthened and resilient. We will understand community needs and strengths and support collective local action.

- **Our economy.** Resilient and inclusive. We will invest and work with city partners to protect and create jobs and support Belfast residents to access much needed employment.
- **Our environment.** Sustainable and climate-resilient. We will decarbonise our economy; creating jobs, protecting our communities, improving health and well-being and enhancing the liveability of our city.
- **Our digital innovation.** Transformative and leading edge. We will invest in our digital infrastructure to facilitate job creation and attract talent, entrepreneurs and investors to the city.

We are pleased to see that this closely resembles your draft framework and will enable us to work positively in the future towards achieving the best possible outcome for the people of Belfast and the wider region. We note, however, that there is no recognition in your draft framework of the importance of place and, more specifically, the importance of Belfast as the regional capital. We believe that Belfast must play a specific role as a driver for the regional economy as has been acknowledged in the Regional Development Strategy. Investment in Belfast is needed to sustain development in the city which will support growth in the region as a whole. As Northern Ireland's first and largest city, its development still lags some way behind contemporary European cities. **We not only encourage you to recognise the important benefits a place based approach can bring, but to specifically recognise the importance of investing in the regional capital as a driver for economic regeneration for the entire region.**

Partnership working is key to the successful delivery of public services. Whilst a significant portion of the aspirations contained within the Framework can be delivered on a regional basis, there are elements which we believe can only be designed and delivered at a more local level. To make the right decisions at the local level, we strongly believe the Phase 2 of Devolution to local government should be progressed during this Programme for Government. The devolution of neighbourhood services will allow for a more responsive approach to communities' needs and aspirations - Councils have a greater understanding and engagement with their local communities enabling the tailoring of services, improved decision-making and the delivery of local outcomes.

We also believe that the transfer of key regeneration functions would potentially be transformative for Belfast and other areas in the region. It would provide the Council with the ability to:

- ensure an integrated and outcome-based approach to regeneration that meets the regional outcomes articulated in the draft Framework, but also the localised outcomes articulated in the community plan;
- take a targeted approach to addressing blighted areas across the city including the City Centre;
- ensure greater alignment of physical regeneration with the emerging Local Development Plan; and
- enhance the vitality of the City Centre and further develop the rates base which is good for both Belfast and the wider region as it enables/supports further investment in front-line services.

The Council would also recommend that responsibility for the delivery of employability and skills initiatives may be further devolved from Departments to local government. While there is a range of activity taking place across Belfast, the pervasive challenges of long-term unemployment and economic inactivity have not been addressed in any real way.

We therefore recommend that the devolution of these powers becomes an enabling priority that will greatly help the public sector as a whole deliver on the aspirations articulated in the PfG Outcomes Framework. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you.

In line with further devolution, **the Council would encourage greater collaboration between local government and government departments, in the planning, development, delivery and monitoring of interventions in order to increase their effectiveness for Belfast residents and, in turn, create a more cohesive society.** As the planning authority, the city council is now in receipt of significant intelligence regarding future employment opportunities at key developments.

We believe the framework is broadly in line with our ambitions, as articulated in the Belfast Agenda, our city's community plan. A maintained focus on priorities aimed at achieving long term outcomes with population and performance indicators attached to these outcomes is in line with our approach to community planning. Our Community Planning partnership is aiming to prepare a new community plan for our city by March 2022 and **we strongly encourage the coordination of local community plans with the completion of the Programme for Government.** We believe it essential that these plans are not seen in isolation – our new community plan for Belfast in March 2022 and the Programme for Government should complement one another, the population measures, performance indicators and priorities should also work together, enabling a collective focus on the needs of our citizens. We therefore strongly encourage you to work in partnership with us, and the local government representative bodies, to jointly plan and develop our statutory plans. **Likewise, we strongly encourage you to consider establishing a coalesced implementation body that can help coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Programme for Government and the 11 community plans for Northern Ireland.**

We welcome the commitment to keeping the PfG as a live document – it is a pragmatic approach given the changing landscape of Covid 19 and the NI Protocol. **We would welcome further detail on the timeframes for regular review and a commitment to involve key stakeholders in the review, including Belfast City Council.**

We note that a list of government strategies are noted as supporting the Programme for Government. **We would strongly encourage that these strategies are reviewed in light of the agreed PfG to ensure they are still fit for purpose in the post Covid landscape.**

Whilst the PfG is the opportunity for a fresh start to governance of NI following the New Decade New Approach, it must be recognised that there was a previous PfG and we would emphasise the importance of formally reviewing the previous PfG to learn, collectively, what worked well and what did not. If this review has been undertaken, we would welcome the publication of the findings.

Outcome 1:

Our children and young people have the best start in life

We know there is a strong relationship between what happens in the earliest years of life and future health and wellbeing. It is our responsibility to ensure our young people get the best start in life and grow up safe, healthy and happy.

This Outcome is about ensuring all our children and young people grow up in a society which provides the support they need to achieve their potential.

We want to ensure all our children and young people have access to the high quality education they all deserve and are equipped with the skills to help them make the best life choices. We also recognise the importance of ensuring our children and young people have good health, quality physical environments with space to play, opportunities for cultural and artistic expression and to make a positive contribution to society, and protection from violence and harm.

We want to make sure that families, childcare and education providers and those responsible for meeting the needs of more vulnerable children and young people are equipped to provide the high quality level of care and support required of them, so that all our children and young people enjoy their childhood and adolescence and grow to become resilient, confident and well equipped to take on the challenges and opportunities that adulthood brings.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Access to Education
- Capability and Resilience
- Care
- Early Years
- Skills and Attainment

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
We look forward to the findings from the work of the Expert Panel on Educational Underachievement and believe this should help develop the priority areas that support this outcome.	
Many of the practical outworkings of this outcome are at a local community level. We therefore encourage the NI Executive to include local government in the further development of this outcome and the implementation of the priorities.	
We are pleased that you recognise the importance of childcare in this outcome. We consider that priority should be given to creating a childcare strategy for the region that will encourage greater maternal employment, redress gender inequalities in the workplace, increase GVA and, most importantly, improve educational and social outcomes for our children.	

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
<p>Whilst the impact of the pandemic has been felt by all, it has been recognised that the long term impact on children and young people, particularly those living in poverty, will be severe. We encourage you to ensure this is a significant priority, with appropriate resources, in the implementation of the Programme for Government.</p>	

Outcome 2:

We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

Our health and wellbeing are directly affected by the quality of the environment around us. We have a collective responsibility to tackle climate change to ensure that our children and future generations can draw benefit and enjoyment from our environment, and each of us must play a part in ensuring that happens.

By taking a Green Growth approach we will manage our resources efficiently and effectively, reducing our carbon emissions to ensure our environment is protected and enhanced while achieving sustainable economic growth to create a living and working active landscape that can be enjoyed and valued by everyone.

We need to ensure our infrastructure is integrated, efficient and sustainable and people are encouraged to make environmentally responsible choices.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Natural Environment
- Green Economy
- Built Environment
- Housing
- Active and Sustainable Transport
- Waste Management
- Water and Wastewater Management

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
<p>Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response</p> <p>This outcome has been carried over from the previous framework and we believe it is an essential element of the new PfG framework.</p> <p>We believe the inclusion of a Green Growth approach is a positive development with an emphasis on achieving sustainable economic growth. This is particularly in relation to cross departmental outcomes which should enable collaborative working across government acting as an enabler for BCC. It is worth distinguishing between green jobs and sustainable green infrastructure – we would welcome the opportunity to work with you on this.</p> <p>Many of the practical outworkings of this outcome are at a local community level. We therefore encourage the NI Executive to include local government in the further development of this outcome and the implementation of the priorities. This crucially includes the importance of developing measurements at regional level that align with and inform local measures.</p> <p>Working sustainably will require greater focus on skills for the new green economy, with relevant education programmes embedded. The creation of infrastructure and jobs that can utilise these skills is vital to future development.</p>	

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
<p>Housing</p> <p>We welcome the inclusion of housing under this outcome – maintaining and redeveloping our current housing stock and ensuring new houses are built in an energy efficient, sustainable way that protects our natural environment and built heritage.</p> <p>Active and Sustainable Transport</p> <p>Promotion of and access to safe, active and sustainable transport to encourage people to make environmentally responsible choices about transport. We encourage greater investment in more sustainable infrastructure towards public transport, walking, cycling and green vehicles.</p> <p>Waste Management</p> <p>Although the problem has been steadily growing for a number of years, the pandemic has brought sharply into focus the challenges that increased on-line shopping is presenting to Waste Management. Increased packaging waste, as a result of an increase in on-line shopping, has highlighted the need for effective recycling processes and facilities.</p>	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
<p>Clean Air</p> <p>It is noted that the Northern Ireland Executive has identified a range of strategies that could help deliver the key priority areas. The air quality contribution to this priority area is to be via a future Clean Air Strategy. It is further noted that DAERA are presently consulting on the public discussion document in advance of developing the first Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland. It is considered that development and implementation of a Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland should be prioritised by the Department so that the necessary improvements in ambient air quality across Northern Ireland can be identified and realised in a timely manner and so that progress to improving ambient air quality is formally monitored via PfG indicator(s).</p>	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Outcome 3:

We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

It is important that everyone in our society feels included and valued and that we can all respect and celebrate the diversity of our society.

