

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



**Belfast
City Council**

9th November, 2021

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will be a hybrid meeting, both in the Council Chamber and via Microsoft Teams, on Wednesday, 10th November, 2021 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest
- (d) Schedule of Meetings - 2022 (Pages 1 - 2)
- (e) Correspondence received from Minister Mallon (Pages 3 - 8)

2. Restricted Items

- (a) Update on Strategic Acquisition (Pages 9 - 14)
- (b) Vacant Premises Programme and Supporting Vibrant Business Destinations Programme (Pages 15 - 34)

3. Motions Referred from Standards and Business Committee

- (a) Motion - Tourism Street Signage (Pages 35 - 36)

4. **Regenerating Places & Improving Infrastructure**

- (a) Belfast Bikes - Equality Screening
- (b) A Bolder Vision Update (Pages 37 - 56)
- (c) City Centre Open Spaces (Pages 57 - 90)
- (d) High Street Task Force Call for Evidence (Pages 91 - 130)
- (e) DfC Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme Update (Pages 131 - 148)

5. **Strategic and Operational**

- (a) Notices of Motion - Quarterly Update (Pages 149 - 156)
- (b) City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan - Six Month Progress Report (Pages 157 - 182)



Subject:	Schedule of Meetings 2022
Date:	10th November, 2021
Reporting Officer:	Carolyn Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.
Contact Officer:	Carolyn Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To advise the Committee of the dates and times of the meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee during 2022.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to approve the schedule of meetings for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee during 2022; and 2. to note that Special Committee dates have also been scheduled, in order to receive presentations from outside bodies and that these would be arranged if required.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that the monthly meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee is normally held at 5.15 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. However, due to holiday periods and the timing of the monthly Council meetings and, in order to assist with the decision-making process, it has been necessary on occasions to move some of the meetings to earlier in the month.</p>

3.2	Accordingly, the following dates have been identified for monthly meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for the period from January to December, 2022:
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday, 12th January • Wednesday, 9th February • Wednesday, 9th March • Wednesday, 6th April • Wednesday, 11th May • Wednesday, 8th June • No meeting in July • Wednesday, 9th August • Wednesday, 14th September • Wednesday, 12th October • Wednesday, 8th November • Wednesday, 7th December <p>(All meetings will commence at 5.15 p.m.)</p> <p><u>Special Committee Meetings (Presentations)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday, 26th January • Wednesday, 23rd March • Wednesday, 27th April • Wednesday, 22nd June • Wednesday, 28th September • Wednesday, 26th October <p>(All meetings will commence at 5.15 p.m.)</p> <p>The City Growth and Regeneration Committee had previously agreed, at its meeting on 11th November 2015, to hold regular strategic meetings in order to receive presentations from outside bodies.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None associated with this report.</p>
3.5	
3.6	
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>



Subject:	Motion: York Street Interchange – Response from Minister for Infrastructure
Date:	10th November, 2021
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Carolyn Donnelly, Democratic Services 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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider a response to a motion re York Street Interchange – Request to Share Independent Assurance Report which was passed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the response and take such action thereon as may be determined.

3.0	Main Report
	<p data-bbox="272 219 432 253"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="272 271 1497 353">3.1 The Council, at its meeting on 4th October, passed the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor O'Hara and seconded by Councillor McAllister:</p> <p data-bbox="368 421 1390 712">“This Council notes that it is currently corporately committed to supporting the York Street Interchange project. This decision was made before this Council declared a climate emergency; before the NI Assembly declared a climate emergency and before the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Report published in August 2021, which was a 'Code Red' warning for humanity.</p> <p data-bbox="368 779 1390 1070">Belfast City Council is a key stakeholder in the York Street Interchange Project and sits on the Strategic Advisory Group for the York Street Interchange. We call on the Minister for Infrastructure to immediately share the Independent Assurance Review of the York Street Interchange with Belfast City Council. This will allow us to make an informed decision on whether we as a Council continue with our corporate support for this project.”</p> <p data-bbox="272 1126 1497 1216">3.2 A response has been received from the Minister for Infrastructure, a copy of which is attached (Appendix 1).</p> <p data-bbox="272 1283 1497 1888">3.3 The Minister states the Independent Assurance Review of the York Street Interchange Scheme was carried out to provide the Minister with assurance on how the proposed scheme reflects her key Ministerial priorities and both Executive and Belfast City Council objectives, in particular</p> <ul data-bbox="331 1485 1422 1888" style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister's priorities around focus on wellbeing, sustainable travel, creating thriving liveable places and communities, responding to the climate emergency and connecting people and opportunities; • The Executive's priorities set out in New Decade: New Approach and the Outcomes Delivery Plan; and • The scheme's strategic fit alongside the emerging policy context, for example, the Belfast Agenda, the Belfast City Council Development Plan Strategy and the emerging Transport Plans <p data-bbox="272 1944 1497 2033">3.4 The Minister also made clear the need to engage with local key stakeholders as part of this review.</p>

3.5	The Minister explained that she is not able to publish the report in accordance with Department of Finance guidance contained within DAO 02/20 (Section 8).
3.6	She stated that reviews must include frank and open exchanges with all of the interviewees and it is likely that interviewees would be much more guarded with their comment and less willing to share and express their views and information with the review team, if there was the expectation that future reports were to be published. Consequently this might potentially undermine the value of such reviews.
3.7	The further work which is being carried out to address the recommendations from the Independent Assurance Review which includes a placemaking and active travel review, is now well advanced and due to be completed in the coming weeks. The Minister will consider the report before deciding on the next steps for the scheme.
3.8	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Document Attached
	Appendix 1: Response from Minister for Infrastructure

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Department for

Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

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**From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure
Nichola Mallon MLA**

Ms Louise McLornan
Democratic Services Officer
Belfast City Council
Legal and Civic Services Department
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

Room 708
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Telephone: (028) 9054 0540
Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference: LM 04.10.2021
Our reference: CORR-1739-2021
29th October 2021

Dear Ms McLornan

YORK STREET INTERCHANGE – REQUEST TO SHARE INDEPENDENT ASSURANCE REVIEW REPORT

Thank you for your letter of 14 October 2021 to Minister Mallon on behalf of Belfast City Council, regarding the report generated from the recent York Street Interchange Independent Assurance Review. The Minister has read and considered the motion passed at the Belfast City Council meeting on 4 October 2021.

The Independent Assurance Review of the York Street Interchange scheme was carried out to provide the Minister with assurance on how the proposed scheme reflects her key Ministerial priorities and both Executive and Belfast City Council objectives, in particular:

- The Minister's priorities around focus on wellbeing, sustainable travel, creating thriving liveable places and communities, responding to the climate emergency and connecting people and opportunities;
- The Executive's priorities set out in New Decade: New Approach and the Outcomes Delivery Plan; and
- The scheme's strategic fit alongside the emerging policy context, for example, the Belfast Agenda, the Belfast City Council Development Plan Strategy and the emerging Transport Plans.

She also made clear the need to engage with local key stakeholders as part of this review.

You will be aware of my reply to your colleague Ms McGoldrick on 17 June 2021, on behalf of the Minister, when I explained that the Minister is not able to publish the report in accordance with Department of Finance guidance contained within DAO 02/20 (Section 8)

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dfp/DAOf0220att.pdf>.

Reviews must include frank and open exchanges with all of the interviewees and it is likely that interviewees would be much more guarded with their comments and less

willing to share express their views and information with the review team, if there was the expectation that future reports were to be published. Consequently this might potentially undermine the value of such reviews.

The further work which is being carried out to address the recommendations from the Independent Assurance Review which includes a placemaking and active travel review, is now well advanced and due to be completed in the coming weeks. The Minister will consider the report before deciding on the next steps for the scheme.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K MCFERRAN', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

KATHRYN MCFERRAN
Private Secretary to the Minister

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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Belfast
City Council

CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION
COMMITTEE

Subject:	Motion – Tourism Street Signage
Date:	10th November, 2021
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director of Planning and Place
Contact Officer:	Carolyn Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
	To bring to the Committee's attention a motion in relation to Tourism Street Signage, which was referred to the Committee by the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 26th October.
2.0	Recommendations
	The Committee is asked to consider the motion and, if the proposal is agreed, a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.
3.0	Main report
	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>At its meeting on 26th October, 2021, the Standards and Business Committee considered a report in relation to Notices of Motion, which had been received for consideration by the Council at its meeting on 1st November.</p>

	<p>In accordance with Standing Order 37(h), the undernoted motion, proposed by Councillor Long, under the heading “Tourism Street Signage”, was referred directly to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for consideration.</p> <p><u>Tourism Street Signage</u></p> <p>“This Council calls for the erection of street signage in the city centre to mark the location of important historical events related to the 'Belfast Enlightenment' period of our shared history in the late 18th Century. The aim is to encourage increased footfall in the city centre and improve the tourist offering. This Council will work with other relevant agencies to develop this strategy.”</p> <p>Proposer: Councillor Long Seconder: Councillor McMullan</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>This Notice of Motion, if agreed, may have potential equality, good relations and rural needs implications and should be subject to our normal screening process as appropriate.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None.



Subject:	A Bolder Vision Update
Date:	10 November 2021
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and Development
Contact Officers:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager Callie Persic, Connectivity Lead 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"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To outline for Members the key aspects of A Bolder Vision (ABV), including the proposed four Key Moves, the engagement programme, feedback from the consultation to date and the indicative timelines.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bolder Vision consultation material and the proposed Key Moves and potential short and longer term interventions. The consultation activity; feedback to date and associated issues in relation to further engagement, timeframes and delivery. A key objective of the Bolder Vision is to enable key design decisions to be made on the city's emerging strategic capital and infrastructure projects as well as informing major

	<p>private and public sector regeneration schemes and sustainable and active travel networks. It aims to strengthen and support the diversification of the city centre and enable improved connectivity with surrounding communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the Bolder Vision process progresses and interventions are refined and developed, consideration will need to be given as to how the Council and other partners can prioritise funding opportunities and align corporate priorities and programmes against the Bolder Vision Strategy and subsequent action plan. • The Bolder Vision provides the foundation for the emerging wider city connectivity programme that seeks to address the need to improve connectivity and active travel right across the city. To note also that Connectivity and Active Travel have been identified in the Community Planning Partnership: City Development Board as a key priority.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>A Bolder Vision Consultation document</p> <p>As Members will be aware A Bolder Vision – Connectivity Study has been developed jointly between Council, Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure. At the 8th September 2021 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, Members received an update on the Bolder Vision pre-engagement activity, overview of the emerging issues and details on the public consultation. In the interim period before the finalisation of the current Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan the Bolder Vision aims to provide a holistic look at the city centre's infrastructure and connections to neighbouring communities from a people and place based priority.</p>
3.2	<p>A key objective is to enable key design decisions to be made from a city user perspective on the city's emerging strategic capital programmes such as BRT Phase 2, Belfast Streets Ahead 3 & 5, the Inner Ring Junctions, as well as informing major regeneration schemes such as Weavers Cross and the Transport Hub, private and public sector developments including housing led regeneration projects and the sustainable and active travel network. The Bolder Vision also aims to bring forward area based infrastructure planning. This will strengthen and support the diversification of the city centre reflecting the changing nature of retail, the development of sustainable and inclusive city centre communities and increased city centre living; tourism and cultural development and improved connectivity with surrounding communities.</p>
3.3	<p>As previously advised to Committee, the public consultation document was influenced by five thematic co-design workshops including a large, cross-sector session that involved Vienna's former Vice Mayor, who led the transformation agenda in the city. A range of follow up meetings were</p>

	also held with key stakeholders including IMTAC, Transport Hub, Translink, Belfast Harbour, Chamber, INI, Arts Council NI, Developers' Forum, NI Water and the BIDs and council departments.
3.4	This input from stakeholders, coupled with analysis of the opportunities emerging from large infrastructure projects, ongoing strategic alignment across local and central government, and best practice was the basis of the proposed four Key Moves and supporting interventions outlined in the public consultation document (Appendix 1). After securing DfC and DfI Ministerial approval, the consultation was launched by the Lord Mayor, DfC and DfI Ministers on 30 September and will run until 23 December 2021.
3.5	<p>A Bolder Vision Proposed Key Moves for transformation</p> <p>A Bolder Vision has identified a number of proposed 'Key Moves' to deliver radical change. These are underpinned with proposed short and long-term interventions that would support transformation in critical parts of the city to create a green, people focused, connected city centre for current and future users. The consultation will however seek the view of consultees as to other potential short, medium and long term interventions. Further details on these interventions and the proposed Key Moves are provided in Appendix 1 of this report. The proposed Key Moves are:</p>
3.6	<p><i>1. Create a Civic Spine with a focus on people</i></p> <p>Establish a clearly defined and recognisable strategic north-south Civic Spine, connecting the Ulster University and York Street Interchange through the heart of the city to Queen's University via Botanic Avenue. The Civic Spine would be reconfigured to prioritise space for people and support effective access by public transport while enabling the introduction of green spaces for a diverse, inclusive, future-proofed and vibrant city centre.</p>
3.7	<p><i>2. Reimagine the Inner Ring Road and end Car Dominance</i></p> <p>Transform the Inner Ring Road to reduce physical severance for surrounding communities and become a sustainable mobility corridor. To do this, the Inner Ring should be reconfigured to accommodate high priority public transport services (such as BRT2) as well as fully segregated and green infrastructure for walking, wheeling, and cycling.</p>
3.8	<p><i>3. Promote City Centre Living</i></p> <p>Encourage city centre living by providing greater quality, choice, and affordability of accommodation, to create a shared and inclusive environment. Establish a city-wide network of</p>

	people friendly routes, community focus streets, incorporating city parks and connections to opportunities for play, interaction, rest, and leisure.
3.9	<p><i>4. Embrace the River Lagan and Waterfront</i></p> <p>Capitalise on one of the city's most defining, but underused assets, the River Lagan, by strengthening connections from the city centre to the east and its surrounding communities – enhancing connectivity across and around the River Lagan.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Stakeholder engagement and feedback</u></p> <p>Council is hosting the online survey on the Engagement HQ platform with DfI and DfC linking to this on their respective consultation sites. A key feature is the Virtual Room that provides boards with information on the background, Key Moves, other supporting capital projects and strategies, timeframe and contact details. Copies of the consultation material, case studies, Frequently Asked Questions are also available to download. It will continue to be pushed through the various BCC Corporate Communications channels and DfC and DfI platforms.</p>
3.11	Whilst engagement will mainly take place online, there is also an extensive programme of in-person and virtual meetings organised throughout the consultation to gain holistic feed back on the proposed interventions, and to take on board additional recommendations to ensure that the final document is representative of the needs of the city centre business, transportation, community, visitor and user perspective.
3.12	Specifically, there is targeted engagement with partnership bodies that have a wide membership and reach and can disseminate information and host engagement sessions including Belfast Chamber, BIDs, Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships, Area Partnerships, Community Planning Partnership and Boards, disability groups, cultural groups, City Reopening Group, QUB, UU and the Community Campus Regeneration Forum, professional bodies, representatives from tourism and active travel sectors and various BCC internal staff networks including the Women's Network, PROUD and ABLE networks. Officers have also reached out to Council fora such as the Shared City Partnership, Migrant Forum, Greater Belfast Seniors' Forum, Equality Consultative Forum, among others. There will also be focused engagement with different elements of DfI (e.g. Section offices, Active Travel), Translink and DfC (including public realm, MAG, housing and HED).
3.13	Feedback from these sessions will be added to the online public consultation survey which asks the public to comment to what extent they agree or disagree with the proposed Key Moves, the

	<p>short and long term interventions and provide any additional comments or suggestions on these. Within the survey we also asked people to drop a pin into a map to identify their favourite place in Belfast and tell us why.</p>
3.14	<p>To date, feedback is largely positive and supportive. This is, in part, a result of ongoing engagement with key civic stakeholders since the completion of Phase 1 and the use of the Visioning Principles to guide recovery interventions that kept a focus on the wider strategic context of the changing city centre landscape and opportunities for transformation. Officers are closely monitoring the feedback and weekly reports are sent to Jacobs (specialist consultants assisting Council, DfC and DfI) so that they can consider the material on a rolling basis. Jacobs will develop a Post-Consultation report that will provide an overview of the feedback and submissions, and detail the engagement and communications undertaken.</p>
3.15	<p>As of 26 October, there has been 344 responses to the online consultation and 2,200 views of the site and 98.5% of responses have been from individuals. The feedback on the proposed Key Moves indicates strong support for the proposals:</p>
3.16	<p><u>Key Move 1: Create Civic Spine with focus on people</u></p> <p>66.6% Strongly agreed 25% Agree somewhat 3.2% Neither agree nor disagree 2.9% Disagree somewhat 2.3% Strongly disagree</p>
3.17	<p><u>Key Move 2: Reimagine the inner ring road and end car dominance</u></p> <p>70.6% Strongly agreed 18.6% Agree somewhat 4.4% Neither agree nor disagree 2.6% Disagree somewhat 3.8% Strongly disagree</p>
3.18	<p><u>Key Move 3: Promote City Centre Living</u></p> <p>75.9% Strongly agreed 17.7% Agree somewhat 4.7% Neither agree nor disagree 0.9% Disagree somewhat</p>

	0.9% Strongly disagree
3.19	<p><u>Key Move 4: Embrace the River Lagan and Waterfront</u></p> <p>85.8% Strongly agree</p> <p>11.6% Agree somewhat</p> <p>1.8% Neither agree nor disagree</p> <p>0.3% Disagree somewhat</p> <p>0.6% Strongly disagree</p>
3.20	<p>In addition, a number specific suggestions have come through the survey which will also be taken into consideration when carrying out the Multi-Criteria Analysis to assess the social, economic and environmental impact of the interventions prior to making the final recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce speed limits in the Belfast metro area to 15pmh • Charging zones for polluting vehicles • No idle zones • Meanwhile use and social enterprise economic zones • Superblocks • Stitch over the grey river. Westlink is the largest economic barrier in the city; add resilience with multiple routes
3.21	<p>Targeted engagement will continue throughout November and December and it is envisaged that this will raise and highlight specific geographic areas and proposed interventions e.g. Linen Quarter Sustainable District, the INW Regeneration Framework etc. Feedback from presentations carried out to date to groups also indicate support for the Vision and flagged up specific issues e.g. opportunities for enhanced connectivity with neighbouring communities including Sailortown, TQ area, Carrickhill etc; Durham Street and the need for connectivity to the city within Weaver's Cross development; dereliction around Shaftesbury Square; opportunities for public spaces such as Backstaff Square and opportunities to better link and connect our public spaces.</p>
3.22	<p><u>Timeframe and delivery</u></p> <p>The programme timeline is intensive, and will require ongoing updates and approvals to keep Members, Ministers, Chief Officers and Permanent Secretaries updated. The indicative timeframe and dates are set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation Close: 23rd December 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of emerging interventions: Dec 2021 – Jan 2022 • Review, collate & analyse consultation response: Jan 2022 • Draft Document for sign-off: March 2022 • Finalise and publish document: April 2022 • Identify funding streams & delivery of Interventions: April 2022 – Dec 2026
3.23	Jacobs is aware that ABV interventions need to be both deliverable and aspirational to deliver the effective change that is required to meet our Resilience and Climate targets, which will be at the heart of the Bolder Vision work. Taking into account the major investment opportunities outlined in section 3.1 of this report a focus of ABV is to help shape these major schemes in line with the Bolder Vision principles/key moves but also to identify additional catalyst schemes and interventions that can be delivered at pace, and that can be delivered through joint public/private sector delivery.
3.24	The Innovation & Growth Commission's report 'Reset for Growth' highlighted that a Bolder Vision was fundamental to creating a connected and animated city core. A key proposition within the report was the delivery of key commitments in the Bolder Vision by 2026. It referenced the need to invest in significant transformational interventions arising from ABV, as well as the importance of wider city to community connectivity. In order to accelerate delivery it highlighted the need to establish a long-term city revitalisation programme to support active travel, pedestrianisation and green spaces and that the delivery of the Bolder Vision should be supported by a three year joint funding programme (BCC/DfI/DfC) to accelerate delivery.
3.25	As projects and interventions are refined and developed as the ABV process progresses, consideration will also need to be given as to how the Council and other partners can identify or prioritise funding opportunities and align corporate priorities and programmes against the Bolder Vision Strategy and subsequent action plan.
3.26	<p>Wider City Connectivity Programme</p> <p>ABV provides the foundation for the emerging wider city connectivity programme that seeks to address the need to improve connectivity and active travel from and to the city core right across the city and provide access for communities to key destinations and facilities, including the Belfast Hills. This connectivity programme links into ongoing work across Council and a number of other bodies including DfI, DfC, the private sector, Translink etc. It includes for e.g. DfI's Strategic Cycle Network; active travel and place-making initiatives that address barriers and improve</p>

	connections and capital projects such as greenways. It also aligns with the emerging proposals for the 'Belfast Urban Greenway' (BUG) Initiative, as previously reported to this Committee in October 2020 and August 2021. The BUG will seek to enhance connectivity to and from the city centre and create an urban greenway concept through the city centre.
3.27	Members will also be aware through previous reports (most recently reported in October 2021) that the thematic area of access, connectivity and active travel have been identified in the Community Planning Partnership and the City Development Board as a key priority. The City Development Board has representation across key stakeholders relevant to access, connectivity and active travel including DfI, DfC, Sustrans, Translink, SIB, VCSE, private sector etc. A workshop focused on reinvigorating the Board and shaping and influencing the refresh of the Belfast Agenda is planned for 19 November. The key focus will be on agreeing a collective position on the city's priorities and identification of gaps and opportunities for collaboration that will inform the future action plan. This will also provide an opportunity to bring a cohesive approach this cross cutting area of connectivity and active travel.
3.28	<p><u>Governance</u></p> <p>The Oversight Group established in Phase 1 consisted of the BCC Chief Executive and the Permanent Secretaries from DfI and DfC. This has continued and provides oversight and decision making for strategic direction at key milestones. Within this structure, the Permanent Secretaries and Chief Executive would escalate decisions to the Ministers and Members for final approval.</p> <p>As part of the ongoing engagement between BCC/DfC/DfI a meeting with the Ministers and the Lord Mayor, CX and senior Council officers is planned to take place in City Hall with a view to discussing strategic infrastructure, regeneration and connectivity schemes that impact on ABV.</p> <p>Regular reports will continue to be brought via the City Growth and Regeneration Committee and political engagement will also be held via the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum. Engagement with the Forum is scheduled for November and mid-February.</p>
3.29	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.30	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report, however, an EQIA Screening will be carried out on the Strategy.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	Appendix 1: ABV Consultation Brochure

A BOLDER VISION FOR BELFAST

Public Consultation

30th September - 23rd December 2021



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Department for
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open
optimised environments

Jacobs

JOINED UP VISION FOR BELFAST

Belfast City Centre is changing. A Bolder Vision is our approach for a progressive, re-imagined Belfast City Centre that is greener, walkable and connected. Improving connectivity is always important and this taken on a new relevance and urgency to collectively work to build a cleaner, stronger and more resilient city. At its heart, A Bolder Vision is creating a people-focused Belfast.

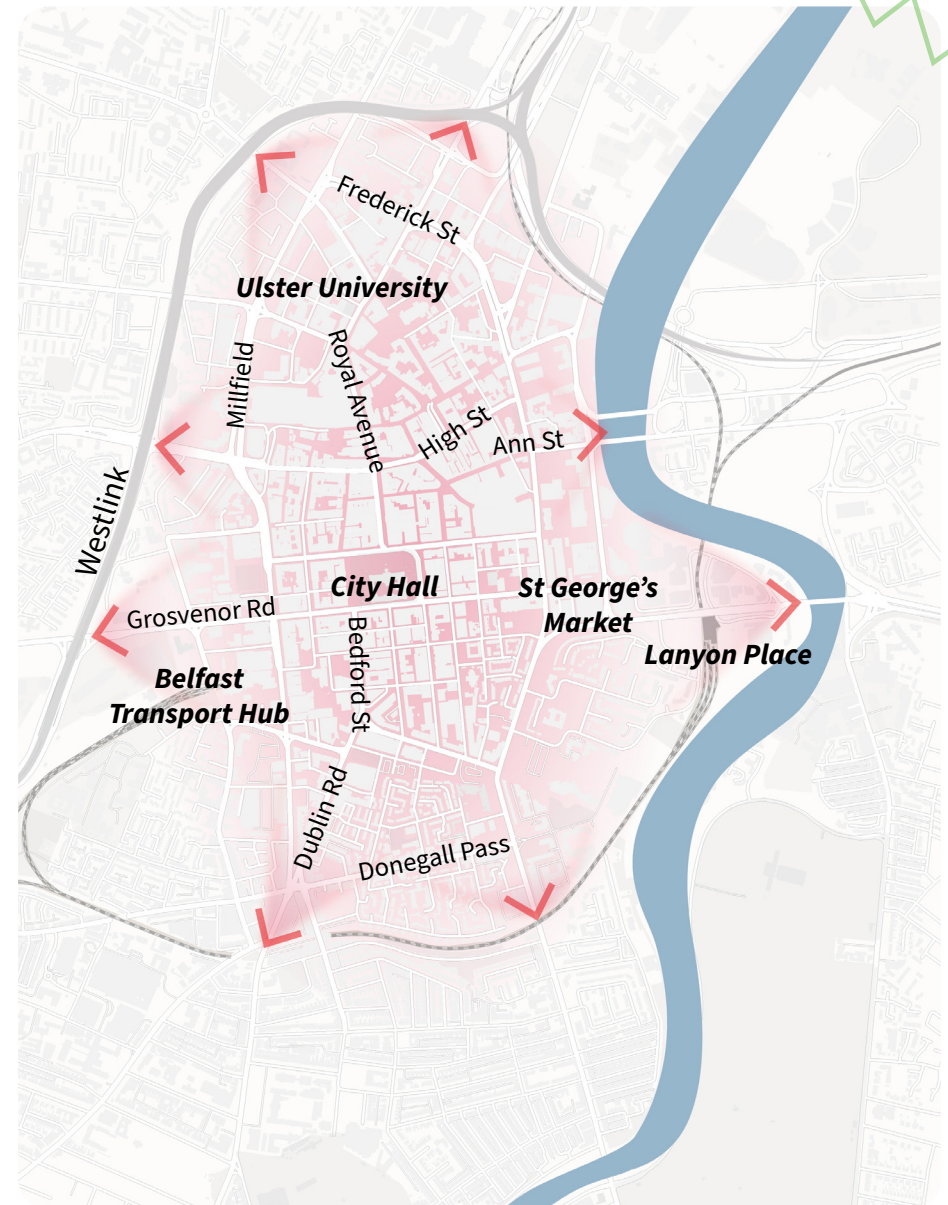
Ulster University is opening its new campus, there is growing demand for city centre living and increased leisure provision across the city centre. It is vital that we plan our infrastructure to shape the city for its future users. We must overcome historical issues including severance and barriers to movement that are still very prevalent today.

A number of strategically important projects will be delivered in the next few years, including vital public sector projects such as the Belfast Region City Deal with Innovation and SMART districts, Belfast Transport Hub, Belfast Streets Ahead 3 and 5, Belfast Rapid Transit 2, Cultural Strategy, Belfast Destination Hub and York Street Interchange.

It is important that Belfast captures these opportunities to ensure projects are fully integrated and support the needs of the city's changing user base. This will help create an accessible, inclusive city ready to address the challenges of climate change and other shocks or stresses.

In August 2019, Belfast City Council (BCC), the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Department for Communities (DfC) completed '**A Bolder Vision (ABV) for Belfast**' for a shared vision of the city centre. This next step is to develop a strategy to inform and strengthen proposed projects and actions and set out new bold interventions across the city centre. Bolder Vision for Belfast will provide the mechanism for a more united approach across planning, transport and regeneration.

A Bolder Vision is our blueprint for moving forward and will guide our future infrastructure investment decisions that are ambitious yet deliverable. This is a shared vision for BCC, DfC and DfI but it will require everyone to work together, make changes and collectively rise to the challenge. Together we can build a Belfast that addresses the climate emergency and builds sustainable places that supports the health and well-being of all our people now and in the future.



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A Bolder Vision for Belfast reflects the overwhelming recognition that change needs to happen to ensure economic and environmental resilience is embedded within the liveability and mobility landscape of Belfast as a capital city of today and of the future. This Bolder Vision is the continuation of a journey for the city, initiated with the Belfast Agenda and strengthened by recent policies and strategies focusing on the centre of Belfast in 2035.

Bolder Vision is underpinned by eight Themes for Change that have led to the four Visioning Principles which will see Belfast city centre by 2035 as:

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2

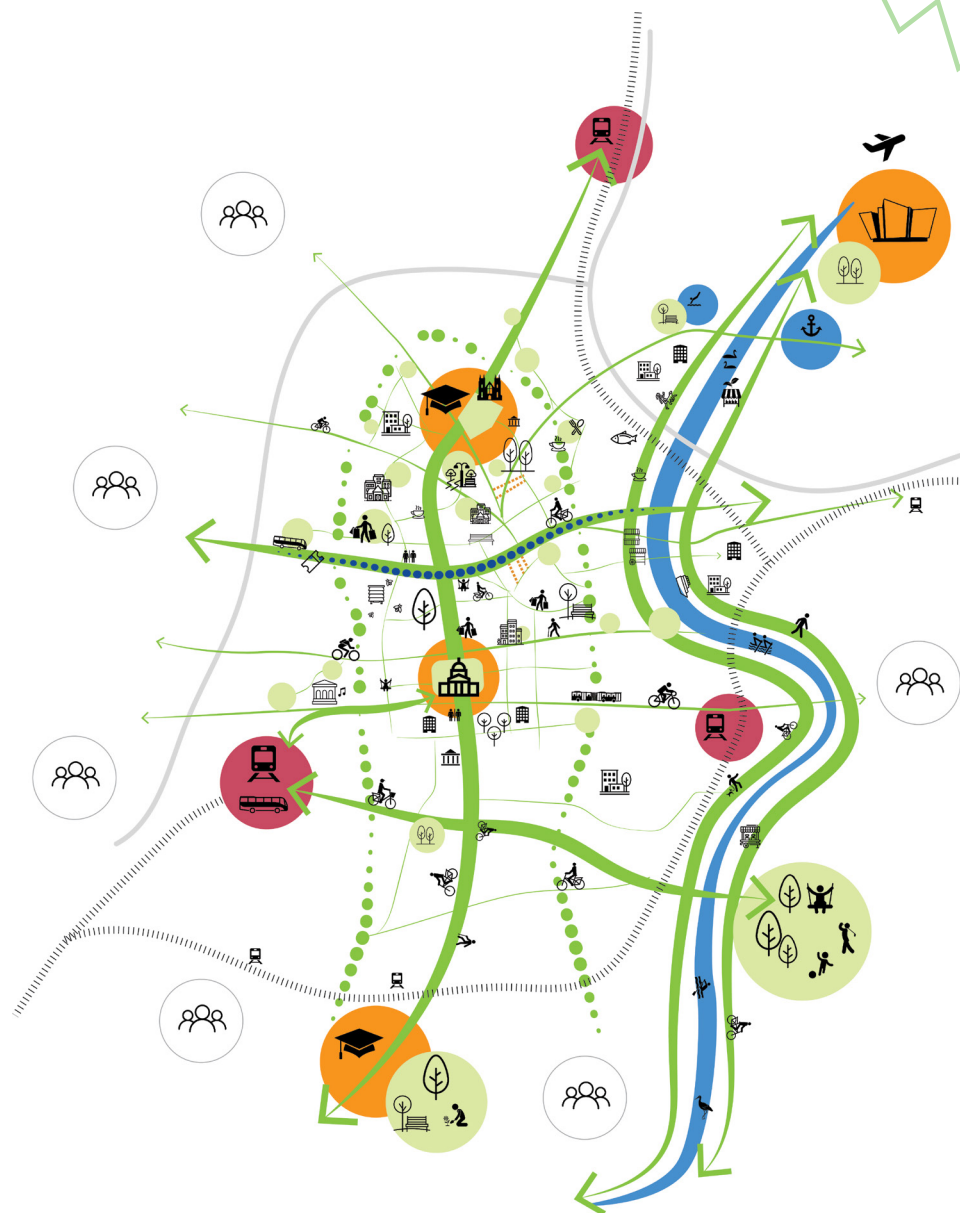
Creating a healthy, shared, vibrant and sustainable environment that promotes wellbeing for all, inclusive growth and innovation.

3

Providing lively, safe and green streets linking inclusive shared spaces to promote resilience and enhance our built heritage.

4

Removing severance and barriers to movement between the centre of Belfast and the surrounding communities to improve access for all.



OPPORTUNITY AREAS TO DELIVER TRANSFORMATION

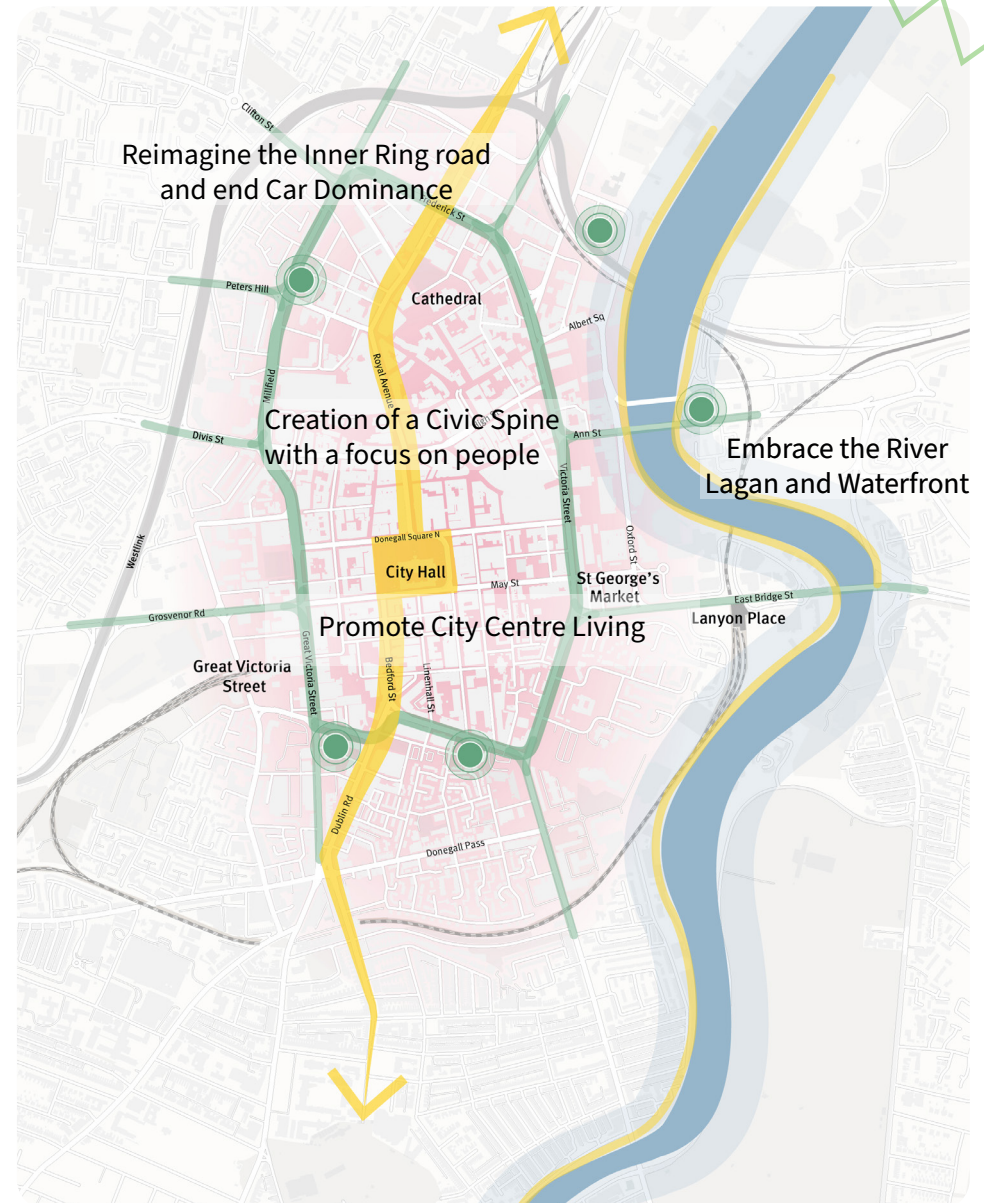
Bolder Vision has identified a number of 'key moves' to deliver transformational change. These key moves can help deliver the new interventions proposed whilst ensuring the right decisions are made for major capital investment schemes and other important projects. Each Key Move groups a number of interventions in critical parts of the city to create a green, people focused, connected city centre for current and future users.

The associated opportunity areas of each key move relate and interface with the major ongoing capital projects in the city. It is critical to understand what the potential of these areas is to inform the delivery of these schemes to safeguard a city centre for all in the future.

The Key Moves are:

- Creation of a Civic Spine with a Focus on People
- Reimagine the Inner Ring Road and End Car Dominance
- Promote City Centre Living
- Embrace the River Lagan and Waterfront

More detail on the Key Moves can be found on the following pages of this brochure.



WHAT IS THE CONSULTATION ABOUT?



Creation of a Civic Spine with a Focus on People

Establish a clearly defined and recognisable strategic north-south Civic Spine, connecting the Ulster University and York street Interchange through the heart of the city to Queens University via Botanic Avenue. The Civic Spine would be reconfigured to prioritise space for people and support effective access by public transport while enabling the introduction of green spaces for a diverse, inclusive, future-proofed and vibrant city centre.



Reimagine the Inner Ring Road and End Car Dominance

Transform the Inner Ring Road to reduce physical severance for surrounding communities and become a sustainable mobility corridor. To do this, the Inner Ring should be reconfigured to accommodate high priority public transport services (such as BRT2) as well as fully segregated and green infrastructure for walking, wheeling and cycling.



Promote City Centre Living

Encourage city centre living by providing greater quality, choice and affordability of accommodation, to create a shared and inclusive environment. Establish a city-wide network of people friendly routes, community focus streets, incorporating city parks and connections to opportunities for play, interaction, rest and leisure.



Embrace The River Lagan And Waterfront

Capitalise on one of the city's most defining, but underused assets, the River Lagan, by strengthening connections from the city centre to the east and its surrounding communities – enhancing connectivity across and around the River Lagan.



Creation of A Civic Spine With A Focus On People

Short term interventions /Catalyst Opportunities:



Redesign the Great Patrick Street junction with a people first approach, supporting improved safety, walking, wheeling and cycling.



Through schemes such as Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3 and 5, identify priority streets wherein standard on-street parking is removed and re-allocated for spaces for people, including linear pocket parks, public realm, retail and pop-up events.



Review location and provision of on-street parking for blue badge provision, coach parking and better streets and places for people



Develop Franklin Street to Amelia Street as a people focussed connection to a newly invigorated Blackstaff Square, with a focus on walking, wheeling and cycling, supporting the Belfast Cycling Network 2021 and reinforcing a strong desire line to Belfast Transport Hub.

Long term interventions:



Further develop the Civic Spine with a high-quality 'people first' space while still delivering efficient public transportation connections and city servicing requirements.



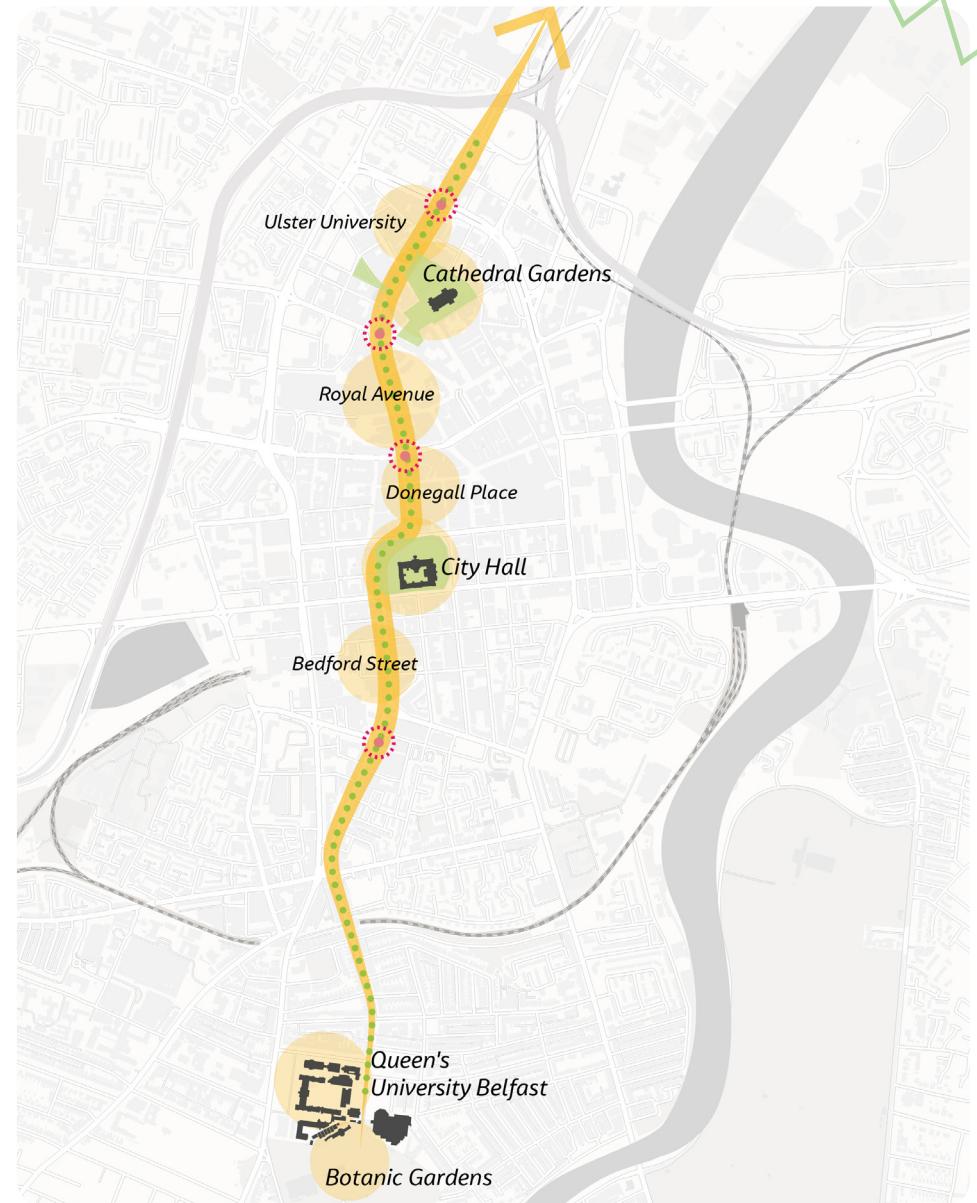
Integrating blue/green infrastructure, the Civic Spine should provide safe, accessible and legible movement in the heart of the city that will be delivered through the Belfast Streets Ahead 3 & 5 & BRT projects.

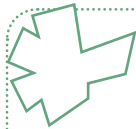


Transform the Linen Quarter to become a sustainable people focussed district, restricting levels of standard on-street parking and reallocating space for blue badge holders, public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling.

Strengthening existing projects:

- Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2
- Belfast Transport Hub
- York Street Interchange
- Five C's Project
- Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3 & 5
- Belfast Destination Hub





Reimagine the Inner Ring road and End Car Dominance

Short term interventions /Catalyst Opportunities:



Utilising the existing configuration, reallocate road space on the Inner Ring to facilitate the delivery of an orbital cycle urban greenway, accessible from all sides of the city with effective signage, artwork and wayfinding.



Redesign the Shankill Gateway and Clifton Gateway junctions with a people first approach, supporting improved safety, walking, wheeling and cycling.



Create green corridors along the Inner Ring, develop active travel hubs and city parks via temporary uses.

Long term interventions:



Reprioritise the Inner Ring to remove severance to communities with a focus on public transport, priority cycling routes and green infrastructure.



Create a one-way gyratory system for traffic along Great Victoria Street and Durham Street, freeing up space on street frontages for walking, wheeling and cycling on both of these streets.