This Outcome is about tackling inequality and discrimination, increasing trust and respect, promoting understanding, ensuring that a person's background or identity is not a barrier to their participation in society.

We want to address the legacy of the past and create space for sharing between traditionally divided and new communities.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage
- Rights and Equality
- Legacy
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
Hate Crime	
We recognise the scourge of Hate Crime and Incidents in the City. In 2019/2020 there were 694 Hate Crimes and 758 Hate Incidents reported to Police in the Belfast District Area on the basis of sexual orientation, race and religion. We appreciate that there is a significant underreporting of hate crimes and incidents. There were 98 hate crimes and incidents on the basis of transgender status and 171 crimes and incidents on the basis of disability status across all of Northern Ireland.	

We recognise our statutory duty to address Good Relations but also recognise that this is on the limited basis of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group. This only covers some of the hate crime categories yet we understand that to tackle hate and intolerance we must promote good relations between those groups who experience hate but are not covered by the Good Relations duty. To enable us to do this, we recommend that Hate Crime becomes a priority under this Outcome and our Good Relations duties are extended to the hate crime categories.

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?

No

Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response

DRAFT

Outcome 4:

We all enjoy long, healthy, active lives

Our physical and mental health impacts on every aspect of our lives.

This Outcome is about enabling and supporting people to maintain their health and lead healthy, active lives, addressing the factors which impact on mental and physical health.

We want to ensure everyone has access to high quality care when they need it throughout their lives.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Access to Health
- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Older People
- Physical Health and Wellbeing

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
We would suggest adding the environment to this outcome as a key priority for health and wellbeing.	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Outcome 5:

Everyone can reach their potential

It is important that everyone in society is supported to help them realise and achieve their potential.

This Outcome is about giving people access to better jobs across different sectors by developing more opportunities, supporting personal development, addressing the issues that lead to underachievement and strengthening links between industry and academia.

We want to help people achieve their ambitions and to feel confident and empowered to pursue their goals and interests.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Capability and Resilience
- Better Jobs
- Skills and Attainment
- Sports, Arts and Culture

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Inclusive Growth & Community Wealth Building

Belfast City Council (BCC) is committed to inclusive growth. For us inclusive growth means ensuring the success of the city reaches every citizen, including those who have not traditionally benefitted from economic growth. We believe this will help create vibrant communities where everyone has the opportunity and aspiration to succeed.

To ensure our growth sectors and new jobs are accessible for all residents, we need to better target the opportunities to all residents and ensure everyone has the right support to take these opportunities.

We encourage the NI Executive to consider introducing inclusive growth as a priority under this outcome. This would bring policies that, for example, address the barriers to employment, particularly those which prevent the most disadvantaged from entering the labour market, cover the whole working life experience, as well as offering improved job-related training and education.

The role of the public sector and large organisations in creating community wealth should also be included.

Community and Voluntary Sector

In addition to the key priority areas referenced (Better jobs, skills and attainment), the role of volunteering should be recognised as a valuable mechanism to support people to build capacity and reach their potential. The sports, arts and culture sector provides an opportunity to support people's empowerment and confidence.

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?

No

Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response

Outcome 6:

Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral

A strong, regionally balanced, inclusive economy is essential if we are to tackle the social and economic challenges facing us. This will be very significant in terms of the impacts of exit from the EU and recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. It is also important that our economy grows in a sustainable way that supports and protects our environment.

It is internationally recognised that a sustainable development approach seeks to progress economic and social ambitions while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

This Outcome is about creating the conditions required to achieve a strong, competitive economy that helps Northern Ireland compete on the global stage, attract investment and stimulate innovation and creativity.

The production of high quality, nutritious food is a crucially important factor for our economy. We want to provide the tools to enable the industry to pursue increased productivity in international terms. The intention is to grow an industry that is environmentally sustainable, supporting high quality air, water, and soil. An industry with a low carbon footprint which promotes biodiversity; is resilient to external shocks and operates within an integrated, efficient, sustainable, competitive and responsive supply chain.

We want to develop our infrastructure to enhance opportunities for growth and ensure growth in our economy is undertaken in an environmentally friendly way to help tackle climate change, striving for low-carbon/zero-carbon alternatives.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Competing Globally
- Green Economy
- Growth
- Food, Farming and Fishing
- Infrastructure
- Innovation

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
<p>We would urge the adoption of a <i>place-based approach</i> at the core of achieving a strong, sustainable and inclusive regional economy. A place based approach is essential to support the regional recovery from COVID and to better connect and maximise the impact of the respective strengths of urban and rural places across the region.</p> <p>This is an opportunity to recognise the role of successful cities as a source of regional, national and global economic productivity and enable places across the region to all play a vital role in contributing to regional economic recovery and growth. A successful Belfast city-region is vital to the future wellbeing of everyone living in Northern Ireland. Belfast provides key networking and</p>	

connectivity functions for the region as a whole. As the regional employment hub, with over 30% of all jobs based in the city and with around 47% of the Belfast workforce commute to work in the city¹ and reside in areas outside the city; the economic growth created within Belfast is distributed across the region. There is a need for an urban policy focus in order to secure the recovery from COVID and drive the sustainable economic growth of the region.

Developing internationalisation and managing the outworkings of the NI Protocol to achieve this outcome will require a renewed focus on the unique selling points for NI with access to and inclusion in both EU and UK trade zones.

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
<p>There is an emphasis on the agri-food industry to increase productivity, enhance environmental sustainability, improve resilience and supply chain integration. However, there is merit in strengthening the resilience in city centres/high streets, business etc; particularly as part of a sustained and integrated recovery effort.</p> <p>The only sector specifically referenced is agri-food. The impact of COVID will require a change in approach to support, sustain and recover many sectors including tourism and hospitality which are large employers. The value of these sectors to the NI and city economy should not be missed. We believe the PfG should also prioritise key growth sectors including Cyber Security, Financial Services, Artificial Intelligence, carbon reduction and clean energy. For a more resilient economy, the PfG should also prioritise the growth of more indigenous businesses as well as continuing to attract high value Foreign Direct Investment.</p>	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

¹ Belfast Skills Barometer 2018

Outcome 7:

Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other

This Outcome is about ensuring we all have a safe community and feel respected.

We need to tackle crime, reduce reoffending and divert people, especially young people, from entering the justice system by challenging and supporting people to change and assisting those in custody to make better life-choices when they are released.

It is important that we address the harm and vulnerability caused by crime and make the justice system more effective; the speed that cases progress through the system matters to victims and witnesses, their families and their communities and can help offenders to better understand the implications of their actions.

We need to promote understanding of different cultural identities to help build respect for each other.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Access to Justice
- Address Harm and Vulnerability
- Early Intervention and Rehabilitation
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
Hate Crime	
We recognise the scourge of Hate Crime and Incidents in the City. In 2019/2020 there were 694 Hate Crimes and 758 Hate Incidents reported to Police in the Belfast District Area on the basis of sexual orientation, race and religion. We appreciate that there is a significant underreporting of	

hate crimes and incidents. There were 98 hate crimes and incidents on the basis of transgender status and 171 crimes and incidents on the basis of disability status across all of Northern Ireland.

We recognise our statutory duty to address Good Relations but also recognise that this is on the limited basis of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group. This only covers some of the hate crime categories yet we understand that to tackle hate and intolerance we must promote good relations between those groups who experience hate but are not covered by the Good Relations duty. To enable us to do this, we recommend that Hate Crime becomes a priority under this Outcome and our Good Relations duties are extended to the hate crime categories.

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?

No

Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response

Outcome 8:

We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives

It is important that we as a society care for those who need our support.

This Outcome is about enabling everyone to live their life in a fulfilling way as valued members of an inclusive society.

We need to tackle the issues that lead to disadvantage and provide the services and support people need, when they need it.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Disability
- Housing
- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Older People

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	
Housing We welcome the inclusion of housing under this outcome – this is a critical area for Belfast with over 7,000 households in housing stress. Tackling homelessness, supporting housing associations, provision and maintenance of appropriate social housing, investment in new social and affordable homes and the supply of housing must all be addressed as a critical priority in the Programme for Government.	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

DRAFT

Outcome 9:

People want to live, work and visit here

This Outcome is about promoting Northern Ireland as a place where people want to live, work and visit.

We want to retain and attract people to live and work here by having attractive employment, a healthy and clean environment, recreation and housing opportunities where people feel respected and safe.

We want to build on international relations and enhance our reputation, deal with the impacts of EU Exit and the COVID-19 pandemic, attract investment and help grow our economy.

We want to promote our built and natural environment our sports, arts and culture sectors to encourage tourism and provide opportunities for people to take part in the things they enjoy.

The Key Priority Areas under this Outcome are:

- Competing Globally
- Better Jobs
- Growth
- Housing
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity
- Sports, Arts and Culture
- Planning

Do you feel this outcome is worth including in the Programme for Government framework?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you agree with the Key Priority Areas that have been included under this Outcome?	Yes
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas missing under this Outcome?	No
Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response	

Whilst a clean environment is mentioned in the introduction, it is not reflected in the priorities. For people wanting to live, work and visit here, the connection to the natural environment is increasingly important – we believe this should be a priority that ensures as many people as possible have access to nature, green space and clean air.

Do you feel there are Key Priority Areas included under this Outcome that are not relevant?

No

Please provide any further comments you may have in relation to your response

DRAFT

Additional Information

Do you have any further comments relevant to this consultation?

Please enter any additional comments in the box below

Disaggregation of Data

In order to effectively measure the effect of the Programme for Government on Section 75 groups, we strongly recommend that resources are put in to ensuring that all performance measures in the final Programme for Government can be disaggregated into Section 75 groups. At present, this is not possible across a key range of data in N Ireland, making it difficult to determine policy changes required to address the impact on these groups.

Appendix 3

Draft NILGA response to the Consultation on a Draft Outcomes Framework for the Programme for Government (NI)

25th February 2021

The following paper has been drafted in response to the Executive Office (TEO) consultation on a Draft Outcomes Framework for the forthcoming Programme for Government.

The draft response is regional in emphases, recognising that individual councils will have local and strategic priorities and recognises that meeting cycles of approval within councils plus tight consultation deadlines prevent full alignment across our sector in advance.

This was presented and developed by NILGA's all council Reform, Devolution, and Improvement Network on 22nd February 2021, for onward distribution to councils, SOLACE and NILGA's Executive through to the PfG response deadline of 22nd March 2021. It is therefore aimed to be a regional submission endorsed by the Association and the Society.

NB: Responses and alignment by councils are already well underway to this but further feedback within timescales by any council is welcomed via s.little@nilga.org

The consultation document is structured around a framework of nine outcomes, setting the priorities for and presenting a picture of the kind of society we would like to be. These are:

- *Our children and young people have the best start in life
- *We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment
- *We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect
- *We all enjoy healthy active lives
- *Everyone can reach their potential
- *Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced, and carbon-neutral
- *Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other
- *We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives
- *People want to live, work, and visit here

However, NILGA has positioned key offers and asks of the councils in this response, rather than just simply responding to the framework questions provided.

A response to this consultation is required by 22nd March 2021, but this date is only the first step in what will be a longer-term material involvement / policy development process by councils and NILGA.

Derek McCallan, Chief Executive, 24th February 2021

1.0 INTRODUCTION

NILGA, the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, is the constituted, representative body for district councils in Northern Ireland. NILGA represents and promotes the interests of the 11 Northern Ireland district councils; its membership is drawn from councillors and its work is informed fully by senior officers. The Association welcomes the opportunity to participate in the discussion around the Programme for Government for Northern Ireland. We trust that the views outlined below which have also been considered by councils and supported by SOLACE, will be applied as policy is developed and finalised, in collaboration with local government, beyond this submission deadline.

2.0 SUMMARY & INITIAL COMMENTS

NILGA welcomes this consultation but at the outset strongly asserts that for any Programme for Government to work, and for sustainable recovery from (in this case the pandemic) and major global disruption, ***localised investment, via better resourced Councils***, is key.

Government at all levels can move from a transactional approach to a relational approach, from effort to impact, devolving power and resources and in so doing, embed trust, adopting a genuinely radical shift in focus, and apply the greater localisation of the public purse to produce the better health, life satisfaction and happiness as espoused in the PfG framework.

The response to the pandemic has gained a very clear appreciation that local councils are the means to develop regional and national policy and investment, drawing in community-based knowledge and solutions and applying this effectively. The PfG framework for councils must go way beyond being invited to engagement exercises, road shows & implementation events, then implementing central policy. Developing a culture of communication and policy design as equal partners in existing structures, would be a positive start, which when it happens is readily welcomed.

Local government must therefore have a design, delivery, measurement and scrutiny role throughout, with both NILGA and SOLACE convening the appropriate corporate and technical input ***inclusive of all councils***. That is the norm, in practice, elsewhere and should be applied in NI immediately, through instruments like the NI Partnership Panel. Community Planning should also be fully recognised as a delivery vehicle, with the proviso that councils should be the hubs of cross departmental, central – local, investment in each Plan's priorities, which are locality & citizen led – like the PfG framework purports to be.

For the PfG to be delivered thoroughly, and effectively, noting councils desire and capacity to be practical and political partners, Regeneration Powers should be legislatively enabled in this

Assembly's mandate. This too, would be a means by which the PfG framework would be improved, through **localised investment, via better resourced Councils**.

This response provides commentary on the draft outcomes and key priorities (at 3.0), context in terms of the essential collaborative delivery partnership with local government (at 4.0), and critique in terms of the limitations of OBA and potential for improved delivery (at 5.0).

This response like the consultation itself, is provided during a time of extreme stress to the economy and society as a whole, in Northern Ireland and across the globe. This massive shock to the system will have implications for future decisions and investment. Some of the changes will be fleeting and will revert to 'normal' once the danger from the virus has receded, some changes will be longer term, and some will be permanent.

NILGA asserts that there are some certainties upon which we can build, such as building a new economy, health prioritisation and the need to decarbonise. These certainties should be localised and the hub role of councils fully recognised and resourced.

An additional key feature is the UK's departure from the EU and the complexities particular to Northern Ireland. NILGA's commissioned work (due at the start of April 2021) on EU exit, and local government / community impacts, will be supplementary information provided beyond this deadline, summarily in respect of PfG and other linked consultations such as ISNI.

NILGA welcomes the intent to work more closely with councils and with other partners outside the nine government departments. This intent, in itself, brings the need to consider **what constitutes effective partnership and accountability**, detailed later in this response. NILGA asserts that working in real partnership with local government must and will make a big difference - where most people locally need and see the benefits most. We trust that a contemporary, strengthened approach to partnership can be taken, building on the knowledge and experience developed through delivery of the current PfG and the clear success in a collaborative central-local approach which came to the fore in dealing with the pandemic.

The PfG apart from being strategic and overarching should be utilised as a statutory change tool, in terms of flexible, thorough, appropriate, investment and measurement, as is the case for example in New Zealand. In this way alone, the PfG would be ground breaking. It needs to be.

NILGA provides an Executive for all councils and as such presents an important axis for the NI Executive itself, including on design, delivery and scrutiny of the emerging PfG.

3.0 COMMENTARY ON KEY SECTIONS OF THE DRAFT OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

- **CONSULTATION INTRODUCTION**

NILGA, at the time, welcomed the key points made in the New Decade New Approach (NDNA) document, and in particular the resolve to develop the Programme for Government through better local engagement and co-design. We agree with the Executive's aspiration that the Programme should recognise and proactively respond to the dependencies and interconnections in public policy and that it should focus on the things that matter most to people.

NILGA views this draft Framework of nine Outcomes, as a critical first step. We are keen to assist in the Framework's development towards an ambitious and effective vision for the future, and are acutely aware that getting this right is key to everything that flows from it:

- Knowing how to measure success and where, as a society we currently are (baseline),
- Identifying partners who together can help achieve transformational improvements, and
- Learning and understanding what works well and what does not.

The Framework sets out draft wording for the Outcomes and incorporates some early thinking around what the key priority areas might be under each Outcome. NILGA concurs with the Department, in that it will be crucially important to get the wording (and **clear adherence** by all departments / partner bodies of this wording) of the Outcomes right, as they will provide the starting point for long-term strategic planning by the Executive, fully involving local government in strategies and actions moving forward.

NILGA strongly believes that a full review of competencies in our public sector is required as a priority, to match outcomes and impacts with fully qualified, suitably commissioned (e.g., from other sectors), trained/ re-trained and motivated personnel across the delivery teams. Modern capacity and competencies are crucial, and the co-ordination & delivery bodies must be in possession of both.

We welcome the learning from the pandemic that is in evidence throughout the document and the emphasis on "working collaboratively with those who have the skills, knowledge and expertise to bring about positive change and to get things done". This collaboration should also include resourcing. NILGA asserts that local government is well placed to collaborate with wider government on this basis, with the proviso that collaborative resourcing must follow – such as in regard to the 11 Community Plans, being very strong knowledge banks for what is needed across

NI, as well as engines for growth, social cohesion and environmental custody. ***The PfG must formally recognise and resource their value.***

NILGA reasserts that councils are a partner *in* not for government, locally as authorities and convenors, and regionally through NILGA itself, within the public sector, rather than categorised within civic society.