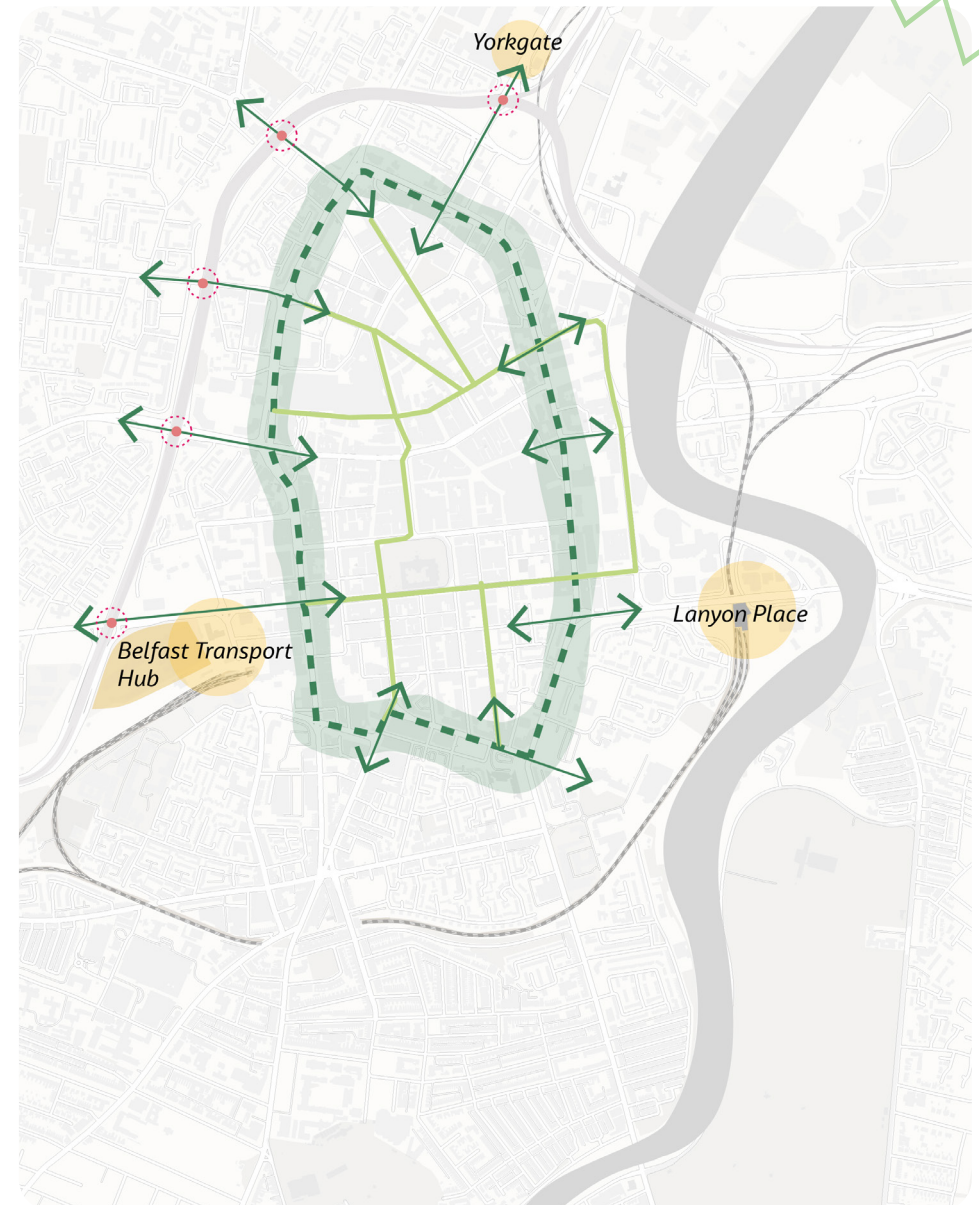
Integrate Belfast Rapid Transit directly with Belfast Transport Hub utilising Durham Street.



Enhance pedestrian and cycle movement over Westlink and under A12/M3 to improve city centre connectivity by introducing green landscaping together with wide and sufficiently lit footpaths.

Strengthening existing projects:

- Belfast Rapid Transit 2
- Belfast Transport Hub
- Belfast Cycling Strategy 2021
- Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 5
- York Street Interchange
- One Million Trees commitment





Promote City Centre Living

Short term interventions /Catalyst Opportunities:



Ensure all capital projects, including private sector developments, are designed to support city centre living and building sustainable communities.



Remove traffic access from Verner Street, and utilise St George's market to activate the space for greening, parklets and retail.



Introduce a linear park in the derelict car park south of Bruce St during construction phase of Belfast Transport Hub. Explore opportunities additional city parks as temporary uses.



Increase cycle parking and Belfast Bike docking stations along the river, around the inner ring road of the city centre to support the development of the Belfast Cycling Network 2021 and linking with the Connswater Greenway to the East.



Supporting the urban forest/one million tree commitment which Belfast has signed up to with the introduction of temporary trees in movable containers. These could be used to test out the introduction of more permanent boulevard planting.

Long term interventions:



Create a series of destination parks and community focussed streets for the Inner North West areas



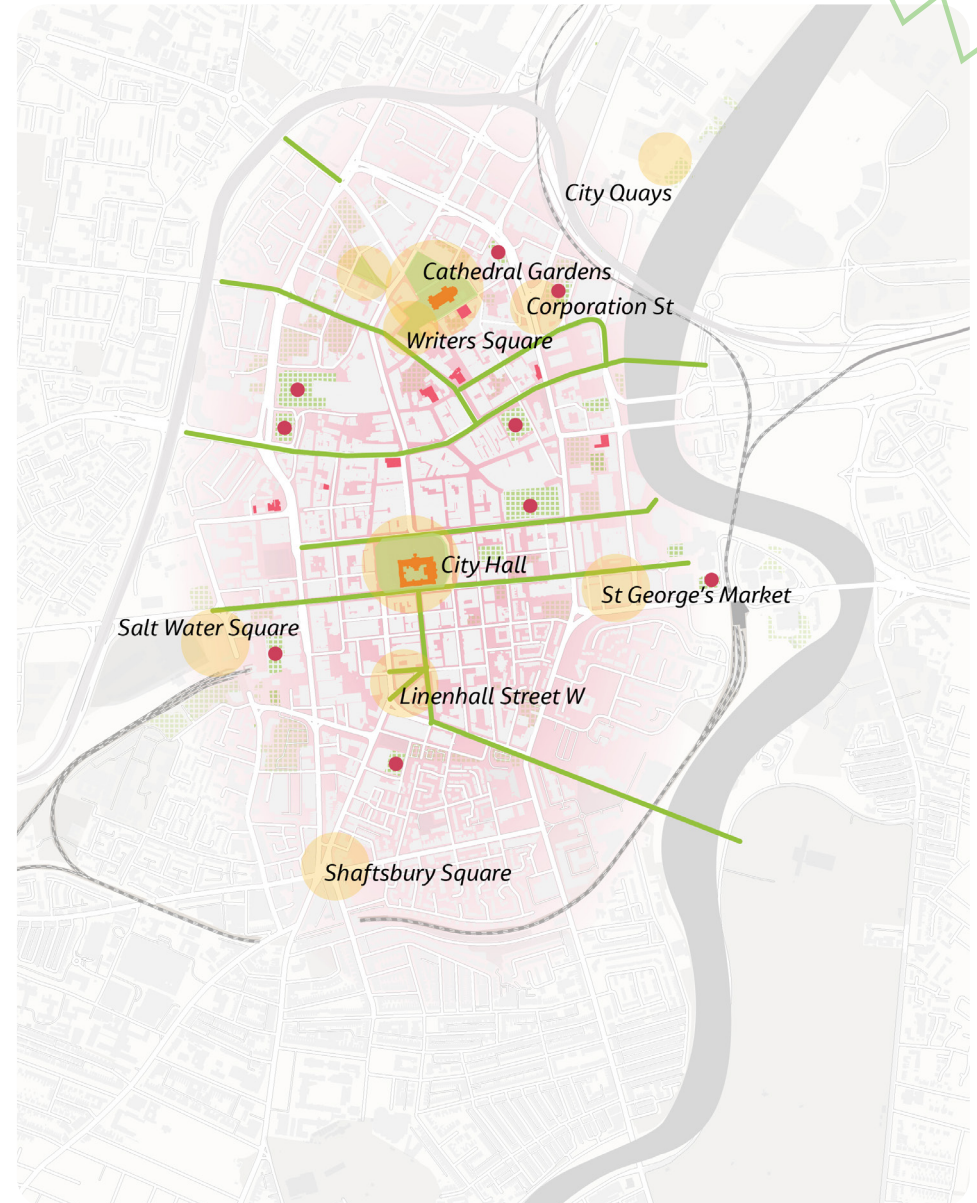
Create a series of vibrant public spaces, including Cathedral Gardens area, Saltwater Square and City Quays Garden linked to both existing and proposed people focussed routes



Establish a network of green streets to prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling, together with incorporating, street trees, pocket parks and different typologies of landscaping.

Strengthening existing projects:

- Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3
- Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 5
- Five Cs project
- Belfast Transport Hub
- One Million Trees commitment
- Belfast Cycling Strategy 2021





Embrace the River Lagan and Waterfront

Short term interventions /Catalyst Opportunities:



Improve existing waterfront active travel networks by connecting to the emerging Urban Greenway on the Inner Ring, introducing appropriate signage and branding.



Activate the River Lagan by introducing pop-up 'green island' parks and swimming pontoons along its length, coupled with a network of public spaces between the harbour area to Ormeau Park.



Introduce new pedestrian and cycle bridge linking Titanic Quarter to City Quays

Long term interventions:



Enhance existing and create new riverside destinations to optimise the use of River Lagan. Strengthen connectivity to both the river and surrounding communities by promoting travel along the water and enhancing both existing and new crossings at strategic locations.



Introduce a new cycle and pedestrian bridge from Sailortown at the North of the City, connecting to the Titanic Quarter.



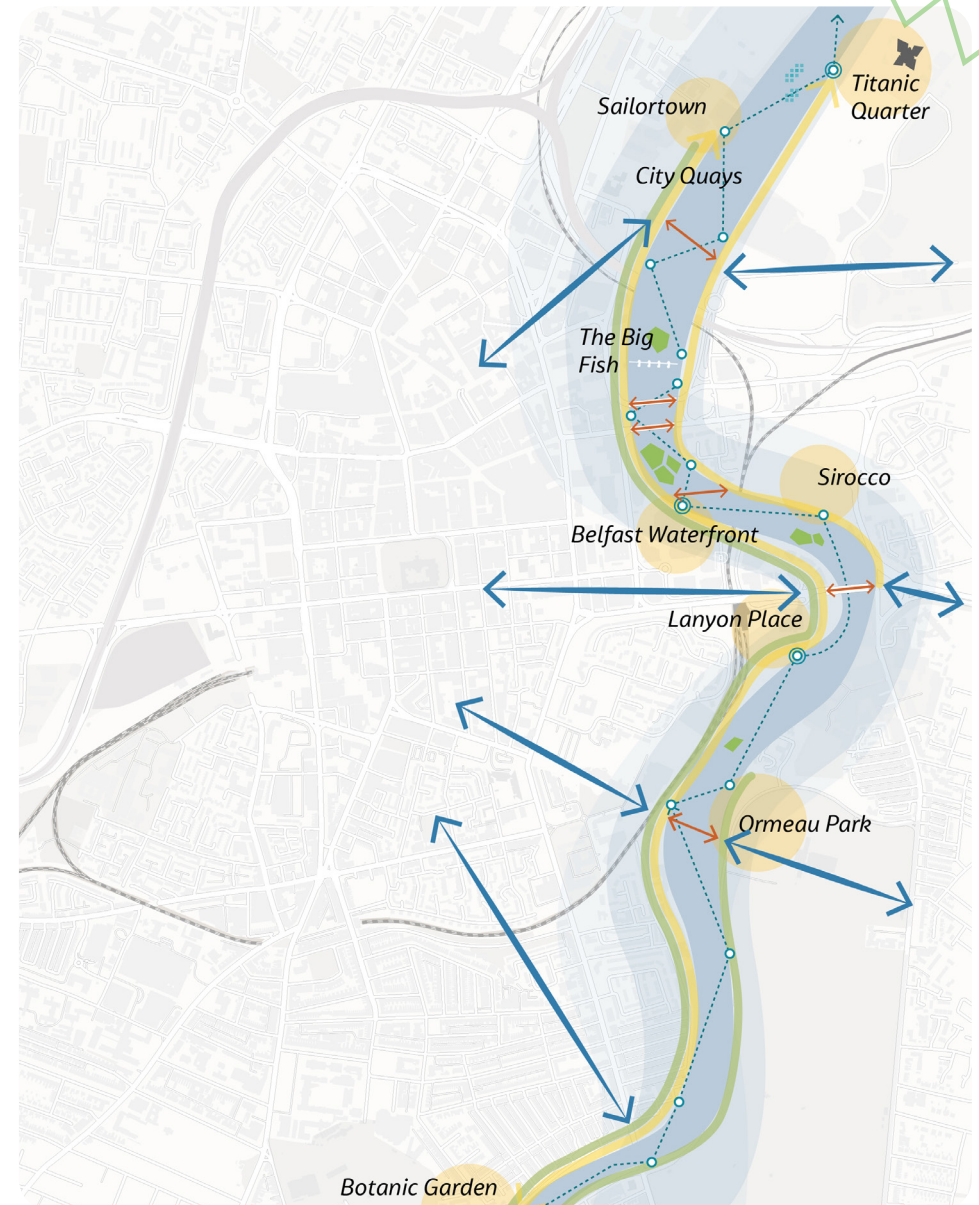
Support commuting, tourism and leisure by growing and developing the Belfast Maritime Mile.



Connecting to the river from the civic spine – extension of the existing linear green park along Chichester street to create green islands in the hard space outside Waterfront Hall. These could 'spill out' onto the river itself becoming floating green islands.

Strengthening existing projects:

- One Million Trees Commitment
- Belfast Cycling Network 2021
- Belfast's Maritime Mile
- Planned developments including Titanic Quarter, City Quays, Queens Quay and Waterside



PROJECT TIMELINE

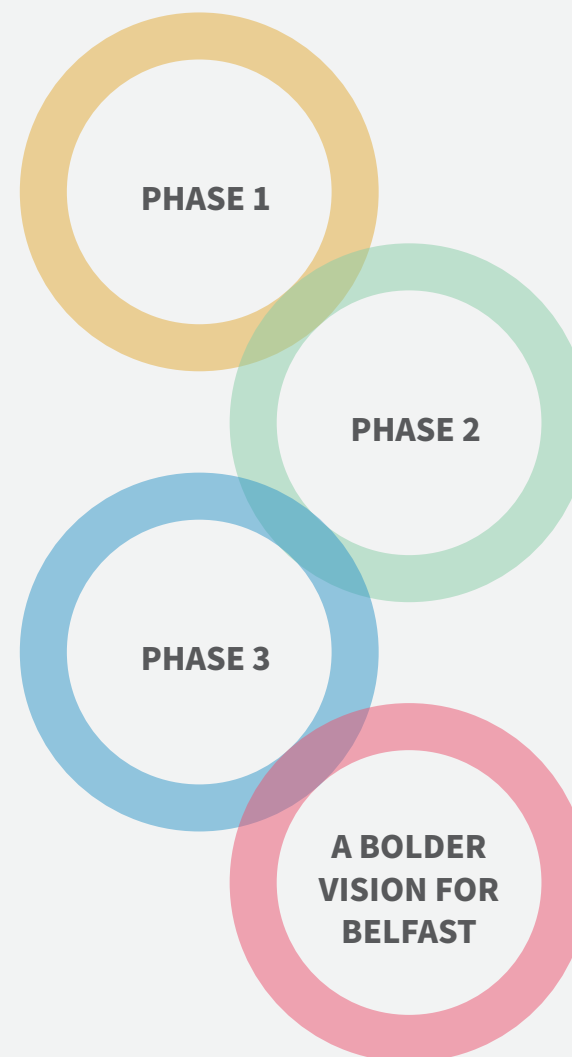
Phase 1 A Bolder Vision for Belfast, sets out how green, walkable, cyclable network of streets and places will improve health for all, revitalise the city's economy and restore a sense of collective pride in the centre of the city by the communities. This stage resulted in the Visioning Principles and Themes for Change.

Phase 2 will provide a tangible vision that creates a green, people focused, connected city centre for current and future users in line with the Visioning Principles set out in Phase 1. This phase follows a collaborative process between the three public agencies (DfI, DfC and BCC) and multiple stakeholder engagement via focus groups, interviews and numerous workshops. This helps collating a number of potential interventions that will shape the future city centre and will influence the way the capital schemes are delivered.

This stage is happening now and the current public consultation will form part of this phase.

Phase 3 Following the consultation period, we will collate and analyse the stakeholder feedback. A consultation report will be produced which will outline all engagement undertaken with stakeholders and the local community before and during the public consultation. We will review the outcomes of engagement and consultation and where appropriate, accommodate requested changes or alterations to the preferred Strategy.

A Bolder Vision for Belfast - The outcome of Phases 1-3 will be the production of the Bolder Vision Strategy which will include the range of interventions for the city. The interventions are organised in short term and long term interventions that ensure a step change for the city centre of Belfast.



HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

This public consultation is 12 weeks long between the 30th September to the 23rd December and we are inviting you to fill in the feedback form.

In response to Covid-19 restrictions around holding public events, this online public consultation experience has been developed. This online public consultation experience allows stakeholders and members of the public to view information and to express their opinions in a safe and accessible environment.

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Email: belfasti@BelfastCity.gov.uk



Website: <https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/bolder-vision>

for the virtual room please visit:

<https://belfastboldervision.virtualeventspace.io>



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Subject:	City Centre Open Spaces & Connectivity
Date:	10 November 2021
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director, City Regeneration & Development
Contact Officer:	Richard Griffin, Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To update Members regarding ongoing work to develop a high quality open/green spaces and connection across and to/from the city centre.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Members of the Committee are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the update on emerging open space and placemaking projects across the city centre, including the Belfast Harbour Commissioners City Quays Gardens, the City Quays North-South Spine, the Little York – Little Patrick Street scheme and the INW / Cathedral Gardens Open Space Framework;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve that Council-owned lands at Corporation St be considered for a temporary meanwhile use for the RSUA/JP Corry Open Belfast Design Competition, on the basis as set out below, with a future report to be brought to Committee prior to progressing with the winning design.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>A report was brought to CG&R Committee in August 2021 outlining some of the ongoing work across Council and other partners to enhance existing, and develop new, high quality open spaces across and connecting to/from the city centre, for the benefit of all users, including existing communities, and to support the growth of the resident population in the city centre. The paper also noted the importance of an integrated approach to connectivity and placemaking, and how this is central to work across individual projects that in turn link to the ongoing development of 'A Bolder Vision for Belfast'.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Detail</u></p> <p>Officers are undertaking a review of open space within the city centre, with a view to identifying potential interventions to improve existing spaces, as well as creating new spaces, with an emphasis on greening and softening otherwise hard urban environments. To note however that such interventions may not necessarily be Council led or delivered but could be by way of other partners, for example, BIDS, businesses developers, public sector bodies and anchor institutions – many of which are already considering such opportunities. An audit is underway which will enable the identification of priority sites or projects ranging from short term 'tactical regeneration' to permanent placemaking projects. In addition to continuing to influence major city placemaking projects such as Belfast Streets Ahead, officers will continue to explore other funding opportunities to support short to medium term delivery.</p>
3.3	<p>Members will be aware of a number of specific projects currently in development across the city that represent opportunities to deliver on these ambitions, with Council having a key role as delivery agent in some instances, as well as enabling and catalysing initiatives being brought forward by other agencies.</p>
3.4	<p>A brief update on these initiatives is outlined below and identified on the map as attached in Appendix 1:</p>