Council-led Community Planning Partnerships, as above mentioned, are a mechanism presently under exploited and under resourced, furthermore our City and Growth deals are mentioned several times in the document (although without mention of councils as a delivery lead). Councils should be more explicitly referenced as wording is vital to leadership, and local leadership is vital to the emerging PfG. This is of course commonplace in neighbouring jurisdictions so is not an exceptional “ask” but rather a significant “offer”.

NILGA supports the principles behind using an outcomes-based approach and the link with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and it welcomes the international approach to performance improvement brought by use of the SDGs. We also support the new PfG being a ‘living’ document, responsive to developing need for change and improvement, and trust that with additional consultation that ways to develop local government’s contribution to PfG, and councils’ sustainability, will be full and clear. As such, processes and criteria related to adapting the PfG and investing in it, must be modernised and proofed against adverse change, such as long-term emergencies, medical, climate, economic or otherwise, and collapse of institutions such as Stormont.

Supporting Strategies

NILGA will be offering comment as to inclusion of relevant policy and strategy under the nine outcomes, however it is highlighted that there are a number of ‘core’ strategic documents fundamental to supporting the Programme for Government, including the Investment Strategy, Economy Strategy and Anti-poverty/Social Strategy. NILGA welcomes the recognition of climate change as a key issue and is of the view that a Carbon Budget should now be made a core component of this suite of strategies, given the renewed focus on climate action expressed in the NDNA document, development of a Climate Change Bill notwithstanding.

- **OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE BEST START IN LIFE**

Although we note that pathways to employment are dealt with under the “everyone can reach their potential” outcome, NILGA would be keen to see inclusion of some wording here, similar to *“We want to ensure all our children and young people have access to the high-quality education*

they all deserve and are equipped with the skills to help them make the best life choices and to access employment opportunities.”

Key Priority Areas

NILGA is largely content with the Key Priority Areas as expressed but would be keen to see acknowledgement of the role of youth work within the document, particularly in relation to the “Capability and Resilience” heading.

- **WE LIVE AND WORK SUSTAINABLY – PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**

NILGA strongly welcomes the recognition of climate change as a key issue and is largely content with this section of the document.

Key Priority Areas

Although we strongly support the Circular Economy Strategy’s inclusion in the list of supporting strategies, we believe that more could be made of the role of the Department for Economy in relation to reuse and reprocessing of materials under the ‘waste management’ priority.

We would recommend that there is a pressing need to include an ammonia strategy in the strategy list, potentially adding action on ammonia and clean air – with resources given to those best placed to act on this priority.

We also note the need to review and contemporise the now out of date biodiversity strategy, so welcome the inclusion of biodiversity under the ‘natural environment’ priority.

- **WE HAVE AN EQUAL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY WHERE EVERYONE IS VALUED AND TREATED WITH RESPECT**

NILGA is largely content with this section of the document, with the identified priorities and with the list of supporting strategies.

- **WE ALL ENJOY LONG, HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIVES**

NILGA is largely content with this section of the document and with the list of supporting strategies.

Key Priority Areas

NILGA agrees with the Key Priority Areas as listed, but also notes the importance of outdoor activity, for the enhancement of mental and emotional wellbeing. This aspect could be drawn out more in the document as it is also noted that ‘access to open space’ is not included as a

priority under any of the outcomes. The recent pandemic experience would indicate that this is a greater priority than previously thought.

- **EVERYONE CAN REACH THEIR POTENTIAL**

NILGA is largely content with this section of the document and with the list of supporting strategies. The strong link with the “Our children and young people have the best start in life” outcome is noted.

Key Priorities

In terms of the ‘Better Jobs’ priority, NILGA would suggest that introducing entrepreneurship at an early stage in the education curriculum should be included within this priority since it has the capacity to inspire young people to take their future into their own hands. In addition, providing adequate childcare would be one step towards addressing economic inactivity.

The ‘Skills & Attainment’ priority must address the under supply of mid & high-level tier skills, particularly since the pandemic has reinforced this skills challenge. We welcome the support for vocational pathways and apprenticeships, which must have parity of esteem with academic qualifications, particularly to ensure inclusive workplaces.

NILGA would query the ‘Sports, Arts & Culture’ priority as described in the document. We welcome the inclusion of support for the creative industries and delivery for the arts, cultural and language sectors, but there is no mention of sport under this heading, nor any inclusion of sport in the supporting strategy list. We note the importance of physical activity within “We enjoy long, healthy active lives” outcome and the inclusion of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy in that section of the document, so the inclusion of sport here may have been an oversight. As a key investor in the sport and leisure sector, councils would support inclusion of sport (as an industry) under this outcome.

- **OUR ECONOMY IS GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE, REGIONALLY BALANCED AND CARBON-NEUTRAL**

NILGA is largely content with the identified priorities and with the list of supporting strategies.

We welcome the inclusion of sustainability as a principle for our economy within this outcome. It is now critically important for Northern Ireland to work towards carbon neutrality and to grow rapidly, the number of ‘green’ jobs and skills that will be necessary to achieve this.

NILGA welcomes the intent to ensure our food production is sustainable but has concerns in relation to the mechanisms to be used for increasing productivity, which could include increased intensification of livestock farming, thereby posing further risks to the environment. This will be a difficult dichotomy to address and efforts by many in the farming community to address carbon reduction which in turn makes our soil more fertile for crops, must be supported.

NILGA asserts that a radical re-think of food production to minimise imports, improve labelling, reduce food miles and instil further investment and pride in purchasing high quality, seasonal, local, Northern Ireland produce is critical to strategies and priorities.

Key Priorities

NILGA suggests that within the 'Competing Globally' priority, that rather than simply dealing with the outworking of the EU Exit Protocol, there is an opportunity to maximise the benefits of Northern Ireland's situation & unique status. A revised International Relations Strategy must be brought forward to enable full attainment of this priority.

NILGA welcomes the 'Green Economy' heading but we believe this section could be expanded to include mention of increasing the number of 'green jobs' and support for existing and start-up circular economy businesses. Incentivising industry to innovate should also be a focus of this priority.

In terms of the innovation priority, NILGA would suggest that forging links between industry, universities and colleges will be a critical success factor.

The Association is keen to see reduction as above mentioned, in 'food miles' associated with local food production and consumption, and therefore strongly welcomes the mention of 'improving resilience and supply chain integration' under the 'Food, Farming and Fishing' priority. Councils are already playing a successful role in this and this should be developed.

- **EVERYONE FEELS SAFE – WE ALL RESPECT THE LAW AND EACH OTHER**

NILGA supports this section of the document, with the identified priorities and with the list of supporting strategies; we recognise the strong links to the 'equal and inclusive society' outcome.

- **WE HAVE A CARING SOCIETY THAT SUPPORTS PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES**

NILGA is supportive of this section of the document, with the identified priorities and with the list of supporting strategies; we again recognise the strong links to the 'equal and inclusive society' outcome.

- **PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT HERE**

NILGA is largely content with this section of the document, with the identified priorities and with the list of supporting strategies. We particularly welcome the recognition of the impact the pandemic and the UK's departure from the EU have had and continue to have on life here for some years to come. However, NILGA would recommend that greater priority should be given to the tourism industry locally, through councils, in light of the impact the pandemic has had on the sector.

Key Priority Areas

We support the Executive in its aims to meet international environment standards and to build societal respect, recognising the importance this can have for attracting foreign investors.

We would assert that the 'Competing Globally' priority must ensure that medium and high skilled jobs are created in Northern Ireland, and that efforts must be made to ensure we optimise the potential for Northern Ireland from our inclusion in the European Single Market for goods.

In addition to digital access, encouraging investment in new technologies, processes and systems; and upskilling in digital technology must be a focus of the 'Growth' priority.

4.0 DELIVERY – BUILDING A 'PARTNERSHIP OF EQUALS' WITH COUNCILS

NILGA welcomes the approach the Executive is taking to developing a long term, multi-year strategic Programme for Government (PfG), that is:

- Developed through engagement and co-design, using an Outcomes-Based Approach,
- Focussed on prosperity and wellbeing for all,
- Establishing a shared and ambitious strategic vision for the future,
- Providing for accountable and transparent monitoring and reporting arrangements.

NILGA wishes to fully develop the recognition of the need to proactively respond to the dependencies that exist between different strands of public policy – based on the things that matter most to people (health, happiness and life satisfaction).