<p>3.5</p> <p>3.6</p> <p>3.7</p>	<p>City Quays Gardens</p> <p>Belfast Harbour Commissioners (BHC) are continuing to develop design proposals for ‘City Quays Gardens’ in line with their recently published Placemaking Strategy. Officers have engaged with BHC regarding the design development process, with the scheme placing considerable emphasis on greening, sustainability, and enabling active travel. The current proposals are available to view at https://www.cqgardens.co.uk/ with images provided as Appendix 2 of this report, and BHC plan to submit a planning application for a c£3m first phase with the aim of commencing work during 2022.</p> <p>It should be noted that the proposed City Quays Gardens represents Phase 1 of a proposed four phase Masterplan for the public realm improvements as a part of the City Quays Masterplan. The wider masterplan also incorporates BCC owned lands as a potential Phase 4 element encompassing the Corporation Square Car Park under the M3 flyover and lands that officers are currently considering for the relocation of the operational Dunbar Depot. These proposals for the Phase 4 development are however very much at concept stage. Officers will continue to engage with BHC regarding the wider masterplan elements and will provide future reports to the CG&R and SP&R Committees as relevant as these discussions progress.</p> <p>Connectivity: North South Spine Road & Little York St/ Little Patrick St Area</p> <p>Officers are working to develop plans for a ‘North-South Spine Road’ in line with the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy and the Greater Clarendon and Sailortown Masterplan (and subsequent Public Realm & Accessibility Design Guide) which set out a number of placemaking priorities including the development of a ‘North-South Spine’, or neighbourhood connector, that would better link Greater Clarendon and Sailortown communities with the city centre. This concept includes enhancing the public realm along Tomb Street and Corporation Street, to Corporation Square, including lands under the M3 flyover. There is also potential to enhance east-west connections towards the University Quarter, including Little Patrick St, which would in turn connect to a separate scheme officers are developing that will aim to transform the streets between four Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation blocks at Little York St/Little Patrick St. Design team procurement is underway for the Little York St/ Little Patrick St scheme which will be funded by developer contributions, while a funding application has been submitted to the DfI Green & Blue Infrastructure fund to undertake the design work for the North South Spine up to RIBA Stage 3. Further detail on both these will be brought to a future meeting.</p>
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Cathedral Gardens / Inner NW Open Space Framework	
3.8	<p>Work is continuing on the Masterplan for Cathedral Gardens, with design concepts having been presented to Members in September 2021 and stakeholder engagement ongoing. Further detailed updates will be provided to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee via the 'Physical Programme Update'. During delivery of the project, a key consideration will be how to offset the temporary loss of open space at Cathedral Gardens and officers are exploring options which will be brought back to Committee.</p>
3.9	<p>Cathedral Gardens occupies a strategically significant location at the edge of the city centre and at the heart of the emerging university quarter and is also an important site relative to development objectives for the Inner North West area. In this context, there is an opportunity to maximise the value of the site from a connectivity perspective by supporting and enabling modal shift through provision of infrastructure on or close to the site, and by influencing projects that can transform the local active travel network. The principles of 'A Bolder Vision' will continue to inform input to Belfast Streets Ahead 3 and planned junction improvement schemes at Great Patrick Street/York St, Clifton Gateway and Shankill Gateway, ensuring that pedestrian and cycle movement is prioritised, including at key gateways for local communities. Work on this is ongoing through the Junctions Working Group although as previously reported to this Committee officers, in conjunction with other members of the Group, continue to press for a quick response from the DfI in terms of delivering effective designs based on a people priority perspective.</p>
3.10	<p>Officers are also working to deliver an Active Travel Hub within Cathedral Gardens, that will further support sustainable movement within the city. Co-funded by Council and DfI, the temporary hub (planned to be on site for c2yrs pending Cathedral Gardens Masterplan delivery) will house both a long-term bike leasing and repair service, and training and awareness programmes. It is considered this mix of support will complement existing infrastructure in the form of the Belfast Bikes docking station, while growing the role of the wider site as a key hub within an emerging active travel network. Procurement of the contractor for the Active Travel Hub is well advanced and work is expected to commence on site during November/December following grant of planning permission. Following pre-market engagement, an Expression of Interest process has also now been completed for an operator to run the hub, and further funding opportunities are being explored that could support additional programming. Members will also receive an update to this Committee Meeting on the opening of the Queens University Belfast Active Travel Hub, part funded through the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme. Officers are also undertaking further</p>

	work to develop a citywide Active Travel Hub Strategy and Implementation Plan in line with the Belfast Cycle Network.
3.11	Officers are also progressing work on the 'Inner North West Open Space Framework' that will consider wider connectivity and placemaking opportunities in this area, while also seeking to guide a collaborative and integrated approach among key stakeholders and delivery agencies including Council, DfC, St Anne's Cathedral, UU and DfI. This work is intended to provide a higher level vision of the wider area including common design principles, while also setting out specific recommendations regarding the future of, for example, Academy St and Donegall St. The consultant team has been appointed with draft outputs expected during December 2021.
3.12	<p>RSUA Design Competition for Early Career Architects 2021</p> <p>Since 2016 the Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA) have run a design competition giving early career architects an opportunity to address real world urban situations. The first built project year was 2017 ('Built:East'), with the 2019 project 'Sound Yard' launched in October 2021. The RSUA/JP Corry Open Belfast Design Competition 2021 is seeking to generate ideas for the meanwhile use of key sites in Belfast City Centre to support the city's ambitions for increased activation and greening of open space in the city, address dereliction and seek meaningful uses for land that is vacant pending development. The aim of the competition is to instigate a project that can be delivered relatively quickly to help test concepts, get public feedback and inform longer-term plans for the city centre while not detracting from the longer term regeneration opportunities.</p>
3.13	The competition aims to encapsulate the ambition set out in The Belfast Agenda, Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS), A Bolder Vision and the Future City Centre Programme. The RSUA have approached Council to support the competition via a meanwhile use of a Council site, acting as a joint client and aligning the meanwhile use to Council's ambitions for a liveable and connected city centre as well as potential for funding. JP Corry are supporting the competition with £20,000 by way of materials and will also be represented with Council and RSUA on the competition judging panel. It is proposed that the panel will have representation from the neighbouring community via Sailortown and participation by a youth representative. The Competition is open to NI based young career architects, with the winning architects potentially having the opportunity to bring their concept through to delivery under the mentorship of an established architectural firm subject to final agreement by Legal Services and Committee (CG&R and SP&R). There is also a break

	<p>clause in the competition whereby should it not be feasible to bring forward the winning design the winning architect receives a prize bursary from JP Corry.</p>
3.14	<p>Officers have proposed to RSUA (subject to Committee approval) that the Council-owned Corporation Street site is put forward. This site was acquired by Council as a vacant site in 2019 and is being brought forward as a housing led regeneration opportunity and work is progressing to attract investment to bring this site, along with other strategic city centre lands forward for development for housing led mixed use regeneration schemes. In the interim period pending development this site represents an excellent opportunity to bring forward a temporary meanwhile use to promote greening the city, improving liveability, providing spaces for active uses and/or play in all its guises and acting as an exemplar site for how the city can treat vacant sites pending development.</p>
3.15	<p>Officers will retain involvement throughout the process, including as a part of the final judging panel, ensuring that the competition outcomes align with Council strategic priorities, and ensure that the use does not impact on the permanent redevelopment of the site. A future report on the winning design will be brought to Committee for approval prior to proceeding with the successful architect. As below, it is also proposed to support the project with funding as part of wider funding package, to contribute to the delivery and maintenance of the successful design for a c2-year period. Further detail on this, including the specific contribution from Council, will however be brought to this Committee for approval prior to committing resources.</p>
3.16	<p>Additional considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will require planning, which will need to be included within the remit of the winner along with preparation of procurement documentation for the delivery and management of same; • The proposal will need to ensure that the longer term use of the site is protected, with the temporary project clearly a meanwhile use pending longer term development; • The delivery cost and revenue costs will need to be included within the brief for entrants and consideration through due Council process. • Officers will progress further with RSUA in relation to key considerations, as well as detailing the Council's client role which will involve cross departmental working, as well as the role of the community and youth representative.

3.17	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> <p>Subject to Committee approval on the successful design, it is proposed to support the project with a maximum £100,000 funding which will be met from existing departmental budget, to contribute to the delivery and maintenance of the successful design for a 2-year period. This funding amount will form part of the design brief; however, officers have approached DfI and DfC to co-fund this £100k contribution and this is expected to reduce the contribution from Council.</p>
3.18	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> <p>None associated with the report- EQIA Screening will be undertaken by Council as required.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Emerging Open & Civic Spaces</p> <p>Appendix 2 – BHC City Quays Gardens</p>

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Greater Clarendon Regeneration

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. City Quays Gardens | 5. Exchange Street (SSA) | 9. Clifton Gateway | 13. Destination Hub |
| 2. Potential Depot Relocation | 6. Dunbar Street (SSA) | 10. Cathedral Gardens | 14. The Sixth |
| 3. North / South Spine | 7. Little Patrick / Little York St | 11. Streets Ahead 3 | 15. Union Street Hub |
| 4. Corporation Street (SSA) | 8. Great Patrick St Junction | 12. Tribeca | 16. INW Northern Cluster (SSA) |

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Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to view the development proposals for a new public space, leisure destination and amenity space at City Quays, being brought forward by Belfast Harbour.

The information within this pack is presented as part of the community consultation for these exciting plans.

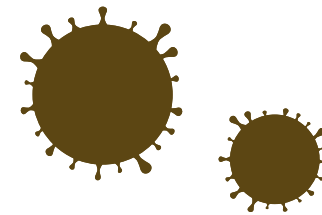
How you can provide feedback

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 situation new methods have been introduced to help you provide feedback on our proposals. We will be using a number of online engagement tools in addition to a consultation phone line and dedicated email address as part of our community engagement.



Artist's impression of proposed open space

Community consultation during COVID-19



To provide opportunities to engage there are a number of ways the community can find out more about the proposals and how Belfast Harbour plans to deliver a sustainable and cohesive development.

How to find out more



Visit: www.cqgardens.co.uk

Our consultation website presents information on the proposal. You can browse our plans, live chat with a member of the team, download information documents, and complete an online feedback form.

Join our digital public information event

We will be hosting a public information event online using Zoom (a video call tool) from **6pm-7pm on Wednesday 13th October 2021**.

Just like a face-to-face event, members of the project team will present the scheme at this event and be available to respond to any queries or listen to any feedback.

If you are unable to join the digital drop-in event and would like to receive information on the plans posted to your home, please contact the team using the project email address or telephone number.



Email: contact@cqgardens.co.uk



Website: www.cqgardens.co.uk



Consultation Phone-line: **0808 1688 296**



Write to us: **Turley, Hamilton House, 3 Joy Street, Belfast BT2 8LE**

Join our digital public information event

You can use the live chat on the consultation website (www.cqgardens.co.uk) to talk to a member of the project team who will be available Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm to respond to your queries.

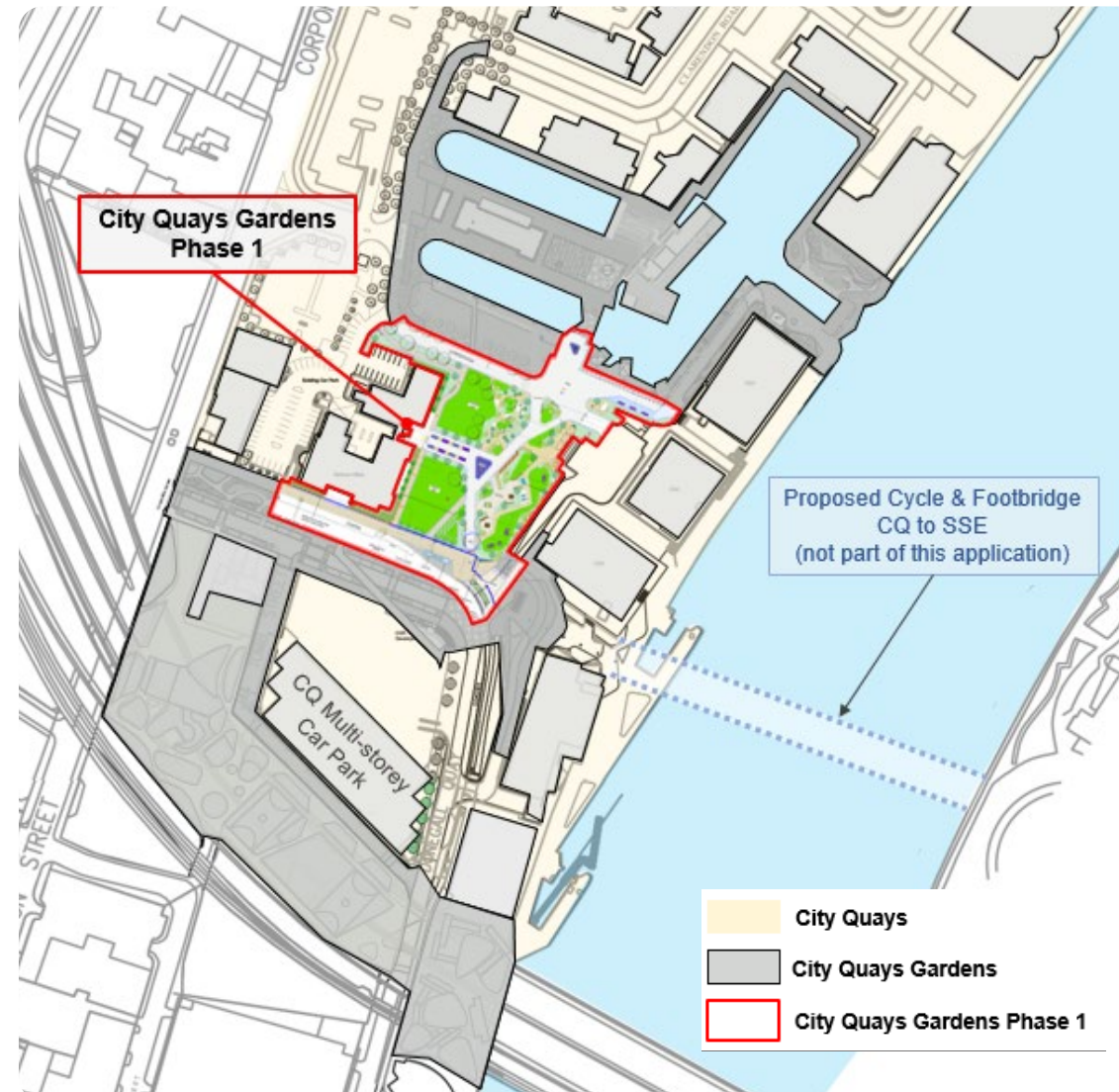
- ➔ ➊ Register for our digital drop-in session by visiting www.cqgardens.co.uk
- ➔ ➋ Join us for your booked slot by using Zoom on your computer or by downloading the Zoom app. (You will find user instructions on the website above)
- ➔ ➌ Hear from our project team on current thoughts in relations to the development plan and get a chance to ask your questions via the Q&A session.
- ➔ ➍ Provide your feedback using our consultation website.

Our Vision

Planning Context

The City Quays Gardens proposals aim to develop a new leisure area, creating a safe year-round destination and amenity space at City Quays, for everyone.

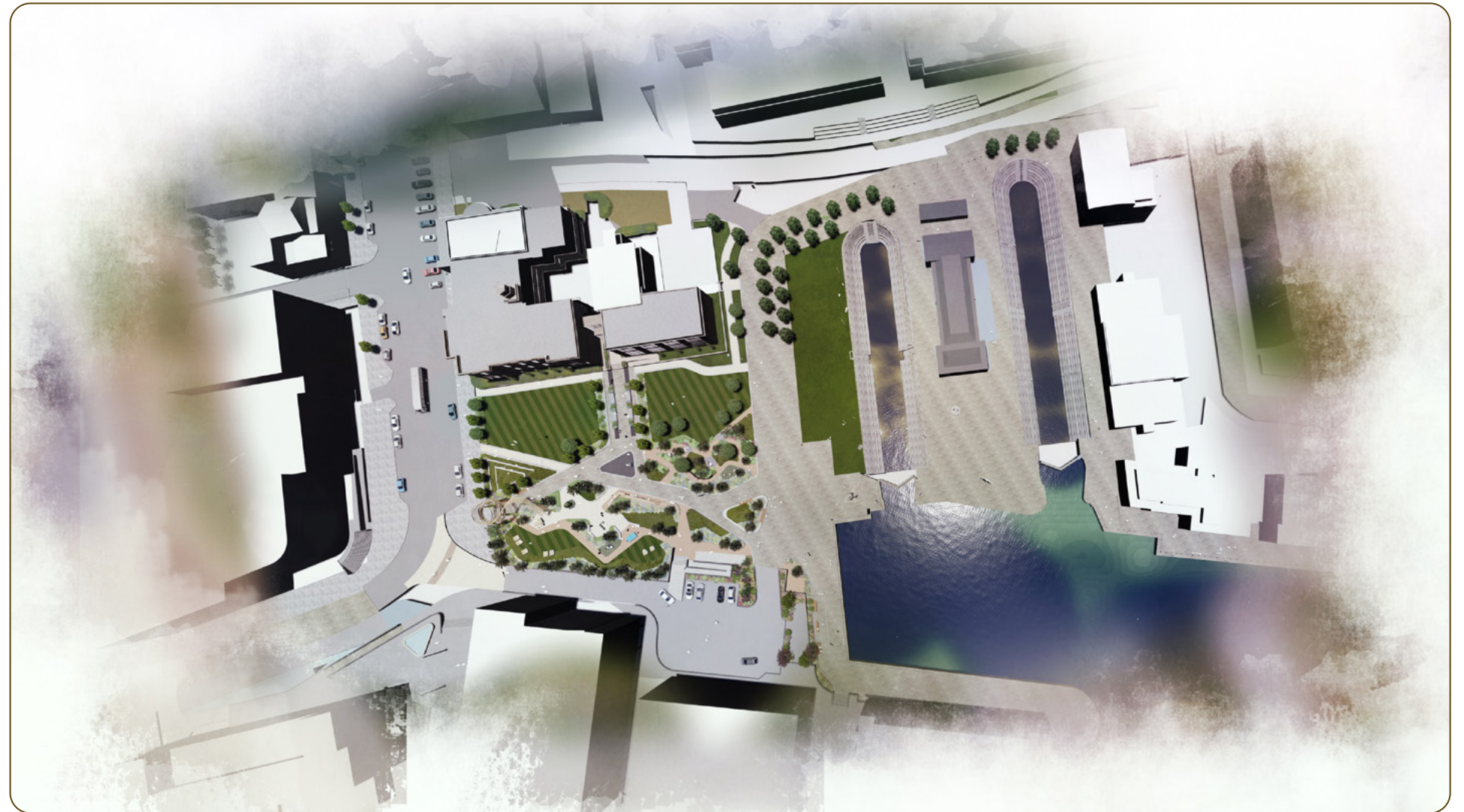
Phase 1, adjacent to the Harbour Office building, is coming forward with a planning application later this year. Prior to submission of the plan we want to hear your views.



CQG in the context of City Quays masterplan

Our Proposals

City Quays Gardens will integrate Belfast's rich maritime heritage as a Port city into the design, creating a new green space that provides a positive contribution to the area's place-making and recognises Belfast Harbour's socio-economic significance within the City.



City Quays Gardens Masterplan

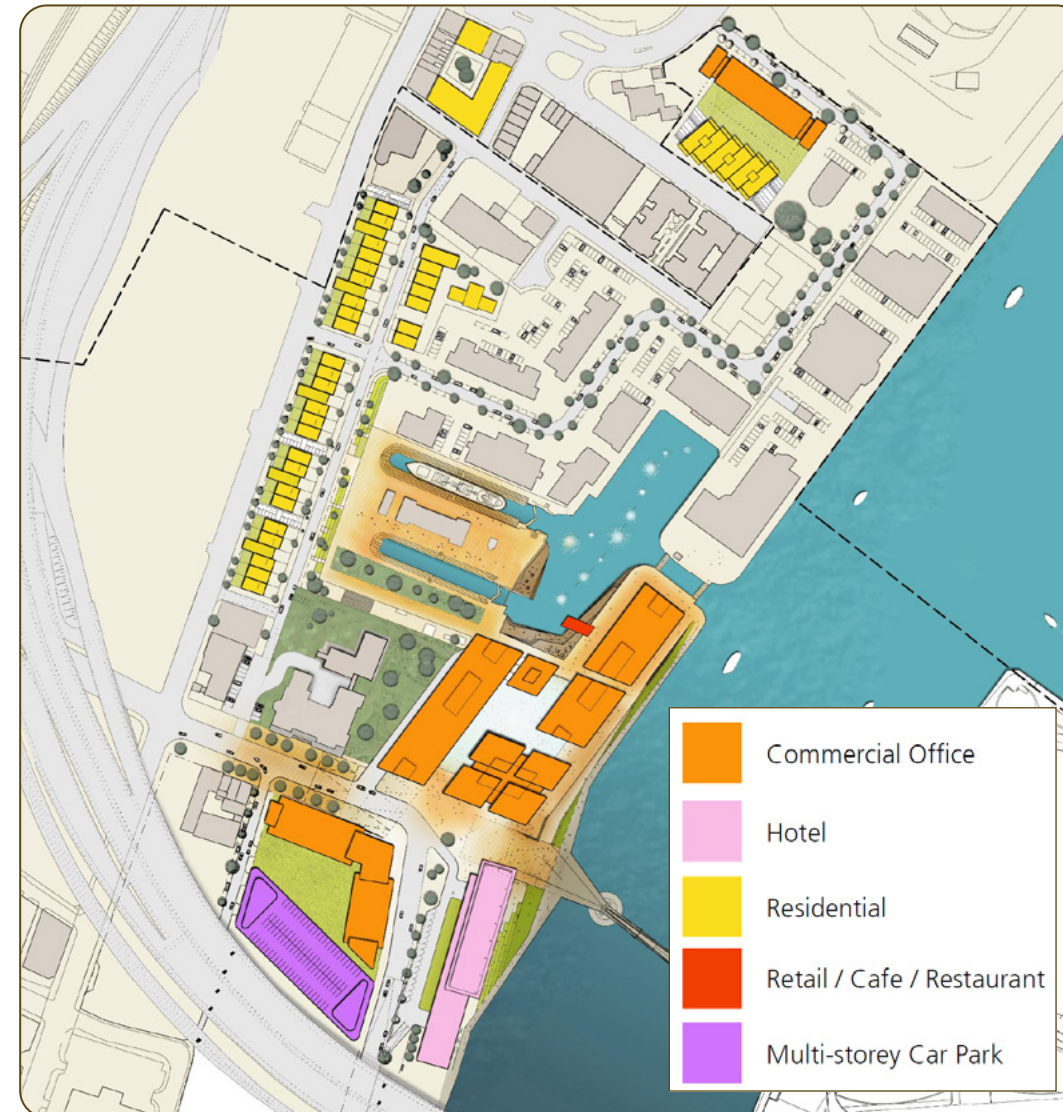
Site Context

The wider site is currently undergoing transformation, and significant investments being taken forward as part of the masterplan for the site include:

- City Quays I and II Grade A office developments,
- Multi-storey car park
- New river front public realm
- The AC Marriot Hotel, and
- the currently under construction City Quays III office development.

City Quays Gardens Masterplan

The proposed Masterplan for City Quays Gardens consists of four phases. Phase 1, is the subject of the current voluntary pre-application community consultation.



Current and proposed uses surrounding the development site



Overview of proposed site with master plan buildings

Project overview

City Quays is already one of Belfast’s most exciting and sustainable real estate developments.

City Quays Gardens will create new green amenity space, connecting to the city and transforming our public realm creating fresh, vibrant and attractive public spaces for all.

Features include:

- Extensive planting and landscaping
- Events lawns, amphitheatre style seating
- Leisure & outdoor work spaces
- Improved pedestrian & cycle connections
- Public Art Trail
- Iconic ‘Nest’ to create landmark gateway
- Feature lighting
- A SMART place to work and relax, with public 5G WiFi



Overview of Phase 1

Maritime-inspired Design

The public realm design is influenced by the site's unique industrial and ship building heritage and the River Lagan waterside location. Building upon the Maritime Mile aspirations, the proposals seek to integrate but differentiate City Quays Gardens from the wider waterfront to define this as a destination and place in its own right.



Proposed site layout

Heritage-led Regeneration

The design of City Quays Gardens puts heritage and sustainability at its heart.

Existing historical artefacts will be protected, conserved and made accessible for visitors in terms of interpretation, understanding and physical access as part of restoration works.

The Historic Environment Department (HED) will continue to be consulted throughout the development process.

Story-telling trail

A series of feature seats and benches within the gardens will tell the story of Belfast Harbour. They will form focal points and start the beginnings of a City Quays heritage trail which will complement the wider Maritime Mile activity and improve connectivity in to the City.