NILGA asserts that a fundamental transformation of societal development progress and public service improvement in the areas that matter most to people requires a radical shift in focus from ***"effort" to "impact"***. Delivering impact requires a whole societal approach, in which local government must be an equal partner, with the Assembly and with citizens' organisations throughout Northern Ireland. ***Both the need for this and its potential for achievement have been illustrated during the current pandemic context at a previously unheard-of pace.***

NILGA therefore requests that local government is fully involved in the development of cluster and cross cutting work associated with this draft PfG – in a partnership of equals with the nine

government departments. An equal partnership of this type demands intense engagement in the development and agreement of the policies in the PfG and associated workplans, not simply invitations to engagement exercises, road shows, implementation events and similar activities.

NILGA fully supports the emergence of high level strategic and operational engagement between council Chief Executives and other Senior Officers of councils, with Permanent Secretaries and other senior Civil Servants as part of the previous draft Programme for Government implementation and the subsequent alignment with local government community plans. It is to be regretted that such meaningful collaborative structures had to be scaled back when the Assembly collapsed, just as they were getting into their stride. NILGA urges the Executive Office, with SOLACE, to reinforce and reform – aligned to new PfG, post-Covid determinants – such engagement with strategic personnel in councils and all SROs, to enable integration, joint design of measurement and performance indicators as well as appropriate, proportionate, audit requirements as befits the draft PfG and the Outcomes Based Approach.

While the present (approximately) 95%/5% split between central and local government spend gives central government dominance in budget terms, the implementation of its policies depends greatly on willing and creative implementation at local level, so that the responsibility for the outcomes to be achieved is much more equally shared. So, too, should proportionate resources, with the current ratio being untenable and not an enabling model for PfG to be locally embedded.

Additionally, such work should be ***politically and democratically scrutinised and directed***, utilising existing statutory instruments; in particular, the Partnership Panel for N. Ireland, involving NILGA / council elected members, is crucial to ***leadership of and institutional investment*** in this transformed PfG.

NILGA's all council Executive, and Reform, Devolution and Improvement Policy & Learning Network should be utilised to enable political, corporate integration and shared communication, aligned to the work advocated above, between Perm Secs and Council Chiefs.

NILGA will also seek to engage regularly with the TEO Committee to enable review, scrutiny and performance discussions and significantly with all Ministers.

5.0 PATHWAYS TO OUTCOMES

Outcomes - Based Approaches

This part of our response will focus on the Outcomes-Based approach and will consider the challenges associated with ensuring coherence and alignment between outcomes and indicators, and potential ways of addressing these challenges.

It is widely accepted that population outcomes, such as the nine drafted in this consultation, are broad and aspirational, with more definition being provided by the indicators chosen to represent progress towards them. However, as discussed in NIAR 362-2020¹ while the indicators currently selected are relevant and valuable, when taken together they do not comprehensively capture progress towards the whole set of outcomes desired. It has to be recognised that indicators chosen for each outcome, valuable as they may be, will never precisely represent the full complexity and scope of that outcome. As discussed in NIAR 362-2020², there will always be a gap between an outcome and the indicator which represent it. However, the challenge is to ensure that this gap is kept as small as possible.

By way of example, NIAR 362-2020, considers Outcome 12 of the previous Outcomes Delivery Plan, 'We give our children and young people the best start in life.' This outcome, the paper explained does not provide any further detail. For instance, what is the upper age limit on 'young people'? What, definitively, constitutes the 'best start' for this population³?

The six indicators chosen to represent progress towards it are:

- % of babies born at low birth weight
- % of children at appropriate stage of development in immediate preschool year
- % of schools found to be good or better
- Gap between the percentage of Free School Meal eligible school leavers, and non-eligible school leavers, achieving at Level 2+ including English and Maths
- % school leavers achieving at Level 2 + including English and Maths

¹Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Library Services (Jan 2021) *Outcomes Based Accountability and the Programme for Government*.

² Ibid

³ Ibid

- % care leavers who, aged 19, were in education, training and employment

NILGA suggests that to overcome this gap between an outcome and the indicators that represent it, each of the population Outcomes in the draft Framework of Outcomes should be further analysed to map the different pathways by which that outcome might be achieved. The technique of drawing up 'Pathways to Outcomes' is a methodology which has been used extensively both internationally (e.g., the 'logical frameworks' of the World Bank) and in the UK (e.g., the 'theory of change' models which have been given much attention in UK government evaluations (see Bovaird, 2012)⁴.

NILGA respectfully asserts that traditionally there has been a focus on ***developing an analytical understanding of public service policy areas*** by breaking down or 'deconstructing' that policy area into the different parts of the underlying service system. Analysis is, of course, fundamental to understanding. However, it has severe limitations, and it is commendable that this is changing. A very different approach to understanding involves using synthesis, rather than just analysis. This requires building up to desired outcomes, not breaking down from those outcomes into lower-level activities; it involves 'constructing', not just 'deconstructing' – to gain an understanding of the whole system, not just of separate parts of the system. In measurement terms alone, this change in "what is successful?" has to be culturally embedded organisationally and learned for those applying the approach. Pathways to Outcomes represents a tried and tested technique incorporating both analysis and synthesis, enabling greater understanding of complex systems and therefore promoting coherence and alignment between outcomes and their indicators, at the higher level of policy, and the varied initiatives and interventions which constitute the practical levels of policy. NILGA welcomes the openness in the PfG framework to embrace different approaches to measurement.

A Pathways to Outcomes approach can help to reduce the gap between outcomes and the indicators chosen to demonstrate achievement of those outcomes. However, getting a better performance measurement system is not the whole story. If, as this draft PfG Framework of Outcomes suggests, the current role of the public sector in Northern Ireland is to improve wellbeing, as represented by the nine Outcomes proposed, then coherence and alignment in terms of action and impact are key. To do this, the architecture of the public service needs to be fully remodelled. ***Locality based modelling with councils as an axis between local people and wider policy & investment machinery***, is one tested means to that positive end.

⁴ Tony Bovaird (2012), "Attributing outcomes to social policy interventions – 'gold standard' or 'fool's gold' in public policy and management?" *Social Policy and Administration*, Vol. 48 (1): 1 – 23.

Understanding challenges by drawing up pathways to outcomes – a generic model

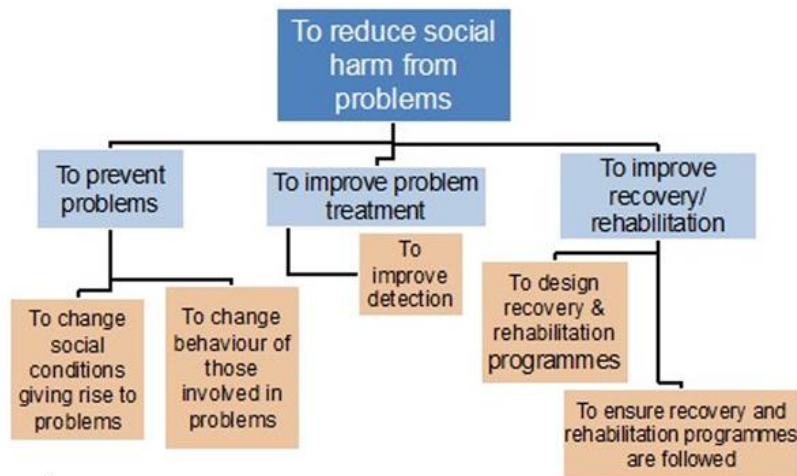


Figure 1:

The broad, aspirational nature of currently suggested Outcomes, together with the challenges posed by indicators which do not fully cover the aspirations embedded within those Outcomes, means we need to have an approach which recognises that we can never represent the full complexity and scope of each Outcome by **purely analytical** models. Therefore, the knowledge and the best efforts of all stakeholders can be incorporated into both the planning and implementation processes. This means achieving a ‘social’ approach to improving outcomes, beyond a ‘technical’ performance measurement approach, and it entails bringing in citizens and government’s partners. Without their experience and their ability to add to and see beyond the narrow analyses which emerge from performance measurement approaches, the Outcomes to which NI aspires are unlikely to be fully achieved. We look forward to further engagement with TEO, to discuss how this social process can be achieved more successfully in the future.

6.0 CONCLUSION

NILGA and councils are willing and able to work with wider government, business and the public to begin to meet the challenges outlined by the draft Outcomes Framework, and we look forward contributing to all further stages of drafting of the Programme for Government, and to its subsequent delivery and continued improvement.

NILGA requests that the outcomes of this consultation include material involvement by this Association, councils and wider local government in the actual PfG design, development and review, using the Association's Executive, wider membership and the Partnership Panel.

Disclaimer: *The Northern Ireland local government association (NILGA) endeavours to ensure that the information contained within our website, policies and other communications is up to date and correct. We do not, however, make any representation that the information will be accurate, current, complete, uninterrupted or error free or that any information or other material accessible from or related to NILGA is free of viruses or other harmful components. NILGA accepts no responsibility for any erroneous information placed by or on behalf of any user or any loss by any person or user resulting from such information.*



Subject:	Inclusive Growth - Social Value Policy
Date:	19th March 2021
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Christine Robinson, Head of Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Jamie Uprichard, Community Planning Officer

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"/>
Sometime 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 update the Committee on the work of the Social Policy Working Group and in particular steps to progress social value procurement within the Council.
2.0	Recommendations
	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree to write to the Department for Communities Minister and the Chair of the NI Assembly Committee for Communities asking for legislation to be brought forward to enable increased powers for local government to introduce social value in

	<p>procurement and requesting changes to be made to the existing 1992 Order as detailed in sections 3.5-3.7;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree the amended terms of reference (Appendix 2) and the re-naming of the group to the Social Policy Member Working Group; • Approve the minutes of the Social Policy Members Working Group of 23rd February (attached at Appendix 1).
3.0	Main report
3.1	In November 2020, members agreed to hold an initial workshop of the Social Value Members Working Group to lead the council's work in relation to social value. Following the initial meeting on 29th January, members agreed to amend the group's Terms of Reference to reflect the need demonstrate further ambition in relation to the council's inclusive growth aspirations (attached at appendix 2).
3.2	As part of the policy development journey to introduce social value procurement within the council officers developed a draft Social Value toolkit. The proposed toolkit provides a consistent approach to enable the measurement, monitoring and reporting of social value commitments within Council contracts and to, in as far as possible, deliver social value at scale. In developing the Toolkit, officers have built on the good practices already established in our procurement processes to support and develop our local supply base by ensuring improved awareness of opportunities, advice and guidance and removal of any barriers to tender.
3.3	<p>Our message to our supply chain is clear – we want to do business with suppliers who have a strong people, environmental and ethical focus within their business. To that end the Toolkit includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Selection Criteria</u> - This includes grounds for exclusions such as offences in relation to conspiracy, corruption, bribery, fraud etc. and compliance with Modern Slavery Act. These criteria are typically pass/fail minimum mandatory standards assessed at the tender evaluation stage and include: Ethical procurement policies and procedures; Environmental policies and procedures; and HR policies and procedures. • <u>Award Criteria</u> – These are additional interventions or actions that a supplier will deliver over and above the supply of the goods/services/works and have been linked to the outcomes set out in the Belfast Agenda.

3.4	What is permissible under procurement law, as selection and award criteria is not clear and impacted by the legislative picture in Northern Ireland. A Social Value Act was introduced in England and Wales in 2013 and in Scotland in 2014. It is essentially a requirement for the procurement of public services to <u>consider</u> wider social, economic, and environmental benefits. An equivalent Act, shaped to reflect the priorities of Northern Ireland has not yet been introduced.
3.5	Article 19 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 sets out restrictions on Council's freedom to consider various matters when procuring works or goods by declaring certain items 'non-commercial considerations' which can't be considered as part of a procurement process. A full briefing note regarding the legislative picture is at appendix 3.
3.6	The Article includes a provision for the Department to make an order to the effect that any matter shall cease to be a non-commercial consideration. The Department has already done this through the Local Government (Exclusion of Non-commercial Considerations) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. This 2015 Order has therefore removed one of the constraints that the 1992 Order placed on Councils and means that it is permissible now for the Council to ask Contractors to, for example, employ apprentices.
3.7	This does, however, still leave exclusions in force. This could prove a considerable bar to the Council, as it will prevent the Council, as an example, specifying it wants goods or services supplied by a local supplier. There is a relatively straightforward procedure available to the Department to make an Order similar to the 2015 Order removing this exclusion. If this could be done, it would greatly widen the available options for the Council in seeking to ensure social value for Belfast through its procurements.
3.8	<u>Resource Implications</u> There are no direct financial implication arising from this report.
3.9	<u>Equality Implications</u> There are no direct equality implications contained in this report.
4.0	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Minutes of the Social Policy Working Group of 23rd February Appendix 2 – Social Policy Working Group Terms of Reference Appendix 3 – Briefing on legislative position affecting council's social value procurement ambitions

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Social Value Working Group

Tuesday 23rd February, 2021

MEETING OF THE SOCIAL VALUE WORKING GROUP

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor O'Hara (Chairperson);
Aldermen Copeland and Kingston; and
Councillors Beattie, Heading and Kyle.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Development;
Ms. N. Bohill, Head of Commercial and Procurement
Services;
Mrs. L. Toland, Senior Manager, Economy;
Mr. C. Campbell, Divisional Solicitor;
Ms. C. Robinson, Strategy Policy and Partnership
Manager;
Ms. C. Hutchinson, Policy and Performance Analyst;
Mr. L. Murray, Strategic Category Manager;
Mr. M. Denny, Commercial Manager
Mr. R. Connelly, Policy, Research and Compliance Officer
Mr. J. Uprichard, Community Planning Officer;
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. K. McCrum, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported on behalf of the High Sherriff (Councillor Long).

Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed Alderman Kingston, who had replaced Alderman Dorrian, to his first meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 29th January were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Procurement 1992 Order Note

The City Solicitor drew the Members' attention to constraints within the Procurement 1992 Order which would impact upon the ambitions of the Council in terms of the development and implementation of progressive procurement, community wealth building and inclusive growth policies and practices. He also stressed the importance of implementing a Social Value Act.

The Members were advised that this legislative provision was unique to Local Government, meaning that councils were not subject to the same rules as other areas of government, therefore, making it difficult to compare what it was doing to government departments.

He also pointed out that these stipulations related to below threshold procurement and for anything over threshold, other rules applied, which were subject to change, given the Brexit situation. The Members were advised that the current thresholds provided significant scope in terms of procurement.

The Working Group endorsed the recommendation that a report be brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee seeking approval for an approach to be made to the Department of Finance requesting the removal of Article 19(4)(e) from the 1992 Order and reflecting the Council's ongoing support for the establishment of a Social Value Act.

The Working Group also agreed to request a briefing from the Department, alongside the Strategic Investment Board.

It was noted that the Strategy Policy and Partnership Manager had developed an Action Tracker to monitor decisions/actions taken by the Working Group and that it would be circulated following each meeting.

Revised Terms of Reference

The City Solicitor informed the Members that the Terms of Reference for the Working Group had been revised following suggestions made at the inaugural meeting on 29th January and recommended that they be approved as follows:

- To identify the communities / priority groups across the city that the Council and its partners will focus on. Setting an agreed framework for action that will flow through council investment and priorities;
- To develop the City Charter overseeing its design and delivery across the City;
- To oversee the creation of a robust and ambitious approach for the integration of social value through the Council's procurement processes, with consideration given to financial affordability, legal implications and the maximisation of impact;
- To develop a Social Value Procurement Framework aligned to the ambitions of the Council through the Belfast Agenda and Inclusive Growth Strategy;

- To move the Community Wealth Building agenda forwards, working with City Partners (anchor institutions) with an initial focus on procurement and commissioning;
- To build capacity and understanding across the Council and City partners on the benefits that a community wealth building approach can bring to a city and its region'
- To collate and consider good practice from other cities and local authorities from the UK, Ireland and internationally;
- To consider other actions, interventions which the Council may wish to take to build the city's economic and social resilience;
- To influence and contribute to regional considerations required to support the council's ambitions, including exploring opportunities for funding from external sources;
- To support the approval of policies and practices through council channels, engagement with external stakeholders and public consultation;
- To approve and monitor delivery of an implementation plan for the adopted approaches with consideration given to staffing and delivery resources, and effective mechanisms are in place to integrate, manage and measure impact;
- To consider public awareness campaigns which the Council may wish to deliver to achieve its ambitions; and
- To report on progress to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on a regular basis through reports and minutes of meetings.

The Working Group approved the revised Terms of Reference and agreed that its name be changed to the Social Policy Working Group in order to reflect its broader remit.

Social Value In Procurement

The Head of Commercial and Procurement Services provided the Working Group with a presentation on the following key points of the proposed Social Value Policy and associated toolkit:

Organisation Behaviours

Defined as behaviours that would be requested of suppliers who tender for Council work, the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services stated that the message would be clear, the Council wanted to do business with suppliers who have a strong people, environmental and ethical focus and, as such, behaviours would be categorised into 3 areas: Ethical Procurement, Environmental and HR policies and procedures.

The Strategic Category Manager provided information on a number of criteria under this heading, detailing a risk rating for each, based on value for money concerns, the likely burden on businesses and the possibility of legal challenge if they were widely implemented, taking procurement law and public sector best practice into consideration. The need to remain flexible in order to apply criteria appropriately was referenced.

With regards to asking suppliers to be Real Living Wage (RLW) accredited, or pay RLW as a minimum, it was recommended that this be built into the City Charter, rather than at the procurement stage, for a number of reasons, including the low number of accredited suppliers in Northern Ireland, the significant cost implications, and the potential for it to be viewed as anti-competitive under Public Contract regulation.