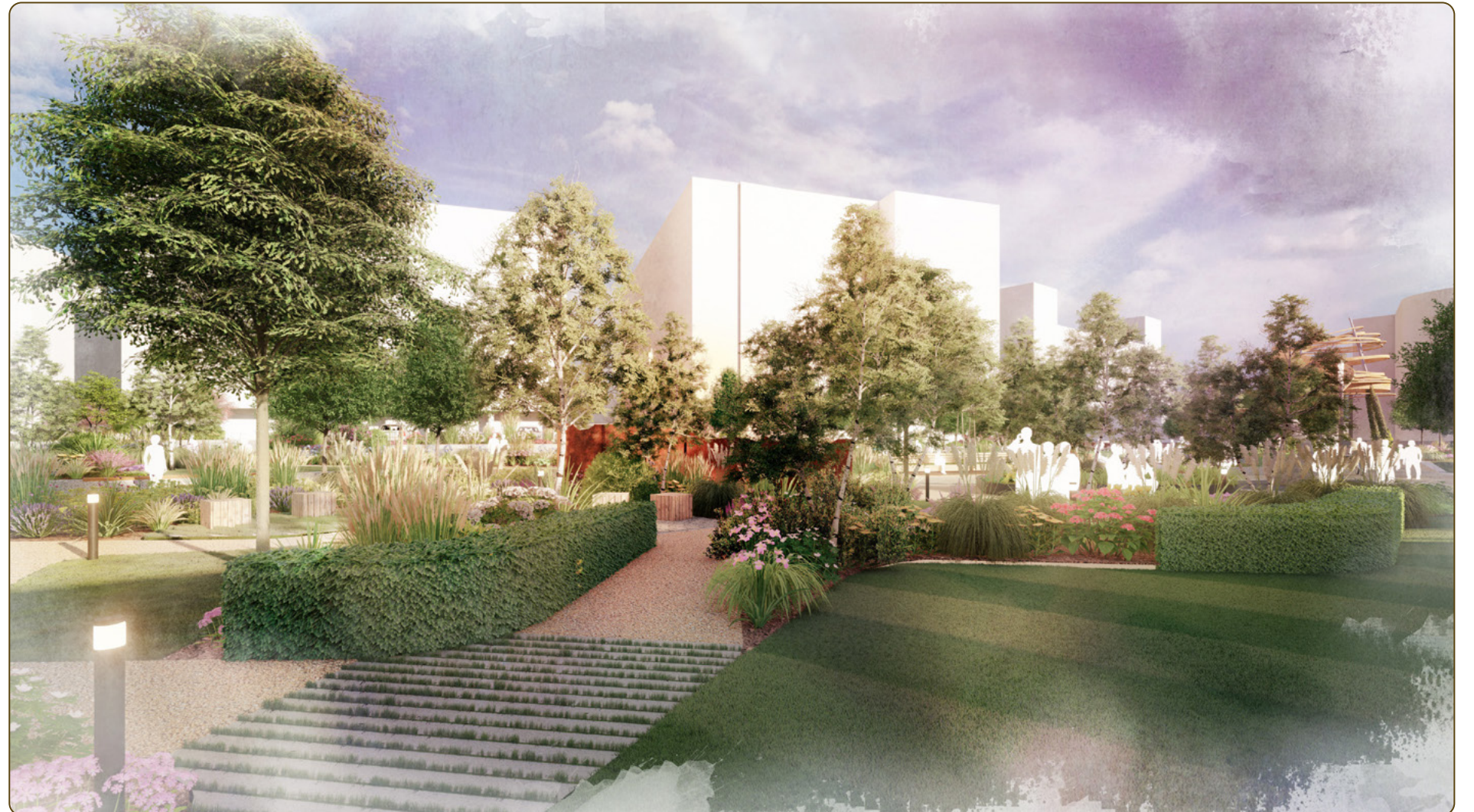


Open Space

City Quays Gardens will be a community area that is open and accessible to all. It will use innovative design, creating a unique community amenity that will integrate technologies and unlock outside space for agile working.

Public Realm

A design language of walls and edges will make subtle reference to the architecture of ships and the ebb and flow of the tide. The development also includes a planting strategy to reflect the coastal environment and create a unique character for City Quays Gardens.



Landscape Design

The landscaping strategy of the proposed development will seek to define the City Quays character and makes reference to the old and new uniting the waterfront and heritage assets. Similarly the design of the public realm will include a suite of playful street furniture reflecting a key harbour aspiration of celebrating maritime heritage and sustainability.

The soft landscaping strategy includes:

- Ornamental planting to building entrances and key gateways;
- Two defined garden spaces - The Glade and The Coastal Garden;
- The Glade will embrace a woodland character with denser tree cover, a mix of multi-stem and clear stem specimens will be complemented by woodland edge and under-storey bulb and perennial planting;
- The Coastal Garden will have a more open, sunny aspect with a mix of coniferous and deciduous coastal trees complemented by a drought tolerant grass and perennial mix;
- Evergreen hedging will provide enclosure, shelter and winter structure;
- Amenity lawns will be positively drained to ensure optimum usage and appearance;
- Existing trees will be retained where possible;
- Semi mature tree avenues denote key routes and gateways.



Soft landscaping plan

All-season Attraction

The design maximises sunny, south-facing aspects for leisure activities with street furniture placed to make the most of sunny aspects.

The retention of mature trees, new evergreen hedges, earth mounding, art screen and planting enclosures will help to mitigate wind across the gardens.

Hedges are placed to shelter seating areas from south westerly prevailing winds. Shade and shelter are provided by tree canopies and pergola structures.



Environmental Excellence

City Quays Gardens will help create a 'Clean, Green Port for Everyone' and support the delivery of Belfast Harbour's 'Green Port' ambitions:

- Increase bio-diversity and urban greening, improving air quality.
- Reconnect communities to the waterfront and marine environment, through sustainable design.
- Consider flood risk issues and integrate proposed flood alleviation measures.

A Public Realm for All

The public realm at City Quays aims to re-green the urban waterfront, enhance the environment for people and wildlife and reconnect and educate visitors about the Lagan landscape.

Re-greening strategy

The re-greening of City Quays Gardens is a key element of the design vision. The scheme aims to enhance biodiversity, improve air quality, create shade and shelter, improve connections to nature and respond to and reflect the natural Lagan landscape.



One Planet Living

One Planet Living seeks to create a world where everyone, everywhere lives happy, healthy lives within the limits of the planet, leaving space for wildlife and wilderness.

City Quays Gardens will be the first One Planet Living development in Northern Ireland, and will focus on ten key principles:



Health and happiness



Equity and local economy



Culture and community



Land and nature



Sustainable water



Local and sustainable food



Travel and transport



Materials and products



Zero waste



Zero carbon energy



ONE
PLANET
LIVING

Sustainable Design

City Quays Gardens will be developed using a number of sustainable construction and development interventions to ensure the space meets zero energy and water usage targets.

Sustainable design elements will include:

- new habitat creation and enhanced biodiversity
- urban greening
- sustainable and active travel advocacy
- zero net energy usage
- zero net water usage
- sustainable drainage features
- site materials reuse
- community outreach
- biophillic design approach
- promotion of eco-tourism.



Community Vibrancy

City Quays Gardens will support the 'Port for Everyone' Agenda as it seeks to:

- Enhance Social Value for local residents and the City
- Create a sense of place that better connects communities to the regeneration within City Quays, enhancing the investment value of the area
- Accommodate a range of small to medium scale occasional events and a 24/7 year-round attraction for a diverse range of users;
- Create an area which supports the vibrancy and attraction within the built developments of City Quays and provides a unique public realm space in the heart of the area
- Create a year-round programme of animation delivered in conjunction with Maritime Belfast Trust.



Community-led Design

The Gardens will offer a space to promote interaction, community gathering, improved health and well-being of visitors and local communities.

There will be a number of physical interventions involved in the design of City Quays Gardens that are conducive to promoting community interactions all-year round including:



Lighting

Dramatic lighting will be in place to guide visitors to and through the gardens via a series of destinations



Amenity and event infrastructure

The public realm has been designed to accommodate small to medium sized events in a variety of locations across the gardens. It is envisaged that the events spaces could be used in isolation or together to a combined capacity of circa 2,200 guests.



Street Furniture

There will be a variety of street furniture in the Gardens to both attract visits and increase dwell time.



Physical Interventions

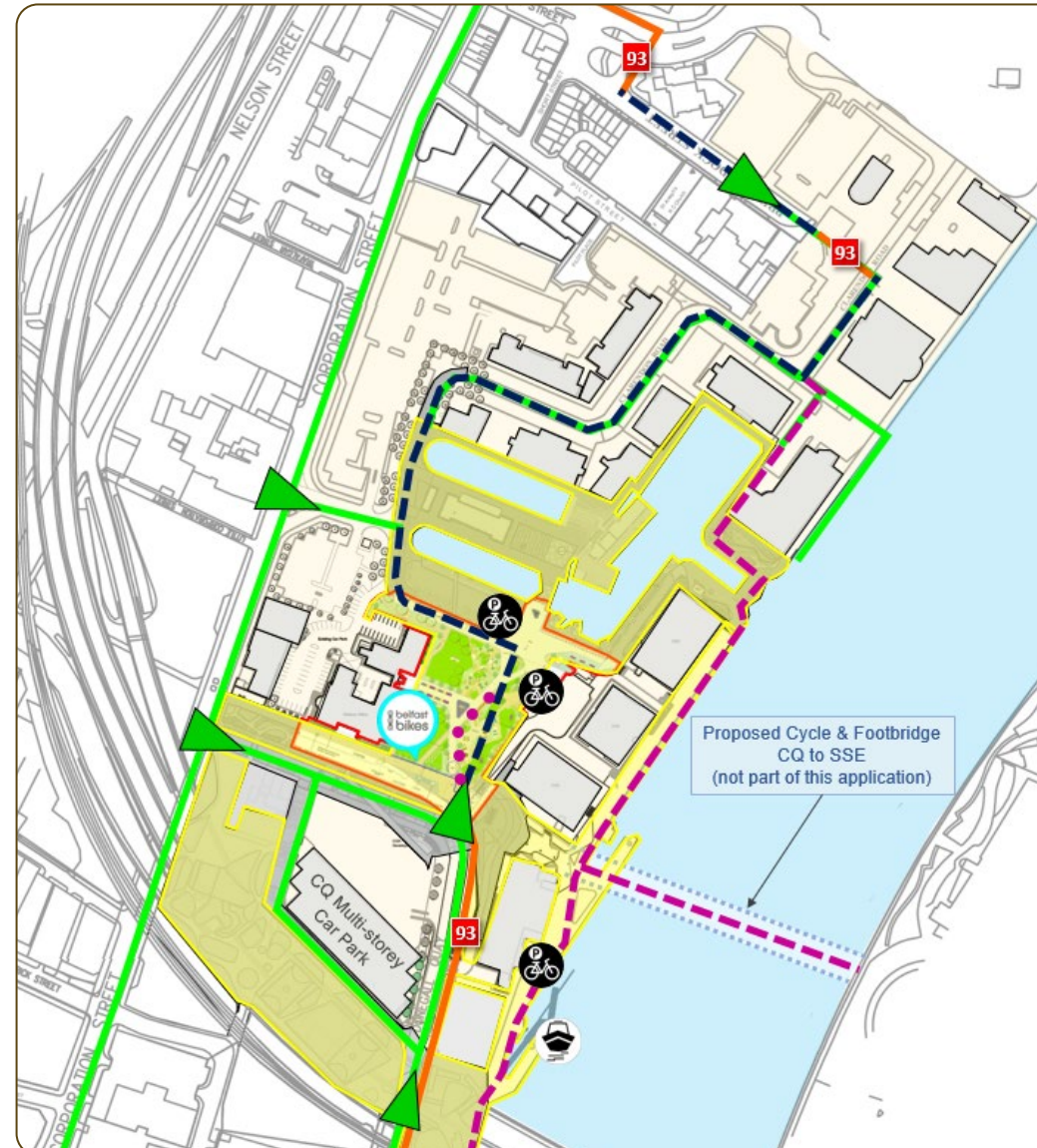
Physical interventions may include street maps, fingerposts, interpretation panels, etc. complemented by digital and interactive wayfinding.



Sustainable Travel

City Quays Gardens will seek to fulfil the following sustainable travel objectives:

- Enhance cycle connections and cycle parking/facilities and be cognisant of the proposed future Lagan pedestrian/cycle bridge.
- Encourage sustainable transport use through integration of public transport (buses, taxis, Belfast Bikes and water taxis) making connections to the wider public transport network.
- Apply Sustainable design and construction, re-greening an urban waterfront into an attractive outdoor space for use by all.



- Active Travel Zone
- Active Travel Access Point
- Active Travel Corridor
- Existing National Cycle Network Traffic-free Route
- Existing Named Cycle Route On-road not on National Cycle Network
- Potential Localised Amendment to Existing Cycle Route
- Possible Alternative Formal Cycle Route
- Cycle Parking
- Belfast Bikes Station
- Water Taxi

Active Travel & Public Transport



Active Travel

City Quays Gardens is proposed as a public realm space permeable to active travel. There is a clear focus on creating sustainable travel and transport in City Quays Gardens in order to meet the wider goal of achieving One Planet Living across the development.

The proposals include a potential off-road alternative cycle route along the waterfront which may also form a direct connection to the possible new pedestrian and cycle bridge. The Gardens will reconnect the National Cycle Network.

The plans will review the possibility of facilitating the relocation and/or extending the existing Belfast Bike Station near the site.



Public Transport

The City Quays Gardens site is in close proximity to a range of public transport halts including Translink metro bus stops and Glider halts and York Street Railway station. It is Belfast Harbour's ambition that the Glider (G2) route will be extended to service City Quays with its already established critical mass of occupiers and visitors.

The site benefits from being located a short walk from the heart of the city and its wider public transport network.



Car Parking

City Quays Gardens seeks to prioritise sustainable and active travel and does not include plans for car parking development (However there is a multi-storey carpark within the City Quays development).

The relocation of some existing surface car parking spaces to the recently constructed City Quays Multi-story Car Park (CQ MCSP) is required for the Phase 1 storey.

Connectivity

City Quays Gardens will play a key role in enhancing connectivity in this area of Belfast and will aim to:

- Create a new outdoor destination space, attracting people to and from the City and the waterfront.
- Minimise the dominance and impact of the Cross Harbour Bridge road infrastructure to unlock connectivity to the city centre and waterfront.
- Better connecting local communities (old and new) to the waterfront and city– Sailortown and North Belfast, East and South Belfast (Short Strand, Markets) Ulster University (new campus students).



Traffic and Access

Access

City Quays Gardens will require the permanent closure of the existing access to Clarendon Dock on Corporation Square. The internal site will only be made accessible to blue light and service vehicles. This will help to encourage active travel use.

The nearest existing internal drop off zone is located outside the City Quays 2 office development.

It will also require the relocation of some existing surface car parking spaces to the recently constructed City Quays Multi-storey Car Park (CQ MSCP).

The suite of street furniture will include a variety of signage and wayfinding elements.

A new city asset

Building on Belfast Harbour's support of Sailortown and North Belfast the Gardens will be an asset on the doorstep in communities, connecting them to the City and vice versa.

Traffic

City Quays Gardens will host some occasional events such as the proposed amphitheatre (80 seat capacity), however its primary daily purpose is a public realm area designed to enhance amenity at City Quays and encourage active travel.

The first phase of the development isn't expected to generate significant vehicular trips to the area during the typical AM and PM peak weekday commuter hours.



The Project team

Belfast Harbour is supported by a multi-disciplinary team taking forward this project:

GILLESPIES

AECOM

RPS


Doran
CONSULTING

Turley

CONSARC

STUDIO
FRACTAL

 semple
mckillop

 WHStephens
EST 1865

Listening to feedback



Community Consultation and COVID-19

In light of the current situation and COVID-19 social distancing measures, new regulations have been introduced to help you provide feedback on our proposals. In line with new guidance, we will be using online tools as well as remote feedback channels to gather your comments on our plans.

To submit a feedback form, please visit www.cqgardens.co.uk. Alternatively, you can request a feedback form and submit your feedback via the channels below:

Write to us



Turley, Hamilton House,
3 Joy Street, Belfast,
BT2 8LE



contact@cqgardens.co.uk

Talk to us



0808 1688 296



www.cqgardens.co.uk

Please visit our website for more information and to find out more about our proposals and how to engage with our team.

Your views are important to us and we welcome all feedback on the new proposals. Please note the deadline for feedback is **Wednesday 20th October**.

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Subject:	TEO High Street Task Force – Call for Evidence
Date:	10 th November 2021
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director, City Regeneration & Development
Contact Officer:	Deirdre Kelly, Programme Manager

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 to inform Members of a TEO High Street Task Force ‘Call for Evidence’ exercise that has recently been launched to gather evidence, data and views on a wide range of high level issues relating to High Streets, to form the basis of policy options for the Executive.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Members of the Committee are asked to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that the Executive Office has launched the High Street Task Force Call for Evidence in order to gather evidence, data and views on a wide range of issues relating to the High Street, with a closing date of 6th December 2021 for responses. Agree that officers prepare a draft response which will be brought via Party Leaders Forum on 25 November with the final response brought back retrospectively to CGR Committee in December. To help inform the final draft the view of Members is also sought in advance of 25 November, either by way of comments at this Committee or by subsequently forwarding to officers.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>High Street Task Force 'Call for Evidence'</u></p> <p>The Executive Office formed the High Street Task Force (HSTF) , which has members drawn from retail; hospitality; local government; academia; the voluntary and community sector; the culture and arts sector; tourism; and trade unions. Through its members the HSTF is working to identify the challenges and issues that our high streets face, and is seeking views on solutions to support high streets and to contribute to the development of thriving and sustainable city, town and village centres.</p>
3.2	<p>The Executive Office launched the High Street Task Force 'Call for Evidence' on 25th October 2021 which will run until 6th December 2021. The Call for Evidence (CfE) is the first stage of an ongoing public engagement process. The CfE document sets out the current understanding of the evidence available relating to high street issues with comments and views invited on this. Responses to the Call for Evidence will inform a draft report and it is proposed that a final report of this ongoing process will be presented to the Executive by Spring 2022.</p>
3.3	<p>Members will be aware of the challenges facing our city centre, the arterial routes and neighbourhood centres. Even prior to the onset of Covid-19 pandemic our high streets, and the retail sector in particular in Belfast, like many other cities, suffered challenges from changes in consumer behaviours including trends towards more online shopping and the desire for enhanced experiences on the high street. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated these changes, with a number of retail closures, many of which were the result of closures of chains of national stores across the UK. The way people shop and the way that communities use their high streets is changing. This changes the nature of what makes a high street successful and it recognised that high streets are having to evolve and adapt. The Call for Evidence, as attached in Appendix 1 of this report,</p>

	<p>provides an opportunity for Council to input to potential future policy options for the Executive, to drive forward the diversification and reimagination of the high street. The Call for Evidence has identified 14 themes which provide an overview of the issues that our high streets currently face:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships • Follow Best Practice • Investment • Planning • Public Realm • Fiscal – including Rates • Capacity • Energy, Climate Change and Sustainability • Housing and other Infrastructure • Getting to and from the High Street • Tourism • Digital High Streets • Rural Settlements • People, Localism and Well-being
3.4	<p>It is proposed that officers develop draft responses to the questions posed in the document and given that the closing date is 6th December, and that the draft response is brought via Party Leaders Forum on 25th November. However the view of Members is sought in advance of 25 November, either by way of any comments they would wish to make at Committee or to forward to officers which will help inform the final draft response. A final copy of the response will be brought back retrospectively to December CG&R Committee. Members can of course separately make their own submissions.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no finance or resource implications associated with this report.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs implications associated with this report.</p>

4.0	Appendices
4.1	Appendix One: High Street Task Force – ‘Call for Evidence’ consultation document



Northern Ireland
Executive

www.northernireland.gov.uk



High Street Task Force

Call for Evidence - 2021

High Street Task Force

Call for Evidence 2021

The Vision:

“Sustainable city, town and village centres which are thriving places for people to do business, socialise, shop, be creative and use public services, as well as being great places to live.”



The
Executive Office

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Ministerial Foreword

We have a bold, ambitious vision: “Sustainable city, town and village centres which are thriving places for people to do business, socialise, shop, be creative and use public services, as well as being great places to live.”

High streets and small businesses are the backbone of our economy and we want to see them thrive now and in the future. They are more than simply places to shop: they are a focal point for the community. People care about their local high streets because they are the centres of their community.

We know that our high streets are changing, and the Executive are committed to helping communities adapt. We also know that restoring the vibrancy of our high streets will take a number of phases over a period of years.

The issues that the High Street Task Force has been considering are found all across our towns and cities, but there cannot be a one-size-fits-all solution. Every high street is different. They each have their own character and personality with traits as unique as the village, town or city where they are located, and, they will need bespoke local solutions.

This call for evidence is an important opportunity for people to have their say and will be an essential step in bringing the vision to life and seeing results “at street level”.

We encourage the widest possible engagement and sharing of views and experiences through this call for evidence. Its findings, together with other data, will inform a draft report and recommendations that will be subject to consultation and equality considerations before a final report is presented for agreement by the Executive by spring 2022.

We look forward to your response to this call for evidence and your ongoing engagement.



Junior Minister Gary Middleton MLA



Junior Minister Declan Kearney MLA

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the wide range of individuals who contributed to the development of this Call for Evidence (CfE). This includes, but is not limited to, colleagues from other Departments and representatives from the business sector, local Government, voluntary and community sectors and professional bodies.

We particularly thank the members of the High Street Task Force:

- Business Alliance
- Department for Agriculture, the Environment and Rural Affairs
- Department for Communities
- Department for Infrastructure
- Department for the Economy
- Department of Finance
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Hospitality Ulster
- Mr Chris Suitor (Business Owner)
- NI Council for Voluntary Action
- NI Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- NI Local Government Association
- NI Retail Consortium
- Queen's University Belfast
- Retail NI
- Social Enterprise NI
- SOLACE – The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives
- Ulster University
- USDAW – The Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

Key Dates and Purpose of this Document

Opening: 25 October 2021

Closing: 6 December 2021

This CfE is open from 25 October 2021 until 6 December 2021. We are keen to hear from a wide range of bodies, groups and individuals across society.

This CfE is the first stage in an ongoing public engagement process. The CfE document sets out the current understanding of the evidence available relating to high street issues and we invite comments and views on this.