After discussion, primarily around how social value clauses could be enforced and cascaded to sub-contractors, the Working Group suggested that officers should seek information from Preston City Council, to ascertain how they managed the implementation of their social value procurement policies.

Social Value Weighting

The Head of Commercial and Procurement Services outlined the legislative context with regards to weighting of social value within procurement and provided a number of examples from the UK, noting that social value was not yet routinely used in Northern Ireland.

The Working Group was advised that, following an analysis of anticipated contracts in 2021/2022 with a value of over £250,000, approximately 45-50 (just under half) had been identified as being appropriate for social value weighting to be applied.

Following discussion, the Working Group accepted the recommendation that a social value weighting of between 5-10% be applied as a starting point.

Social Value Award Criteria

The Working Group was presented with a range of award criteria which had been developed using outcome statements from the Belfast Agenda, with initiatives being grouped into three themes, namely, employment opportunities/supporting employability, social opportunities and environmental initiatives, with points assigned to a range of measures within each theme.

The Head of Commercial and Procurement Services explained that the proposed toolkit would provide officers with a breakdown of the points required under each of these themes, depending upon the type of contract, the value, its duration and percentage of cost criteria.

She advised that, if the type of contract was "Goods" or the contract was less than twelve months then "Employment Opportunities" would require 0 points. If the contract was not Goods and the contract was longer than 12 months then "Other Social and Environmental" gets 50% of the Social Value (SV) Points allocation. If cost criteria was greater than 50% then SV% would be 5%. If the Cost Criteria was 50% or less then the SV% would be 10%.

The Working Group discussed the proposal and a Member questioned whether, with the SV% set at 5-10%, a contractor could be awarded work based on high

scores elsewhere in the criteria without the need to take on social value initiatives. A further Member questioned whether it was appropriate that environmental opportunities should score more than some employability and social opportunities, as was currently being proposed.

The Head of Commercial and Procurement clarified that the SV points for a number of the employability and social measures were per eight hour block so it was possible to multiply the points where initiatives exceeded this.

Following discussion, the Working Group approved the direction, as detailed within the presentation, and agreed that a Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) sense check to be carried out on the proposals.

City Charter

The Strategy Policy and Partnership Manager provided the Working Group with an update on the development of the Inclusive Growth City Charter for Belfast, which was designed to help ensure that business practices of organisations across the City supported inclusive growth. Engagement with stakeholders had, she pointed out, confirmed that the period of recovery as a result of Covid-19 presented a good opportunity to progress with the embedding of social clauses.

She explained that the Charter would involve three focus areas, namely, Inclusive Employment, Progressive Commissioning and Procurement and Supporting Your Community.

The Policy and Performance Analyst provided details around the engagement that had taken place to date, future engagement plans, the key takeaways from these discussions and the draft pledges within the Charter.

In discussing the matter, a Member suggested that the Charter should be marketed in the same way as the 'Scores on the Doors' food hygiene ratings in order to clearly present how socially invested businesses were.

The Strategy Policy and Partnership Manager agreed that it was important that the Charter was attractive and competitive and so branding and communications would be key, as would the 'hooks' that would be built in as incentives to sign up. She also confirmed that the Universities were involved via Community Planning.

The Working Group noted the progress in relation to the development of the Charter and agreed to hold a workshop in late March to discuss the proposed content, membership model and resources required for its implementation.

Procurement and Community Wealth Building

The Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Manager provided an update on the Council's work alongside the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and anchor institutions to progress work in relation to how procurement and commissioning could support local/community wealth building.

She explained that the work would be practical in nature and had been designed to instigate change in anchor institution behaviour around procurement, one of which

aimed to redirect wealth back into the local economy whilst ensuring value for money and compliance with all relevant legislative requirements.

The Working Group was advised that the Council would be engaged with the Universities, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Commissioning Board and Health and Social Care Trusts to encourage their buy-in.

The Working Group noted the report and agreed to hold a joint briefing session with CLES to consider in detail the Community Wealth Building approach and where this fitted into the existing policy and strategy framework of the Council.

Forward Work Plan

The Strategy Policy and Partnership Manager drew the Members' attention to the proposed work plan for the months ahead.

The Working Group agreed to meet again in March to review the social value framework and toolkit, and to discuss the City Charter content and implementation.

It was also agreed that climate ambitions and the role of procurement, living wage accreditation and identification of priority groups would be discussed in April.

Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group noted that its next meeting would be held remotely at 2.00p.m. on Tuesday, 30th March.

Chairperson

SOCIAL POLICY MEMBER WORKING GROUP

Terms of Reference

February 2021

1. Role and Responsibilities

The role of the Social Policy Member Working Group will be to act as a task and finish group responsible for making recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (SP&R) on the development and implementation of policies and practices that achieve Council's ambition of an inclusive city and promote community wealth building practices as the city recovers from the pandemic.

Through the group, officers and members will work collaboratively to 'problem solve' on substantive issues related to progressive procurement, community wealth building and the broader ambition of inclusive growth.

2. Terms of Reference

The Social Policy Member Working Group Terms of Reference will be to:

- Identify the communities / priority groups across the city that the council and its partners will focus on. Setting an agreed framework for action that will flow through council investment and priorities.
- Develop the City Charter overseeing its design and delivery across the City.
- Oversee the creation of a robust and ambitious approach for the integration of social value through the Council's procurement processes, with consideration given to financial affordability, legal implications and the maximisation of impact;
- Develop a Social Value Procurement Framework aligned to the ambitions of the Council through the Belfast Agenda and Inclusive Growth Strategy;
- Moving the Community Wealth Building agenda forwards, working with City Partners (anchor institutions) with an initial focus on procurement & commissioning;
- Building capacity and understanding across Council and City partners on the benefits that a community wealth building approach can bring to a city and its region.
- Collate and consider good practice from other cities and local authorities from the UK, Ireland and internationally;
- Consider other actions, interventions which the Council may wish to take to build the city's economic and social resilience;

- Influence and contribute to regional considerations required to support the council's ambitions, including exploring opportunities for funding from external sources;
- Support the approval of policies and practices through council channels, engagement with external stakeholders and public consultation;

- Approve and monitor delivery of an implementation plan for the adopted approaches with consideration given to staffing and delivery resources, and effective mechanisms are in place to integrate, manage and measure impact;
- Consider public awareness campaigns which the Council may wish to deliver to achieve its ambitions; and
- Report on progress to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on a regular basis through reports and minutes of meetings.

3. Membership

The Social Policy Working Group will comprise of one member from each of the political parties in the Council.

4. Chairperson

In line with the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee decision on 19th August 2016, a Chairperson will be appointed on an annual basis. This item of business will be placed on the agenda for the first meeting of each Working Group following the Annual Council meeting each year.

5. Frequency of meetings

The Social Policy Working Group will meet on a bi-monthly basis unless otherwise required.

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Appendix 3

Article 19 of the Local Government Northern Ireland) Order 1992 sets out restrictions on Council's freedom to consider various matter when procuring Works or Goods by declaring certain items 'non-commercial considerations' which can't be taken into account as part of a procurement process.

19.—(1) Subject to Articles 20[F1, 20A] and 21(1), every council shall, in exercising, in relation to its public supply or works contracts, any proposed or any subsisting such contract, as the case may be, any function regulated by this Article, exercise that function without reference to matters which are non-commercial matters for the purposes of this Article.

(2) The contracts which are public supply or works contracts for the purposes of this Article are contracts for the supply of goods or materials, for the supply of services or for the execution of works; but this Article does not apply in relation to contracts entered into before the coming into operation of this Article.

(3) The functions regulated by this Article are—

(a) the inclusion of persons in or the exclusion of persons from—

(i) any list of persons approved for the purposes of public supply or works contracts with the council, or

(ii) any list of persons from whom tenders for such contracts may be invited;

(b) in relation to a proposed public supply or works contract with the council—

(i) the inclusion of persons in or the exclusion of persons from the group of persons from whom tenders are invited,

(ii) the accepting or not accepting the submission of tenders for the contract,

(iii) the selecting of the person with whom to enter into the contract, or

(iv) the giving or withholding approval for, or the selecting or nominating, persons to be sub-contractors for the purposes of the contract; and

(c) in relation to a subsisting public supply or works contract with the council—

(i) the giving or withholding approval for, or the selecting or nominating, persons to be sub-contractors for the purposes of the contract, or

(ii) the termination of the contract.