Its publication is supported by a series of focused engagement events, including public workshop sessions.

Responses to the questions in this CfE will be analysed along with other evidence and information to form the basis of policy options for the Executive. A summary of findings will be published on the Executive Office website following the completion of the CfE.

Note that, due to COVID-19 restrictions, all engagement activities may be conducted using a virtual platform.

How to Respond

All responses should arrive no later than 6 December 2021 and early responses are encouraged.

There are questions in each section of the document. Please respond to as many, or as few, as you wish.

There are four options available for response. The online option is the easiest and preferred option. If you wish to request a hard copy, please contact us by email or post.

1. Online – Accessible at:
<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/dfc-analytical-services-unit/high-streets-call-for-evidence>
2. Email – highstreet@communities-ni.gov.uk
 - a. With “High Street Call for Evidence 2021” as the subject line.
3. Postal – Send responses to:

High Street Call for Evidence 2021
High Street Task Force
Level 4
Department for Communities
9 Lanyon Place
Belfast
BT1 3LP
4. Workshops – Details on where and when the workshops will be held will be made available on the Executive Office website and can be accessed here:
www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/call-evidence-high-street-task-force

Accessibility

We can provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable.

We liaise with representatives of young people and disability and minority ethnic organisations and take account of existing and developing good practice. We will respond to requests for information in alternative formats in a timely manner.

We will use a range of communications channels to enable wide access to information. Some members of the public may not have access to a computer to obtain information from websites. The Department will consider a range of communication methods to ensure wide access to its information. We will respond positively to requests for access to information to meet user needs.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Call for Evidence Responses

The Executive will publish responses on the nidirect website at <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/> . If a respondent is an individual acting in a private capacity, they should indicate whether or not they wish their name to be withheld or disclosed when responding.

Where responses from companies and individuals responding in a professional capacity are to be published, the Department will remove contact details only.

Responses to this Call for Evidence may be subject to requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). All disclosures will be in line with this legislation. If you feel that information that you provide should be treated as private or confidential, please explain why so that we can take this into consideration.

All personal data will be processed in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018/UK General Data Protection Regulations (UKGDPR).

For more information, please see our privacy notice Privacy Notice in Annex A.

Introduction

Our high streets are changing. The way in which we work, live, shop, access services, enjoy leisure and travel is continually changing and moving away from the traditional high street experience. This change has been and continues to be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Retail trends, the prevailing economic mood and the broader business landscape create an uncertain backdrop. Businesses, sectors, employees and communities have experienced an unprecedented impact which continues to affect our high streets and beyond.

The Executive Office formed the High Street Task Force (HSTF) with a view to identify the challenges and issues that our high streets face, and to oversee the development of solutions and actions that can be taken to support our high streets with the strategic aim to contribute to the development of thriving and sustainable city, town and village centres. Collectively, the HSTF membership includes a range of business representatives from retail; hospitality; local government; academia; the voluntary and community sector; the culture and arts sector; tourism; and trade unions. Together, they represent considerable experience and expertise, along with economic and social acumen.

The vision of the HSTF is: *“Sustainable city, town and village centres which are thriving places for people to do business, socialise, shop, be creative and use public services, as well as being great places to live.”* It is a vision that will require everyone working together and the broadest possible buy-in from those who live and use our high streets. It will need partnership and a focus on delivery, and it will very much be a long-term project. Transformation will not happen overnight and significant work has already been undertaken in getting us to this point.

Right across society, there is a desire for our high streets to succeed. They are more than simply places to shop: they are a focal point for the community and the HSTF membership will use its networks to ensure a balanced approach that reaches across the entire region.

With this, comes the understanding that it cannot be a one-size-fits-all solution. Every high street is different. They each have their own character and personality,

with traits as unique as the village, town or city where they are located, and they will need bespoke local solutions.

We need to seize control of that change and create a new vision of thriving high streets where retail and hospitality, amongst others, can play their part. This vision is about building something new; not about resisting change or reinventing the past. The key lesson from other places is that no single sector can provide all of the solution. We need to see high streets as diverse business ecosystems that meet the needs of communities.

The HSTF appreciates the size and scale of the challenge ahead but does so with an ambition and a desire to succeed.

This Call for Evidence is the first formal stage in the strategy development and your participation is welcomed and encouraged. The responsibility for high streets rests with many and, therefore, the solutions are something that we must design and tackle together.

Making this happen will require substantial institutional, regulatory and policy change. We recognise that the solutions to these deep-rooted challenges require all of us across government to work together in new ways.

The Context

The problems facing our village, town and city centre high streets predate COVID-19, the 2007 economic crisis and internet shopping. The way people shop and the way that communities use their high streets is changing. This changes the nature of what makes a high street successful. High streets are having to evolve and adapt.

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the resultant impact on village, town and city centres has reinforced the need for a coordinated strategic response to both the immediate and longer-term recovery priorities for our town and city centres.

On 23 March 2020, UK high streets, town and city centres effectively closed for business. Most retailers, offices, restaurants, bars, coffee shops, cultural and leisure destinations shut their doors, as only essential businesses were allowed to stay open. Technology has meant that whilst many office-based businesses have been disrupted, working from home has been possible and new ways of working have materialised.

The impact on retail and hospitality has been much more widespread and damaging. Many have looked to new business models, offering take away options, online delivery or digital services. Others furloughed their staff to survive financially. In addition, other sectors, which play a key role in the vibrancy of town and city centres, such as arts and cultural venues, tourist attractions and event venues, have been impacted.

We need a fundamental reinvention of our high streets. It will require new levels of partnership between the Executive, councils, business and wider society to it. Since the start of the pandemic, leaders in our town centres have been managing its impact with the certainty that the 'old normal' is not a recipe for the long-term future. As habits change, our retail sector and high streets must change too.

The Task

The HSTF has been established to contribute to:-

- ***developing the strategic approach to delivering the vision and responding to the economic and social challenges facing village, town and city centres;***
- ***building and strengthening the partnerships that will deliver the strategic response; and***
- ***building the capacity needed to achieve the vision.***

The HSTF provides the opportunity to shift the perception of the high street away from the traditional economic model and towards a more complex one that addresses social, environmental and economic sustainability.

The HSTF has looked at problems, challenges, and concerns. It has questioned what good practice is; has developed key principles that can be used across any size of high street and has set out outcomes that it wants to see achieved, including sustainable regeneration. It has examined the outputs needed to deliver those outcomes and considered what best practice looks like locally, nationally and internationally.

It has also asked: “What is a high street? What are the key constituents? Who is the client/user? Can we see a clear trajectory? How does density and scale affect the solution, and, looking to the future, what are the key forces acting on the street?”

This is a rare opportunity to set in tow a model of good capacity practice for the next Programme for Government, for example; with locality-based budgets, cross-departmentally and across government tiers, and drawing on existing work such as Rural Catalyst Pilots, Urban Village Renewal and scoping adaptations tailored for and by each settlement.

The Vision

The vision of the High Street Task Force is:

“Sustainable city, town and village centres which are thriving places for people to do business, socialise, shop, be creative and use public services, as well as being great places to live.”

A Shared Responsibility

The challenges currently faced by village, town and city centres cannot be addressed by one government Department working in isolation. They require action not just by central government Departments but partnership working that also includes councils, non-governmental bodies and the business community.

No matter how good the government policy is, it needs to be implemented properly, and that will only happen if all key stakeholders are ‘bought in’ – politicians, communities, developers, business and others.

A Call for Action

The achievement of the HSTF vision will require sustained effort over time; reflected in legislation, policy and strategy, as well as front-line delivery. It will need a collaborative approach, with villages, towns, cities and councils competing for funding. Policies will be required to operate in the same space, multiple funding streams will need a more joined-up approach, and a local focus on delivery will be required. Further to this, we will need to capitalise on uniqueness, build on strengths and recognise that not one size fits all.

What Does a Good High Street Look Like?

There is a need to define what good practice looks like. However, this cannot be a proscriptive definition but rather should be a set of guiding principles.

A good high street is likely to have many or all of the following characteristics:

- Accessible and connected;
- Easier to get to and move around in;
- Welcoming and safe;
- Has unique characteristics and culture;
- Collaborative, responsible and ongoing;
- Enjoyable;
- Has a diversity of uses and activities;
- Is a nicer place to be;
- Has a better mix of uses so that more people will want to go there, spend time, live and do business there;
- Has found a way of managing them well.

What are the key issues?

- Recovery from Coronavirus and beyond;
- Developing a new strategic approach;
- Climate change – adaptation and mitigation;
- Planning principles;
- Vacancies;
- Housing;
- Public Transport (including active travel);
- Rates;
- Tourism;
- Digital High Streets;
- Rural settlements;
- People, localism and well-being.

Themes and Questions

The 14 themes listed in this Call for Evidence provide an overview of the issues that our high streets currently face. The key considerations and issues have been listed in bullet form to show the initial thoughts gathered so far and set the scene for further ideas to be gathered through the Call for Evidence.

The questions for each theme are then listed and mirror those provided in the online version.

Theme 1: Partnerships

The HSTF will seek to encourage partnerships with public, private and third sector partners, locally, regionally and nationally. This could require the consideration of:

- Government, local authorities, the wider public sector, businesses and communities must put the health of village, town and city centres at the heart of decision making and deliver the best local outcomes, align policies and target available resources to prioritise town centre sites, encouraging vibrancy, equality and diversity.
- Champions are needed to lead the way forward and to involve those who live and work in our town centres in the decision making.
- More coordination and joined-up working, partnership and reorganisation of the key statutory functions is needed to bring about effective change more quickly.
- Correct powers, appropriately devolved, need to be in place to deliver interventions.
- A recognition that this a long-term approach.
- Our councils have a key role in the localism agenda and the Executive need to consider the devolution of regeneration and other powers to them so that they can play a fuller role in the recovery process.
- We need interim solutions.
- We need to determine what has worked well and has not worked.

Theme 1: Questions

1. What are the key issues for partnerships?
2. What powers should local partnerships have to make them more effective?
3. What changes to legislation, policies, processes or procedures could transform partnerships on the high street?

Theme 2: Follow Best Practice

The HSTF approach to developing best practice is to assess good practice from other places and adapt this so that 'best practice' becomes a unique 'right practice' for our local high streets. This could require the consideration of:

- Looking at best practice locally, nationally and internationally.
- The importance of community planning, in which public sector organisations work in partnership with the private sector, local communities and the community and voluntary sector to identify and solve local problems, improve services and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of an area.

Theme 2: Questions

4. What is best practice for the management of the high street?
5. What expert help is needed to develop best practice?
6. What changes are needed to legislation, procedures and processes to improve best practice and transform community planning on the high street?

Theme 3: Investment

The high street needs ways of dealing with investment that will support innovation, help renewal and create thriving high streets. Investment is not only needed for buildings and digital infrastructure, but also for developing people and communities. This could require the consideration of:

- More specific funding streams and schemes are required to promote and encourage residential living
- Funding streams and workforces should be aligned.
- Specific funding schemes to promote and encourage wider provision of community services.
- A better understanding and clarity on the availability of funding streams.
- Place-based budgeting.
- The residential Urban Development Grant scheme should be revived.
- More focused funding for village, town and city centre promotions.
- Incentives to deal with long-term vacancies.
- Clarity on priority investment area(s) is needed.

Theme 3: Questions

7. What are the key issues for investment?
8. Is information on funding easy to find?
9. Which of the following funds would support the development of the high street? Pick as many or as few as you wish.
 - a. High Street Transformation
 - b. Residential Living
 - c. Urban Development Grant
 - d. Other (Please comment below)

Theme 4: Planning

In addressing planning for the high street, our challenge will be to contribute to the delivery of a fair and inclusive planning system for people, communities and businesses. This could require a review of the planning system, its impact on the high street and the consideration of:

- Village, town and city centre masterplans.
- Promoting a “Town Centre First” principle to encourage the public sector to continue to invest in town centres and help communities thrive.
- More flexible planning policies are required to enable repurposing.
- Strong diversification of town centres is needed to include, but not limited to: housing, community uses, leisure, offices and outdoor spaces.
- Actions are needed to address vacancy and dereliction on the High Street.
- A five-year moratorium on major out-of-town retail applications should be considered.
- A stricter “town centre first” approach, more Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and a joined-up approach to regeneration.
- An approach to increase population living and working in our high street.

Theme 4: Questions

10. Are you aware of village, town and city centre masterplans?

11. What are the key planning issues?

12. Would you support a temporary ban on out-of-town retail developments?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, for how long?

13. What changes to legislation, policies, processes or procedures could transform high street planning for the better?

Theme 5: Public Realm

The Public Realm is defined as the space around, between and within buildings that are publicly accessible, including streets, squares, parks and open spaces. These are the everyday spaces that we move through and socialise within and the places where we live, work and play. This could require the consideration of:

- Creating better ways of delivering Public Realm that are cleaner and greener.
- Public Realm “smart” towns with green spaces that are decluttered, eco-friendly, sustainable and better connected.
- Promoting high-quality design to ensure that our town centres provide sustainable, attractive, accessible and safe environments.
- Town centres should be clean, vibrant and attractive if visitors are to be encouraged to visit and stay.

Theme 5: Questions

14. What are your views on the high street environment?
15. What could be done to change the perception of the Public Realm?
16. What improvements are needed in your high street?
17. What is a priority for Public Realm projects in the high street?
18. What would make town-centre living more attractive?

Theme 6: Fiscal - Including Rates

Fiscal policy is how government taxation and spending policies are used to influence economic conditions. This affects demands on employment, inflation, goods and services, and economic growth. This could require the consideration of:

- Reform the tax system to ensure that sufficient revenue to pay for public services whilst ensuring that the tax burden is fair.
- A fundamental reform and review of commercial and business rates in village, town and city centres. (NI Reval 2023)
- A targeted approach to rates for small businesses.
- Our high streets have the highest vacancy rates in the UK. We need to develop a policy response to address vacancies and rates.

Theme 6: Questions

19. What tax and rating reforms are needed to help stimulate the high street economy?
20. What actions should be taken to reduce vacancy rates on the high street?
21. Do you believe that legislation is required to change fiscal policy?

Theme 7: Capacity

Capacity refers to the built, social, spatial, and infrastructural strengths and opportunities to transform to produce significant and measurable change. This could require the consideration of:

- A capacity mapping and pilots exercise similar to that undertaken by the HSTF in England should be developed for our region, utilising Ministerial Advisory Group data and knowledge, and resourced and contemporised by HSTF funds. This should be council area coordinated and community led.
- Greater High Street inclusion for Community Wealth Building Pilots, community planning, with greater formal and allocated cross-departmental investment in each. Community Wealth Building Pilots are an investment model to enable local communities to increase co-operative asset ownership, anchor jobs and resources locally, and ensure local community economic stability and democratic control.
- Develop HSTF capacity by investment in hubs by location, and, if desired at community level.

Theme 7: Questions

22. What is the priority for capacity mapping and pilot exercises?

23. What capacity skills need to be developed?

24. What should be created to support the development of high street capacity?

- a. Community funds
- b. Locality budgets
- c. Sector schemes
- d. Expert advice
- e. Workshops
- f. Collaborative approach
- g. Other (Please comment below)

Theme 8: Energy, Climate Change and Sustainability

Our environment is our most important asset and is crucial to each and every one of us. It is one of the main reasons that people from other countries and regions visit, bringing money into the local economy. It affects our economy, our health and well-being, and it facilitates social interaction. Building, through construction, renovation and repurposing, also plays a key role in emissions reduction. This could require the consideration of:

- The carbon impact of interventions during design, to reduce the carbon footprint and increase sustainable development.
- Carbon reduction measures in existing and future infrastructures in our high streets should be dynamically addressed.
- Blue-green infrastructures, which are strategically planned networks of natural and semi-natural areas to enhance the biodiversity designed and managed to support a wide range of ecosystem services, could assist with the greening of our urban environments, facilitate better water management and support safer, cleaner, sustainable spaces. This will allow interconnectivity, provide recreation spaces and help communities to connect and to thrive economically and socially.
- Examine incentives for repurposing existing buildings to address embodied energy, increase energy efficiency and use of renewable energy.

Theme 8: Questions

25. What actions should be adopted to provide greener urban environments?
26. What incentives should there be for repurposing buildings? (Tick as many or as few as you wish)
- a. Environmental grants
 - b. Loans
 - c. Reduced rates
 - d. Other (if you pick "Other" please expand on your answer)
27. Should existing buildings, including our heritage assets, play an enhanced role in transforming the High Street?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

Theme 9: Housing and Other Infrastructure

Good quality, affordable and sustainable housing is central to reducing housing stress, homelessness and improving housing solutions for the most vulnerable. This could require the consideration of:

- Policies and strategies to address quality, quantity and availability of housing to encourage people to live in and around high streets.
- We should ensure that these are not just transient communities but that they are attractive to families.
- We should consider space standards, access to services and the living over the shops scheme.

Theme 9: Questions

28. What strategies are needed to encourage people to live in and around the high street?

29. What key services should be available for high street residents?

- a. Health
- b. Housing
- c. Education
- d. Leisure
- e. Other (if you pick "Other" please expand on your answer)

30. How do we engage communities more effectively?

31. How will housing developments improve areas of deprivation in high streets, rural villages, town and city centres?

Theme 10: Getting To and From the High Street

Getting to and within villages, towns and cities is at the heart of urban regeneration and positively impacts local and regional economies. It unlocks development potential and as a result, many places and communities have seen increased regeneration, investment and employment. This could require the consideration of:

- Ensure that our town centres are well served with public transport provision and supporting infrastructure.
- Promote policies to encourage walking, cycling and the accessibility and quality of environment. This could link to the 15-minute neighbourhood concept.
- Maintain and improve accessibility to, and within, village, town and city centres.
- Parking, including issues such as charging, free or time-limited parking, especially in the levelling-up context.
- Reduce the appeal of commuter and out-of-town parking.
- Incentivise employers to promote the use of public transport.

Theme 10: Questions

32. How do you get to your high street? (Tick all that apply)

- a. Walk
- b. Car
- c. Bus
- d. Train
- e. Cycle
- f. Taxi
- g. Other (if you pick "Other" please expand on your answer)

33. What would make your journey to and from your high street easier?

34. What changes to legislation, policies, processes or procedures would encourage walking and cycling?

35. What are your views on high street parking?

Theme 11: Tourism

Tourism is a major contributor to the economic well-being of our villages, towns and cities. Its development could include:

- A review of policy and regulations including support for hotels.
- Recognising the importance of sustainable town centres to meet the expectations of the tourist of the future. This will mean being able to provide a critical mass of services for accommodation, hospitality outlets and a thriving night-time economy.
- Develop the unique and visitor attractiveness of our high streets and remodel their marketing to reflect that.

Theme 11: Questions

36. How do we engage with communities to promote tourism?
37. What changes to legislation, policies, processes or procedures should be made to develop tourism on the high street?
38. Are you aware of an innovative tourism project that could help your high street?

Theme 12: Digital High Streets

Online shopping has impacted our high streets. As well as the opportunities, consideration of the concerns and issues could include:

- Complementing existing business models to allow additional flexibility and resilience to react and survive during what are still uncertain times. Going online will also open up opportunities to reach new markets and new consumer demand.
- In addition to online innovation and diversification, the high street needs to be offering something different that cannot be delivered or experienced online.
- We need data-driven insights into the social media conversations that matter with ways to understand the audience and how to make better connections to reach them, such as their preferences.
- Promoting local products, services and trades.
- Considering the potential for strategies such as data and IT training.

Theme 12: Questions

39. What aspects of a digital high street are important?

40. What digital innovations would help your high street?

41. What more needs to be done to improve digital skills?

Theme 13: Rural Settlements

Rural development is vital not just for individuals in rural areas but also for economic growth. Rural development will help improve productivity and stability in social and economic development. It enhances the quality of life and financial well-being of individuals, specifically those living in rural areas, but it also has major impacts on those in urban environments. This could require the consideration of:

- Providing support for rural settlements, including consideration of the social, environmental and economic role of settlements in a new era of connected working.
- Maximising the opportunities of the Department for the Economy-led Project Stratum that will bring high-speed broadband and connectivity to rural settlements.
- Invest in and provide a tailored and seamless approach.
- Village high street development

Theme 13: Questions

42. What changes to legislation, process and procedures are needed for village developments?
43. How could funding for rural settlements be made easier?
44. What innovative initiatives would improve village economies?

Theme 14: People, Localism and Well-being

Places need to be compelling, to encourage communities to support economies, products and services that promote and improve the health and well-being of residents and the wider community. People need to feel connected, and community networks can support these links. This could include:

- The High Streets Task Force in England describes this regeneration framework as four Rs: repositioning, reinventing, rebranding and restructuring. These 'four Rs' require a new vision, a changed offer to consumers, better stakeholder communication and changing the governance of our high streets.
- Part of the solution to this challenge lies in fully developing and implementing the concept of 'localism' to repurpose our village, town and city centres as unique hubs at the heart of our community.
- Localism is not just about supporting independent retailers; it is also about empowering people and communities to reshape and repurpose their local villages, towns and city centres and reinvigorate the leadership model.
- Considering the impact of the Living Wage on equality and on people wanting to work on the high street.

Theme 14: Questions

45. Are you aware of any initiatives that would improve localism in your community?
46. What is the most important aspect for creating well-being in the community?

Annex A

Privacy Notice

High Street Task Force (HSTF)

Data Controller Name: Department for Communities

Address: Causeway Exchange, 1 -7 Bedford Street, Belfast BT2 7EG

Email: DPO@communities-ni.gov.uk

Why are you processing my personal information?

The High Street Call for Evidence, launched on 25th October 2021, seeks evidence, data and views on High Street issues. The lawful basis for processing data provided to the Department during this consultation is in the UK GDPR at Article 6(1)(e) and Article 9(2)(g)). The personal data collected in this consultation exercise will be used for analysis and reporting of consultation responses.

Which categories of personal data are you processing?

The personal data we are expecting to receive and handle will consist of your name, address, email address, and any additional personal data you provide in your responses. If you are responding as a commercial/business entity, then some elements of your contact details may not be personal data.

Where do you get my personal data from?

If we hold your personal data in relation to this Call for Evidence, then you will have sent it to us when you submitted your consultation response.

Do you share my personal data with anyone else?

During the Call for Evidence analysis, responses will be analysed and responses may be published on the Department for Communities website.

Do you transfer my personal data to other countries?

No.

How long to do you keep my personal data?

The data you provide in your response will be retained on the Department's Record Management system for seven years in line with the Department's Retention and Disposal Schedule.

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- You have the right to object to the processing, in specific circumstances.
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If you are still not happy, 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

Tel: 0303 123 1113

Email: casework@ico.org.uk

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





Subject:	DfC Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme Update
Date:	10 th November 2021
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director, City Regeneration & Development
Contact Officer:	Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager, City Regeneration and Development

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Some time in the future

Never

☐
☐
☐
☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To update Members on the progress of the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the updates on the DfC Revitalisation Programme projects contained within this paper and the continued importance of the use of streets and spaces to assist businesses and communities as part of a wider programme of work focused on Reimagining the Public Realm. To note the progress and completion of a number of projects within the programme with further detail to be provided in a presentation to this Committee Meeting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note, in respect of the Castle Place Hub project, the current position and in particular the request from DfC to the Council to take ownership of the new kiosk at Castle Place. • To agree the proposed approach (as below) in terms of the Council taking ownership of the new Castle Place kiosk subject to approval of the business case by DfC and approval by SPR Committee on the transfer of the kiosk to Council and relevant licences and business case implications.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>The CG&R Committee have received regular updates and provided approvals relating to the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme - a £4.039m programme funded via DfC, DfI and DEARA to bring forward and deliver a range of economic, cultural and physical interventions to support businesses to trade efficiently during the Covid-19 restrictions and to maximise and create more outdoor space for businesses.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Progress</u></p> <p>In terms of progress on delivery of the Programme, at the end of September a total of £2.6m has been spent or directly allocated to delivery partners with a forecast to complete the programme by March 2022. As previously reported, officers are continuing to work with contractors and delivery partners to minimise the impacts of the global supply and contractor availability issues. The majority of the procurement is now complete, and contract works programmes are been finalised with suppliers and contractors for the remaining work packages, minimising the impacts of these issues and further reports will be brought to this Committee as appropriate.</p>
3.3	<p>The following sections provide an outline of a few of the projects recently completed to date and projects in progress, with Appendix 1 Table providing a summary overview of the projects being delivered as part of the overall programme. Appendix 2 sets out the detail of the wide range of projects being delivered as part of the Business Cluster Community Grants. Members are also asked to note that a presentation will be provided to this Committee meeting providing further detail on the projects delivered through the Revitalisation Programme.</p> <p>Sustainable and Active Travel (DfI Funded as part of the DfC Revitalisation Fund)</p>

	<p>The following are some of the projects currently being delivered:</p>
3.4	<p><u>Queens University Active Travel Hub</u> involves the completion of a new active travel hub, jointly funded by the Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme and QUB to encourage more people to choose cycling as a means of transport in and around the city, officially opened and launched on 17th September 21. The hub will be operated by social enterprise Big Loop Bikes and is one strand of the Universities goal to reach net-zero carbon emissions as set within their Strategy 2030</p>
3.5	<p><u>Cathedral Gardens Active Travel Hub</u> is currently awaiting planning approval with delivery expected in February 2022. The tender for the construction works is now complete and pending appointment and the Expression of Interest for the preferred operator has now closed and officers are currently assessing the returns.</p>
3.6	<p><u>The e-cargo bike scheme</u> – a pilot scheme that aims to improve air quality, reduce kerb parking and congestion by providing a sustainable delivery option for first mile/last mile/onforwarding and only mile deliveries has been appointed to local company, Streetdock. Streetdock are currently mobilising to commence operations in December 2021.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Bolder Vision</u></p> <p>On the 30th September we launched a 12 week public consultation on ‘A Bolder Vision for Belfast’ Reimagining our City Centre – an ambitious connectivity blueprint for the city centre on how to create a vibrant place, support our economy and our health and well-being. A detailed report on the Bolder Vision is included on the Agenda for this Committee Meeting, and the projects been brought forward by the Revitalisation Programme form a key element in the development of the Bolder Vision and how the city can better use its spaces and places.</p>
3.8	<p>Business Cluster & Community Grants [£10k - £25k capital grants]</p> <p>To bring forward this capital grants scheme for citywide environmental improvement schemes, proposals were sought on interventions that would support business operation and recovery; enhance physical spaces; increase civic participation and sense of ownership; and encourage people to live, work, visit and invest in local areas. A total £1,067,204 has been approved for some 51 applications with 7 successful city centre</p>

	<p>applications and 44 successful applications outside city centre. This grant programme is supporting 35 Community Groups and Social Enterprises and 16 business clusters across the city, with a full list including project description included within Appendix 2 of this report. This funding allocation comprises £700k of funding from the Revitalisation Programme and £450k from BCC as previously reported to this Committee.</p>
3.9	<p>As of end of September £750k has been provided to the successful applicants and officers continue to work with the remaining successful applicants in conjunction with the Integrated Design Team to secure relevant statutory approvals and support delivery of the projects.</p> <p><u>Ongoing Projects:</u></p>
3.10	<p>Castle Place Kiosk</p> <p>This project involves the creation of new public realm and streetscape enhancements within a key junction of the city centre, including the extension of the existing pavement width, reallocation of road space to create a new cycle lane and the creation of a new kiosk that offers a unique city centre kiosk and key attractor located in a prime retail pitch. This project forms a significant project in terms of informing the future treatment of this central city centre location, incorporating enhanced public space encouraging footfall and dwell time, with segregated active travel infrastructure and unique architecture that incorporates the cultural and historical significance of the conservation area.</p>
3.11	<p>This joint DfI/DfC/BCC project was agreed to have DfI installing the roadworks, BCC delivering the Kiosk build and above ground elements, and DfC to undertake the long-term ownership and operation of the kiosk structure.</p>
3.12	<p>DfI have commenced the road realignment works and are due to complete works in early November. DfC were in the process of applying for a Streetworks licence for the structure and had underwent an advertisement process to appoint a preferred operator for the kiosk. Following receipt of 16 applications DfC commenced discussions with a preferred operator and have removed their existing kiosk from this location to make way for the new kiosk. BCC has awarded the contract for the fabrication and installation of the kiosk.</p>
3.13	<p>With regards to the new Kiosk, DfC have recently informed the Council that, on further consideration of the proposal, they do not in fact have the statutory vires to enable them to undertake the ownership of the kiosk and, following detailed discussions, have requested</p>

3.14	<p>that the Council considers undertaking the long-term ownership of the new kiosk. To enable this a number of considerations need to be made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Committee (CG&R and SP&R) approval is for BCC to install the kiosk with ownership transferring to DfC on completion. • Undertaking the ownership of the kiosk will have a resource and revenue tail implication for Council. DfC have requested that Council submit a business case to DfC that outlines the implications and any revenue tail implications associated with this new asset for consideration. However, it should be noted that the operator marketing process undertaken by DfC and subsequent operator proposal was predicated on an annual lease to the operator with a rent payable and the operator being responsible for rates and Public Indemnity and contents insurance. • BCC will need to undertake their own marketing exercise to secure an operator and thereafter enter into an appropriate lease agreement, which will involve future landlord lease management responsibilities. • BCC would be required to undertake a Streetworks licence from DfI <p>A business case is currently been prepared to submit to DfC outlining the financial implications to the Council and seeking appropriate financial recompense arrangements from DfC to offset this. Prior to formally responding to DfC on this matter Committee is asked to consider agreeing to this approach, which will be subject to approval of the business case by DfC [regarding financial implications] and approval by SPR Committee on the transfer of the kiosk to Council and relevant licences and any business case implications, as well as future approval to any lease agreements.</p>
3.15	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The capital costs associated with the identified projects are met by the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme with additional funding from BCC as identified in 3.8 of this report.</p> <p>As above, a business case is being submitted to DfC in respect of the Castle Place Kiosk to address any financial implications for Council and requesting appropriate financial recompense from DfC to offset this. The intention is to market the kiosk and secure an operator on a lease /tenancy arrangement with an annual rent and responsibility for other outgoings as appropriate.</p>
3.16	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>

	Impact assessment complete on overall programme and kept under review
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	Appendix 1 – DfC Covid19 Revitalisation Programme - status overview Appendix 2 – Business Cluster & Community Grant details

Appendix 1 - DfC Covid19 Revitalisation Programme – NOVEMBER 2021 status overview

Programme Headline Category	Project	RAG	Status
Revenue funding	Additional Street Cleansing & Neighbourhood Safety		Complete
	Belfast Gift Card		Complete
Enhanced Christmas Offering including animation, lighting and marketing	Marketing & branding		Complete
	Animation		Complete
	Feature Lighting Linen Quarter		In progress - procurement underway; works approved within terms of Streetworks license.
	Feature Lighting BID One		In progress - full planning application submitted; contractor appointed. Wayleave agreements in progress.
	Feature Lighting Cathedral Quarter Bid		In progress - procurement underway.
Signage & Dressing	Public Safety signage and messaging		Complete
	Public messaging and communication		Complete
	Adelaide Street - parklet and public realm		In progress: 100% funded by DfI. Business case submitted and approved. The materials for works ordered and works have been scheduled for delivery – delivery is hoped prior to Christmas embargo period, Officers working with DfI to secure a delivery programme.
Physical Interventions & Streetscape Improvements	Covid-19 Business Grants (up to £2.5k)		454 businesses have claimed their funding allocations. The closing date for all claims was the 25 th June. The total amount of funding delivered through the scheme was £801,609 .
	Business Cluster & Community Grants (capital grants £10 - £25k)		In progress: 51 applications approved totalling £1.1m. Officers liaising with organisations to support delivery/progress statutory approvals.
	Entries and Lanes Phase 2		In progress - tactical regeneration schemes to transform a number of pedestrian links, such as Sugarhouse Entry, College St Mews, Pattersons Place, High St Entry and Exchange

			Place/Warehouse Entry. Work is progressing with Contractors appointed and delivery to be complete during early 2022.
	Union Street Pedestrianisation		In progress – Statutory Road Orders in place and contractor procurement complete. Planning application submitted. Article 73 being processed by DfI. Funding Agreement in process of being issued to the BID.
	Cathedral Quarter - Exchange Place/Warehouse Entry		In progress - contractor procurement complete. Planning application submitted. Article 73 being processed by DfI. Funding Agreement in process of being issued to the BID.
	Castle Place Hub		In progress: Procurement completed. Civils works (by DfI) for public realm have commenced. Working through planning issues re new Kiosk. Ownership issue regarding new Kiosk, post construction – to be considered.
	Linen Quarter Hub		In progress: Planning approved for Brunswick St. Social and hoarding Streetworks license approved. Container exterior and interior fit-out design agreed with operator - ordered and to be installed in January 2022 Linen Quarter branding and signage subject to ongoing Planning process.
Access & Connectivity	Linen Quarter Parklets		Completed (launched 2 July).
	Linen Quarter Boardwalk		Boardwalk fabrication to commence following the installation of the Bedford St. parklet. To be installed by January 22.
	DfC and DfI Budget allocation for Bolder Vision Phase 2		In progress - Phase 2 commenced and progressing on programme – consultation is open and engagement activity ongoing.
	City Wide Parklets		Included within Community & Business Cluster Grant funding. Update as above
Sustainable active travel initiatives	Connectivity Scheme in Church Lane area		In progress - Procurement complete. Planning application in progress for submission.
	Replacement/upgrade of Belfast Bikes		Completed
	Expanding Belfast Bike network		In progress - Order placed for 4 new docking stations (as agreed CGR May).
	Electric Bike Trial <i>[E-cargo delivery pilot]</i>		Completed – operated now appointed due to be on the streets December.
	Covered Citywide cycle stands		In progress – supplier has been appointed, locations identified and agreed. Delivery to be complete by Jan 22.

	Expanding Sustainable Transport Hub network <i>[Cathedral Gardens ATH; QUB Cycle Hub]</i>		QUB Bike Hub – Completed and launched 17 Sept 21. Cathedral Gardens ATH – In progress: awaiting planning approval with delivery expected by Feb 21.
Monitoring & Evaluation	UU Study allocation		In progress - nearing completion
	Monitoring & evaluation of the Revitalisation Programme		In progress - procurement scoping; reliant on programme completion

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Applicant	Business Cluster or Community Group	Summary of Project
EastSide Partnership	Business Cluster	Installation of an outdoor social space to act as Ballyhackamore's de-facto village centre - includes contemporary seating (incorporating heritage interpretation), bicycle parking, planters with seasonal flora and fauna as well as a bespoke covered area to be used as a year-round event space for local businesses and/or community-based organisations.
North Belfast Working Mens' Club	Community Group	Works include improve the facade facing onto Danube Street, creating disabled access to the pavilion, by the modification of exterior entrances to buildings and also to green, by significant improvements to the perimeter around the bowling green, to the veranda to the pavilion and to create a sheltered and heated patio.
Sailortown Regeneration	Community Group	This is a collaborative project to provide well designed and people friendly interventions to the streetscape of Sailortown. It also aims to encourage outdoor activities, while supporting local businesses through covid challenges and in the future.
Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	Community Group	Improvements on land around the association's building to include new seating, planters, bike parking, shelter and lighting.
Colin Glen Trust	Community Group	Improvement to the park by introducing new and additional benches, picnic tables, bins, landscaping, planting and shrubbery to encourage people to visit and use Colin Glen as an enticing outdoor space for those who wish to spend time in an urban forest park setting.
East Belfast Mission	Community Group	Improvements to store fronts at Refresh Café in Skainos Square and our restore Shops on the Newtownards Road, Connswater Retail Park, Skainos Square and Park Centre shopping centre.
Roar and Explore Dairy Farm Ltd	Community Group	Shop frontage enhancements and lighting scheme (new shutter, awning, painting of wood panelling around entrance and light box signage), Street Planters - to introduce greenery to a public space, Street Furniture - Attractive benches and seating for customers, 2 cycle parking stands.
O'Donovan Rossa GAA Club	Community Group	Installation of a community walking trail and outdoor fitness equipment located on the club site at Rossa Park.
Portview Trade Centre	Business Cluster	Open up the immediate outdoor space between Block A and Block B with integrated food, hospitality and retail events and reformed landscape space, underpinned by the Banana Field Living Museum.
Linen Quarter BID	Business Cluster	Creation of a new boardwalk/parklet consists of a steel frame placed directly on top of the tarmac surface of the on-street parking bays, measuring 18mx2.1m (38m2 in total). This frame will be clad in composite materials resembling wooden surfaces, thereby creating a pleasant atmosphere. The outside surfaces of the boardwalk/parklet will be painted in a bright yellow that will alert car drivers to its existence.

Applicant	Business Cluster or Community Group	Summary of Project
Mourne Seafood Bar (Bank Square Cluster)	Business Cluster	Creating a more welcoming environment e.g. hanging baskets, awnings, new seating etc.
Lagmore Youth Project	Community Group	To utilize the already very limited land available in Lagmore to purchase a temporary youth hub that has been successfully running through a rented marquee on waste ground within the heart of Lagmore, next to the local primary school and next to the two main arterial routes in the community.
Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	Community Group	Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum (CCRF) took ownership of a small plot of land on Cliftonpark Avenue in North Belfast adjacent to the recently built Girdwood Community Hub. This land was an eyesore and used as a dumping ground. CCRF has cleared and tidied the site and we would now like to transform it into a community parklet.
Maritime Belfast	Community Group	To re-invigorate and upgrade the Riverbox experience, an outdoor multi-purpose art installation, which is located on the Maritime Mile. This will include the purchase and installation of a new LED screen & PA System; rebranding of the structure and seating by a local artist as well as site dressing and landscaping that will define this unique outdoor arts space /venue.
Belfast Boat Club	Community Group	Provision and enhancement of landscaped areas, replacement of insecure and dilapidated fencing and gates, provision of outdoor seating areas.
Big Belmont Project	Business Cluster	Shop front improvements to businesses on the Belmont Road.
Upper Springfield Development Trust	Community Group	<p>Proposed areas of work are as follows:</p> <p>193-195a Whiterock Road: Removal of rubbish and waste built up at site; Resurfacing the area with Hra Asphalt tarmac; Painting the rear wall; Building industrial bin storage containers</p> <p>195a Whiterock Road: Replacing the existing broken shutter; Painting the surrounding area of the beauty salon</p> <p>689 Springfield Road-703/705 Springfield Road: Clearing debris and rubble from behind the wall; Filling the wall with sand, stone and cladco heavy duty weed mat; Adding top soil and flowers to the top end of the wall • Erecting fencing along the wall; Sealing and painting the fencing, along with the wall</p>

Applicant	Business Cluster or Community Group	Summary of Project
Townsend Enterprise Park Limited	Community Group	To improve pedestrian access, signage, overall visual amenity and parking provision for motor vehicles and bicycles to benefit the businesses and organisations based in and around Townsend Enterprise Park and their respective customers and service users. The 3 associated sub-projects are: (i) improving and modernising the entrance and outside space to the front of Enterprise Centre; (ii) erecting new signage to better signpost the location of the businesses/organisations therein and identify it as a shopping / commercial destination; and (iii) provide cycle storage.
Saints Youth Centre	Community Group	Underused overgrown dangerous uninviting spaces require attention – in doing so we aim to promote a greater access to the public and focus on leaving a space that lends itself to a more attractive and relaxing space for all to use. Peer and adult led programme to create an environment of inclusion and participation that will immediately develop as sense of community spirit.
Cairde Ard Eoin	Community Group	Environmental improvement scheme that will support local community groups and business in the local area to recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the local community.
Mornington Community Project	Community Group	Develop the outdoor potential at Mornington due to the issues surrounding indoor service delivery, social distancing and the spread of covid.
Greater Village Regeneration Trust	Community Group	This project involves environmental improvements into the Village, Donegall Road area which is an urban area with limited access to green space and the majority of the properties are small terrace houses ie to introduce planters and benches to some locations throughout the area , add a sensory garden to a plot of land which GVRT is leasing from DFC.
Castle Enterprises	Business Cluster	A covered Pergola and heated outdoor area revitalising a disused and closed road bringing businesses together to form a new outdoor trading area.
St James Forum	Community Group	Part one: To secure our community farm with an 8 foot high security fence at the back of our new building to keep the animals safe. The fence will blend in with the local wildlife area at the bog meadows, and have hanging baskets along the fence. Part two: build 6 large lamps at the front of the farm which will hold large hanging baskets bringing lots of colour to the area, with hanging baskets along the front fence also. A summer house, seating and benches throughout the Farm for vistiors to sit relax and enjoy the scenery and the animals.
Castle Street	Business Cluster	Shop front improvements to businesses on Castle Street.
Patrick Sarsfields GAC	Community Group	To create a Community Garden. The Community Garden will be open and inclusive to everyone and we will actively encourage and promote those most vulnerable in society including young people, people with mental health issues, those physically impairment and older people to come and engage.

Applicant	Business Cluster or Community Group	Summary of Project
St John's Preschool Playgroup	Community Group	Develop the outdoor space at their building to facilitate safe early years' service delivery for local children aged 3-4.
University of Atypical	Community Group	<p>This project aims to revitalise the stretch of Royal Avenue that runs between the corner of North Street and William Street, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase and installation of planters, bins, tactile studs and benches along Royal Avenue making use of extended kerb areas. • Design, production and installation of hanging banners and on-street flags/ signs. • Installation of unique birdhouses and insect houses for trees along the street. • Intensive deep clean of area and graffiti removal.
Cathedral Quarter Trust	Community Group	<p>This project aims to revitalise the stretch of Royal Avenue that runs between William Street and the corner of Donegall Street (opposite Cathedral Gardens), to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of festoon lighting at the entrance to William Street leading down to Writers' Square. • Purchase and installation of planters and benches along Royal Avenue making use of extended kerb areas. • Design, production and installation of hanging banners and on-street flags/ signs. • Purchase and installation of hanging decorations for trees along street. • Intensive deep clean of area and graffiti removal.
Oh Yeah	Community Group	Enhancing the rooftop of Oh Yeah to allow users, tenants, visitors and music community to safely and comfortably meet outside, to work, network, create and gather in small and restricted numbers. This will include outdoor furniture, plants, flower boxes and lighting.
Sans Souci Residents Association	Community Group	<p>Main aims of the project are to encourage commerce, walking and cycling on the Lower Malone Road, to improve health and well-being and to increase a sense of local pride and community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New cycle racks will be installed at business premises and alongside the footpath. Small ornamental Irish-grown trees, shrubs, ground cover and bedding plants, suited to the urban environment, will be planted in high quality, durable, locally-designed and manufactured containers.
Small Steps	Community Group	Improve the appearance of the York Road area by removing graffiti and installing public art which encourages local people to have pride in their community and its heritage.
New energy for the Newlodge	Business Cluster	A range of enhancements to include, seating, colourful hanging baskets, signage, lighting, bright colourful paint work and power hosing which hopefully make the place more welcoming and in turn increase footfall.

Applicant	Business Cluster or Community Group	Summary of Project
Lamh Dhearg GAA Community Club	Community Group	Provide a new sheltered outdoor space maximising usage, suitable for able and disabled use and access through: 1. Provision of Retractable Roof System. 2. Provision of 4 No 2kW Energy efficient outdoor wall mounted heaters.
Hannahstown Community Association	Community Group	To provide an outdoor area that can be used all year round by the local community and users of Hannahstown Centre.
Nelson Trade Centre Revitalisation	Business Cluster	Install new illuminated signs above the shopfronts to create a consistent uniform appearance along the row.
Ballymacarrett Community & Cultural Engagement Project	Community Group	The proposed capital works project ('Ballymacarrett Green' – A Community Space) is to undertake ground works in an area which is run down and a problem wasteland for illegal dumping and create a Green Space by landscaping the site and making the area fit for community use again. The project will initially tidy up the area as it is currently overgrown and make the space safe. The subsequent landscaping will include a Covered seating area, low maintenance shrubs and trees, a raised community allotment, suitable storage, and a greenhouse.
Lower Donegall Road Traders	Business Cluster	Capital and environmental improvements to local SME Retail and hospitality businesses located on the Lower Donegall Road, so as to aid recovery to these hard hit sectors brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic. They will do this by improving the kerb appeal (through signage, awnings, pavement cafes) and safety (heated outdoor facilities and sanitising stations) of their businesses so as to encourage footfall, and also improve the overall image and usability of the area.
Newington Day Centre	Community Group	Provide a community garden and enhance the appearance of the outside of the centre and adjoining building. The aim is to mirror the stylish interior of the centre on the outside
Greater Shankill Cluster	Business Cluster	The project aims to deliver a series of improvements to the exterior area and facade of the Spectrum Centre to make the area more attractive to visitors and people who live there.
The Shankill Parklet	Business Cluster	A 20m x 2.4m urban Parklet constructed directly in front of 5 x retail and hospitality businesses. We are also proposing a facelift to the fronts of each of the 5 businesses to compliment the project and create an oasis of green and support the local traders.
Workwest	Community Group	The project will include the installation of outdoor seating and meeting pods within an underused area in Work West with the aim of attracting site tenants to use the space with their customers / suppliers and for use by their employees.