(4) The following matters are non-commercial matters as regards the public supply or works contracts of a council, any proposed or any subsisting such contract, as the case may be, that is to say—

(a) the terms and conditions of employment by contractors of their workers or the composition of, the arrangements for the promotion, transfer or training of or the other opportunities afforded to, their workforces;

(b) whether the terms on which contractors contract with their sub-contractors constitute, in the case of contracts with individuals, contracts for the provision by them as self-employed persons of their services only;

(c) any involvement of the business activities or interests of contractors with irrelevant fields of Government policy;

(d) the conduct of contractors or workers in industrial disputes between them or any involvement of the business activities of contractors in industrial disputes between other persons;

(e) the country or territory of origin of supplies to, or the location in any country or territory of the business activities or interests of, contractors;

(f) any political, industrial or sectarian affiliations or interests of contractors or their directors, partners or employees;

(g) financial support or lack of financial support by contractors for any institution to or from which the council gives or withholds support.

(5) The matters specified in paragraph (4) include matters which have occurred in the past as well as matters which subsist when the function in question falls to be exercised.

(6) Where any matter referable to a contractor would, as a matter specified in paragraph (4), be a non-commercial matter in relation to him, the corresponding matter referable to—

(a) a supplier or customer of the contractor;

(b) a sub-contractor of the contractor or his supplier or customer;

(c) an associated body of the contractor or his supplier or customer; or

(d) a sub-contractor of an associated body of the contractor or his supplier or customer;

is also, in relation to the contractor, a non-commercial matter for the purposes of this Article.

[F2(7) The Department may by order provide, in relation to councils, for a specified matter to cease to be a non-commercial matter for the purposes of this Article.

(8) An order under paragraph (7) may—

(a) provide for a matter to cease to be a non-commercial matter for specified purposes or to a specified extent;

(b) apply in relation to specified councils, functions or contracts;

(c) amend a statutory provision;

(d) include supplementary, incidental, consequential and transitional provisions.

(9) No order shall be made under paragraph (7) unless a draft of the order has been laid before, and approved by resolution of, the Assembly.]

As can be seen, the definition of a public supplies contract includes contracts for both goods and services.

The list of matters that can't be taken into consideration are noted at paragraph (4).

The two subparagraphs that would serve as the greatest restriction for the Council in meeting its social value aspirations would be subparagraphs (4)(a) and 4(e).

4(a) would, for example, prevent the Council from asking potential contractors to take on apprentices, and 4(d) would prevent the Council from pursuing a buy local policy.

As you will note there is provision in the Article, at paragraph (7) for the Department to make an order to the effect that any matter shall cease to be a non-commercial consideration.

The Department has actually already done this through the Local Government (Exclusion of Non-commercial Considerations) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 which provided that Article 19(4)(a) of the 1992 Order and the conduct of contractors or workers in industrial disputes between them as specified in Article 19(4)(d) of that Order shall cease to be non-commercial matters for the purposes of Art 19.

This 2015 Order has therefore removed one of the constraints that the 1992 Order placed on Councils, and means that it is permissible now for the Council to ask Contractors to, for example, employ apprentices.

This does, however, leave the exclusion at (4)(e) in force. This could prove a considerable bar to the Council, as it will prevent the Council, as an example, specifying it wants goods or services supplied by a local supplier.

There is a relatively straightforward procedure available to the Department to make an Order similar to the 2015 Order removing this exclusion. If this could be done, it would greatly widen the available options for the Council in seeking to ensure social value for Belfast through its procurements.

There are a couple of additional points to make. This legislative provision is unique to Local Government, which means that we aren't subject to the same rules as other areas of government, making it difficult to compare what the Council is doing to other governmental departments. The second point is that this is all in relation to below threshold procurement. For anything over threshold other rules apply, that could make considerations different for larger value procurements. Up until Brexit that would have been the European procurement rules. For the moment, these have been replicated into UK law, but this could all change very quickly, as the UK seeks to impose its own rules.

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Subject:	Update on Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021 and 80th Anniversary of the Belfast Blitz
Date:	19 th March 2021
Reporting Officer:	Ryan Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Nicola Lane, Good Relations Manager, Sandra Robinson, Protocol and Public Affairs Manager, Eimear Henry, Senior Manager (Culture and Tourism)

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"/>
Sometime 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
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide an update on progress concerning the Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021; and - provide further information on how the Council can mark the 80th anniversary of the Belfast Blitz on 15th April 2021 in the context of Covid-19 restrictions.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. note that Council has received £87,700 from the Shared History Fund, which is being by distributed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund towards the Council's Decade of Centenaries Programme; ii. consider the proposals contained in the report to mark the 80th anniversary of the Belfast Blitz on 15th April 2021 with regard to the use of searchlights at City Hall and note the challenges in securing the use of the siren; iii. consider turning off the lights at City Hall on 15th April 2021, as referred to the Committee from the Council meeting on 1st March 2021; and iv. agree an amount of up to £800 towards the use of the searchlights/equipment on 15th April 2021.
3.0	Main Report
	<p><u>Decade of Centenaries Programme</u></p>
3.1	<p>At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19th February 2021, Members were advised that an application requesting £87,700 had been submitted to the Shared History Fund which is being distributed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The application was seeking funding for 4 projects which had been agreed by Council as part of the Decade of Centenaries Programme ; namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drama and animation programme in mid June 2021 - The restoration of the chairs in the Council Chamber, used by the King and Queen on the occasion of the inauguration of the NI Parliament in 1921 - A digitised artefacts and stories project related to 1921 and; - A time capsule project
3.2	<p>Members are advised that the Council's application to the Fund has been successful, with the full amount requested being granted. Officers have already began work on the implementation of these projects.</p>
3.3	<p>Members may wish to note that a panel discussion is being organized for March 26, from 12 noon – 2pm on the topic: <i>"100 Years of Northern Ireland; How Has It Gone?"</i> This event is being run by ND Events and Tara Mills from the BBC has agreed to be our moderator.</p> <p>The panel for this event will consist of the following:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lord Paul Bew, Chair of the Centenary Historical Advisory Panel ○ Professor Mary E. Daly, UCD and Royal Irish Academy ○ Professor Thomas Hennessey, Professor of Modern British and Irish History, Canterbury Christchurch University. ○ Dr. Marie Coleman, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queens University Belfast. ○ Dr. Seán Byers, Researcher at Trademark Belfast and author of a number of pieces on trade unions, economic and political strategies
3.4	<p>Each of the panel members have been asked to focus the topic from a particular angle. Registration for this event is here: https://ndevents.co.uk/bcccentenariesprogramme/</p> <p><u>80th Anniversary of the Belfast Blitz</u></p>
3.5	<p>At the last meeting of the Committee, Members agreed that in the current environment, and given that the Northern Ireland War Memorial (NIWM) are organising a range of creative activities including online lectures, work with schools, reminiscence projects which will reach a wider audience, Council would take the approach of supporting and promoting the programme in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to restrictions, the Lord Mayor will take part in the annual laying of wreaths ceremony at City Cemetery and Milltown Cemetery on 15th April, on behalf of Council if small gatherings are permitted. • Lord Mayor to launch and/or promote the activities being planned around the anniversary. • Council Communications Team will liaise with the NIWM to ensure we promote the events and Lord Mayor could record an appropriate message as part of this promotion. • The NI War Memorial is planning to deliver reminiscence resource packs to care homes to mark the 80th anniversary. Council will liaise with the Museum to publicise the activity packs and the Lord Mayor will be involved in some capacity to be determined.
3.6	<p>The Council also agreed to contribute up to £1,000 towards the printing costs of the school and care home packs.</p>
3.7	<p>Officers were asked to explore the possibility of including an air raid siren/searchlight within the programme and bring a report back to the Committee.</p>
Page 95	

3.8	The Council has engaged with War Years Remembered who had previously provided an air raid siren and a searchlight for the 75 th anniversary. However, while willing to be of help, at the time of writing, the organisation are not in a position to confirm if they can supply the equipment at this stage and Officers are still awaiting potential costs. The air raid siren which they previously supplied would only be heard in the environs of the City Hall grounds and the searchlight provided would not require permission from the Aviation Authority.
3.9	As a further option, officers have sourced a company which could provide two searchlights on the evening which could be seen across Belfast at a cost of £500. These would be more powerful than the previous searchlight used and would require that notice be given to the Aviation Authority.
3.10	In addition, at the March Council meeting, it was agreed that consideration would be given at the next meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to turning off the lights at the City Hall on 15th April to mark the anniversary.
3.11	Should Members approve the above action, the lights at City Hall could be turned off at an appropriate time and the searchlights be turned on for a period of time which would be a significant visual representation for the commemoration of the anniversary.
3.12	Members may wish to note that the NIWM are also in the process of producing a Blitz Walking Tour booklet which will contain QR codes where information about the Blitz can be downloaded and the tour includes the NIWM, St Anne's cathedral among others, with the tour finishing at City Hall. Copies of the booklet will be made available at the City Hall to enhance the visitor offering.
	<u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u>
3.13	There are no equality or good relations implications associated with this event.
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
3.14	£1,000 has already been agreed from existing budgets and up to an additional £800 could also be covered from existing budgets for the above occasion.
4.0	Documents Attached
	None