Applicant	Business Cluster or Community Group	Summary of Project
Rosetta Café	Business Cluster	Reimagine, repurpose and activate an unloved and overlooked piece of pavement area creating a new aesthetically exciting and functional structure for the Ormeau Rd situated adjacent to a cluster of micro businesses.
Impact Training NI Ltd	Community Group	Project that aims to create a localised useable functioning space for young people, students, local agencies and the local community. Specific aspects of the project will include: - Bespoke outdoor group activity zone - Dedicated multi-purpose tables and seating - Weather coverage - Greenery and strategic barrier located throughout site
Orpen Shopping Centre Traders	Business Cluster	External environmental improvements to the shopping centre complex to include external seating areas/parklet, bicycle parking, some improved shop fronts , new totem signage for the centre, new attractive pathways and external lighting.
North Belfast Interface Network	Community Group	Create a safer and more attractive area in Ardoyne/Crumlin Road. Works to include: Shop Frontage enhancements This will entail the removal of graffiti, painting shutters and freshening up shop fronts and derelict sites. Anti-climb paint will be applied to those premises that have perimeter walls Capital Purchases These will include the purchases of hand sanitisation units, street furniture, heat lamps and hanging baskets and safety lighting to adorn those units that have requested them. Medium Term Capital investment The issue of broken pavements has been raised with and by the businesses, particularly those access areas that are un-adopted, in this instance the Brompton Park and Estroil Park access to the Crumlin Road. It is proposed that sections of both these areas are re-tarmacked to enhance both access and safety. In addition it has been proposed that the markings be re surfaced.
Tús Tacíocht agus Pobal	Community Group	Purchasing a host of play equipment that will support social, educational, fundamental development. The equipment will allow children to play with other children outdoors in a safe and fun environment while also developing their gross motor skills and educational skills.

Applicant	Business Cluster or Community Group	Summary of Project
Mount Eagles / Lagmore Youth and Community Association	Community Group	To purchase awing's, outdoor furniture, outdoor heaters, street furniture and canopies, which will create a safe outdoor space for young people to come together in a safe space in line with Government guidelines, as part of the additional support within the Lagmore/Mount Eagles area through the provision of on street support through outreach detached work.
Skainos	Community Group	Improvement of the Skainos Centre's outdoor and community public spaces, including the public "square" at the front of the building, our outdoor roof garden and our "living wall" at the front of the building. All of these improvements are designed to increase the appeal of these areas for community use and as a result to increase community engagement, footfall and spend in the lower Newtownards Road area as well as within our own spaces.
Cliftonville Circus Shop Local	Business Cluster	Project involves eight local businesses to purchase awnings, improve shop frontage, purchase better signage and most importantly encourage shoppers to shop local and ultimately drive a greater footfall to these eight local businesses and any other businesses in Cliftonville Circus. This will also improve the outlook of the local environment as we will include planting for public realm, decor, hanging baskets and greenery for improved public realm and make a wraparound garden space to front of the shops.
University Quarter Cluster	Business Cluster	Purchase awnings, outdoor furniture and had sanitising stations to enable businesses to open outdoors.
		Total Approved Funding

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Subject:	Notices of Motion – Quarterly Update
Date:	10 November 2021
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director of Place & Economy
Contact Officer:	Deirdre Kelly; Programme Manager Claire Patterson, Business Research & Development 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"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	This report provides a quarterly update on the Notices of Motion that City Growth & Regeneration are responsible for, in line with the agreement at SP&R Committee that all Standing Committees will receive a quarterly update.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notes the updates to all Notices of Motion that this Committee is responsible for as referenced in Appendix 1; and - Agrees to the closure of a number of Notices of Motion, as referenced in Appendix 1 and noted in paragraph 3.5 below.
3.0	Main report

3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>At SP&R Committee on 25th October 2019, the following Notice of Motion was agreed:</p> <p>“That this Council notes that other Councils produce a monthly status report in relation to Notices of Motion; and agrees Belfast City Council adopts a similar practice and produces a monthly Notice of Motion Update which will be brought to each full Council Meeting, detailing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Date received 2. Notice of motion title 3. Submitted by which Councillor 4. Council meeting date 5. Committee motion is referred to 6. Outcome of committee where Notice of Motion will be debated 7. Month it will be reported back to committee 8. Other action to be taken.
3.2	<p>Following Committee’s consideration of the report on the quarterly update of Notices of Motion in August 2021, it was agreed to close 4 Notices of Motion. All subsequent Notices have been added to the database in Appendix 1 which shows 11 active Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance for which this Committee is responsible.</p>
3.3	<p>Notice of Motion Updates</p> <p>As previously noted by Committee, given the current pressures in responding to the pandemic, it has been difficult to afford the usual time towards progressing Notices of Motion. Nevertheless, there has been progress in a number of notices of motion. Members will also note that work on the database continues to be developed.</p>
3.4	<p>Closure of Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance</p> <p>At SP&R Committee on 20th November, it was agreed that Notices of Motion could be closed for one of two reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Category 1 - Notices of Motion which contained an action that has been completed. All Notices of Motion within this category contained a specific task that has since been completed. It is worth noting that, when Committee agree to action a Notice of Motion, there are sometimes additional actions agreed alongside the Notice of Motion. As these are not technically part of the Notice of Motion, they are taken forward through normal committee decision making processes. The Notice of Motion can therefore be closed, but additional actions related to it will continue to be

3.5	<p>progressed and reported to the committee. These additional actions are not contained in this report but will be noted in the live database moving forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Category 2 - Notices of Motion have become Council policy or absorbed into a strategic programme of work. These Notices of Motion did not contain a specific task that could be complete. Instead, they were more strategic in nature and required changes in Council policy and/ or strategy for long term outcomes. Those listed within this category have all been agreed by Committee and are now either Council policy or are currently being implemented through a Council strategy that is managed by a Standing Committee through the corporate planning process. <p>CG&R Committee are asked to note and agree that the following 2 Notices of Motion are now closed:</p> <p>Category 1 Recommended Closures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closure of Donegal Street for Belfast Pride (Ref 190) - Request / events plan has not been received from the organisation to enable examination of the proposal for the road closure for Belfast Pride this year. As per the August Committee report, future proposals can be considered on submission of an events plan/formal request. - York Street Interchange Project (Ref 207) – a letter was issued to the Minister for Infrastructure on 14th October 2021 inviting the Minister to consider the motion.
3.6	<p>Additional information in relation to these Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance are available in Appendix 1.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no additional financial implications attached to this report. Finance and resource implications are considered by Committee when taking decisions on the specific Notices of Motion and Issues Raised by Members.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report. Implications are considered when taking forward the specific Notices of Motion and Issues Raised by Members.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Notices of Motion Live Database – CG&R Committee</p>

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Notice of Motion – Live Database

Belfast

Ref	Type	Date of Council Meeting	Motion (including hyperlinks)	Proposed by	Referral route	Committee	Lead officer	Department	Status	Status Update
14	Notice of Motion	04/02/2019	Enterprise Zones	CLlr Attwood	Straight to Committee	CG&R	John Greer	Place & Economy	Ongoing	Officers followed up with the CLlr and research briefing on Enterprise Zones completed. To be progressed in line with the current developments, such as the Economic Strategy, BRCD and Innovation programmes of work; and as resources become available.
72	issue Raised in Advance	04/03/2020	Review of the Belfast Bikes Scheme	CLlr O'Hara	Issue Raised in Advance	CG&R	A Reid	Place & Economy	Ongoing	Update provided as part of Strategic review of Belfast Bikes (9/6/21). Decision under item 4b) Just Eat Belfast Bikes Strategic Review subsequently called in.. Further report to be considered at November CGR Committee meeting.
117	issue Raised in Advance	07/10/2020	City Wide Strategic Site Assessment Update	CLlr Murphy	Issue Raised in Advance	CG&R	A Reid	Place & Economy	Ongoing	An update on the city wide SSA was provided to CGR Committee in June 21. This is also being considered as part of the Community Planning Partnership process under the City Development Board, with work progressing at pace. A substantial update will be brought to Committee in the near future.
152	issue Raised in Advance	13/01/2021	Environmental Infrastructure in Council Car Parks	CLlr Heading	Issue Raised in Advance	CG&R	J Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	Under consideration within Electric Vehicle Infrastructure workstream and Car Park Strategy.

153	issue Raised in Advance	13/01/2021	Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme	CLlr McMullan	Issue Raised in Advance	CG&R	A Reid	Place & Economy	Ongoing	Officers are currently working with CNS in relation to the refresh of the CPS it is anticipated that this NOM will be progressed in line with this. A draft specification is currently under development and further progress will be made as resources become available.
164	Issue raised in Advance	03/03/2021	Developing Clean Tech in the City	Alderman Dorrian	Issue Raised in Advance	CG&R	A Reid	Place & Economy	Ongoing	To be progressed through the development of the Belfast Economic Strategy which will examine the health of the current sector and with partners including Invest NI make recommendations for sector development actions.
180	Notice of Motion	04/05/2021	Extension of the Belfast Bikes Scheme	CLlr Baker	Straight to Committee	CG&R	A Reid	Place & Economy	Ongoing	Letter to the Infrastructure Minister referencing the need for consultation with communities before implementing infrastructure drafted (July 2021) and Strategic Review of Bikes report brought to CGR Committee in June. Decision under item 4b) Just Eat Belfast Bikes Strategic Review subsequently called in (9/6/21).. Further report to be considered at November CGR meeting.
190	Issue raised in Advance	09/06/2021	Closure of Donegal Street for Belfast Pride	CLlr O'Hara	Issue Raised in Advance	CG&R	A Reid	Place & Economy	Recommendation Close	Request/events plan not received to enable consideration of road closure. Future proposals can be considered on submission of an events plan/formal request.
207	Notice of Motion	04/10/2021	York Street Interchange Project	CLlr O'Hara	Debated at Council		A Reid	Place & Economy	Recommendation Close	Letter issued to the Infrastructure Minister on 14 October 2021
208	Notice of Motion	04/10/2021	Belfast City Nightlife and Night-time Economy	CLlr de Faoite	Straight to Committee	CG&R	A Reid	Place & Economy	Ongoing	Considered at October CG&R Committee. Report to be brought back on how to facilitate, resource and manage.
211	Notice of Motion	04/10/2021	Community Wealth Building	CLlr Murphy	Straight to Committee	CG&R	J Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	Considered at October CG&R Committee. Report to be brought back on how to facilitate, resource and manage.

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Subject:	Committee Plan 2021/2022 – Six Month Update (April-September 2021)
Date:	10 November 2021
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Development and Regeneration

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Some time in the future

Never

☐
☐
☐
☐

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	This paper provides a six month progress update on the key actions contained in the City Growth and Regeneration (CG&R) Committee Plan, as agreed by this Committee in June 2021.
1.2	The 2021-2022 Committee Plan was developed in the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and the Belfast Agenda. The Committee will recall that the Committee Plan contains the commitments within the 2021-22 annual delivery plan for the Corporate Plan which fall under the remit of the Committee, plus additional deliverables that have been agreed by CG&R Committee and relevant to the Standing Orders of the Committee. It sets out the

	main priorities and programmes of work that the Committee is overseeing to maximise the Council's contribution to delivering a sustainable and inclusive recovery and the Belfast Agenda.
2.0	Recommendations
	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – note the content of the report and that officers are continuing to progress the actions within the City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan 2021-2022, as agreed by the Committee in June 2021.
3.0	<u>Main Report</u>
3.1	Whilst the City Growth & Regeneration Committee have a role to play across a number of the themes, the clear focus for this Committee is City Recovery, immediate emergency response and reopening etc whilst also continuing with work to deliver on longer term plans for the city, with key priorities that will help the people and businesses of Belfast continue to respond to, and recover from, the economic impact of the pandemic while also shaping the future development and sustainability of the city.
3.2	In addition to the ongoing work to support the Community Planning Partnership, through the refreshed Jobs, Skills and Education Board and the City Development Board, this year the Committee has held a number of engagement and workshop sessions to enable strategic discussions to shape the Council's role and position on key issues such as the future of the city and role of the city centre and the DfC Employability NI programme, which has led to the establishment of the interim Labour Market Partnership. In addition to this there is regular and ongoing engagement with the City Stakeholder Group and a multi agency approach to city recovery measures etc.
3.3	The Committee receive regular updates on progress with the delivery of specific programmes and initiatives such as; the DfC COVID19 Revitalisation Fund, Future City Centre programme, A Bolder Vision and A City Imagining Cultural Strategy. At the October 2021 meeting, the Committee also received detailed reports on the progress in relation to the Jobs and Skills work programme and the Business Support Services programme.
3.4	This report therefore provides a composite overview. Appendix 1 outlines progress with the main commitments in the Committee Plan for the six month period (April-September 2021). It should be noted that many of the commitments will continue to be delivered over the course of the year and the Committee will be kept informed of progress. However, some

	<p>examples of the progress delivered against the corporate themes of Our city - safe, vibrant, connected spaces and places, inclusive economic recovery and community recovery in the first six months of the 2021-22 are provided below.</p>
3.5	<p>To support city recovery, the Business Cluster and Community Capital Grants scheme is virtually complete, with 33 applicants obtaining grants across the city. The DfC funding of £759k has now been spent in full. A further £450k from BCC was also made available to assist 18 other groups. The Local Business Interventions fund closed for claims on 25th June, assisting 445 businesses.</p>
3.6	<p>Work to support inclusive growth and recovery through employment initiatives over the last six months, a total of 427 people enrolled on Employment Academy programmes, across a range of sectors. 176 have completed their programme and 141 have secured employment so far. Additionally, via our Youth Support Programme, has supported 186 young people who have, or are at risk of, dropping out of education, employment or training. To date, 109 young people have progressed into positive outcomes. Officers continue to work with partners to develop employment pathways to emerging growth sectors within the technology and green sectors.</p>
3.7	<p>The Committee has also noted that business start-up support has helped 306 individuals to develop 200 business plans, creating an estimated 120 jobs. Support has been provided to 40 Social Enterprise and Cooperative organisations, 4 of which were Cooperatives. With a focus now on cooperatives, six outreach events for 120 attendees are being progressed. Committee agreed in October to accessing funding to support the delivery of area-based support for local business associations to increase vibrancy and drive footfall in anticipation of a go-live date in early November 2021.</p>
3.8	<p>Following Committee approval in September 2021, work is underway on two significant 12 week public consultation exercises to inform (i) the next phase of A Bolder Vision city centre connectivity study, which has been developed jointly between Council, Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure. The Consultation will seek the views of consultees on a number of identified proposed 'Key Moves' to deliver radial change, as well as other potential short, medium and long term interventions and (ii) the 10 year Tourism Plan, Make Yourself at Home.</p>
3.9	<p>Delivering on the Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (BCCRIS) and associated masterplans remains a priority. This includes the Inner North West, with the</p>

	<p>publication of the Masterplan and action plan; progressing with a programme of work around Housing Led Regeneration which includes the city centre strategic site assessments to facilitate city centre living through the strategic use of public sector city centre land assets. The strategic sites include the Inner North West – Northern Cluster, with a development brief agreed with DfC and issued, aimed at achieving the delivery of a residential led mixed-tenure, mixed-use scheme with a focus on place-making development. The Inner North West – Southern Cluster is progressing with a concept regeneration plan seeking to maximise the regeneration potential of this significant area of the city centre, strategically located in close proximity to the core retail area, the new university, the site of the new Destination Hub and existing residential communities. Dunbar Cluster, master planning exercise in underway to maximise the place-making potential arising from the comprehensive redevelopment of a number of co-located sites. Exchange St / Corporation St; Gloucester Street and Ormeau Avenue, planning assessments all complete and progressing with concept making plans at Ormeau Avenue. In addition to the ambitious programme of work within the city centre, a city wide approach has been taken to the strategic site assessments. Officers are working collaboratively with a number of other public sector bodies in the mapping and identification of public sector lands for housing. This includes the establishment of a Housing Led Regeneration Sub Delivery Group within the Community Planning structures of the City Development Board, chaired by NIHE Chief Executive to over see a detailed programme of work which will bring together the various strands of work undertaken by a number of public bodies in relation to the mapping and identification of public lands for housing led regeneration. Work is progressing on the development of a City Centre Living Vision aimed at bringing forward housing development at scale; completing Phase 1 of the Entries Programme with Phase 2 underway and ongoing work with key partners and stakeholders on major regeneration and infrastructure schemes in the city such as Transport Hub/Weavers Cross, Ulster University campus and BRT Phase 2.</p>
3.10	<p>As noted by Committee in August, the Council's strategic acquisition of a city centre site marked a significant step in the Council's regeneration role in shaping the future of the city centre and the diversification of uses. Further updates on this and strategic proposals for the city centre will be brought to Committee for consideration.</p>
3.11	<p>Support for the Belfast Region City Deal continues, in particular the Belfast Destination Hub, with a decision due in the next month. This will signal further opportunities for the</p>

	regeneration and future of the city centre as well as being a key strategic asset for the delivery of the 10 year A City Imagining Cultural Strategy and draft 10 Year Tourism Plan.
3.12	Partnerships are key to delivering on the City's strategic ambitions. The joint public / private sector Renewed Ambition Programme is continuing at pace focusing on maximising the impact of the joint partnership for developing regeneration, infrastructure and a modern built environment for the City of Belfast. Work is ongoing to complete the Social, Economic and Environmental Impact of Real Estate and Regeneration Investment Research.
3.13	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> Progress is in line with the agreed Committee Plan, annual work plans and associated Departmental budgets.
3.14	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</u> Strategies, programmes and actions within the Committee Plan are developed and delivered in consultation with the Council's Equality & Diversity Officers and subject to appropriate equality, good relations and rural needs assessment.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - CGR Committee Plan 2021-22 – six month progress (April-September 2021)

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**City Growth and Regeneration
Committee Plan 2021-22**

Six-month progress update
April-September 2021

Introduction

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

Its specific functions include:

- Setting the overall strategic direction for the Council in the areas of cultural and economic regeneration and growth.
- Influencing and contributing to regional regeneration and growth strategies and activities.
- Developing and implementing city-wide economic strategies and policies.
- Managing and maximising the impact of major physical developments in the city.
- Coordinating and promoting major citywide events.
- Considering draft financial estimates for the Committee together with such statements, reports and recommendations as required.
- Monitoring quarterly performance and financial reports and year end reports.
- Approving all revenue purchases of works, goods or services relevant to this Committee which exceed or are likely to exceed the statutory amount (currently £30,000) and subject to tender.
- Monitoring reports on matters that are of direct relevance to the responsibility of this Committee.
- Sourcing and providing support to attract and utilise European and other grants which contribute to the growth of the city.
- Providing support for economic development initiatives.
- Supporting the development of culture, heritage and the arts.
- Working with other agencies to promote Belfast as a key investment and tourism opportunity.
- Developing programmes and actions to support local businesses and attract inward investment.
- Managing Council owned properties including the maintenance and repair of Council buildings, properties and vehicles.
- Managing the Council's markets and maximising their benefit to the city.
- Influencing and contributing to strategies policies and actions affecting skills, employability, transportation and energy in the City.

- Considering Year end and mid-year review of key corporate risks.
- Exercising the Council's functions in relation to:
 - Economic Development;
 - Tourism;
 - Culture and Arts;
 - European and International Relations;
 - Car parks;
 - City Markets;
 - City Events;
 - Belfast Castle;
 - Malone House;
 - Belfast Zoo; and
 - City Regeneration and Development.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee Key Programmes of work

Update on progress 1st April – 30th September 2021

Inclusive Economic Recovery

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
Belfast Region City Deal	n/a	We continue to work with and inform the various strands of the Belfast Region City Deal. (See the SP&R reports for May and August for further details.) In particular this period, we have been informing the innovation strand to ensure it meets the needs expressed by local businesses. An update on the Belfast Destination Hub is shown later in the report and the next meeting for the Gasworks Bridge is on 06.10.21.
Cultural Strategy	n/a	<p>Progress against the cultural strategy up to end of quarter 2 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the submission of UNESCO bid and development of music recovery strategy; • the re-opening of cultural multi-annual funding and project funding including Community Festivals Funding; • the development and delivery of new funding programmes including Pathfinder Awards and Creative Bursaries; • the completion of Cultural Infrastructure Audit and development of a Co-design Framework; • ongoing role as Strategic Delivery Body for Festival 2022 (Unboxed) to deliver 5 projects in 2022; • the development and delivery of communications plan for culture (2021-24); • delivery of events to date has included Maritime Weekender and ongoing music programming.

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
City Recovery, reopening the city and support for businesses	Business cluster and community capital grants scheme (BCCG)	A total £1,067,204 has been approved for some 51 applications with 7 successful city centre applications and 44 successful applications outside city centre for environmental improvement. Proposals on city wide proposals were sought on interventions that would support business operation and recovery; enhance physical spaces; increase civic participation and sense of ownership; and encourage people to live, work, visit and invest in local area. Officers have worked with applicants on the delivery of this grant programme which is supporting 35 Community Groups and Social Enterprises and 16 business clusters across the city. This funding allocation comprises £700k of funding from the Revitalisation Programme and £450k from BCC as previously reported to Committee. As of end of September £750k has been provided to the successful applicants and Officers continue to work through the remaining successful applicants to secure relevant statutory approvals and support delivery of the projects.
	Revitalisation Fund: Physical interventions	In terms of progress on delivery of the Programme, at the end of September a total of £2.6m has been spent or directly allocated to delivery partners with a forecast to complete the programme by March 2022. The majority of procurement is now complete, and contract works programmes are being finalised with suppliers and contractors for the remaining work packages, minimising the impacts of the global supply and contractor availability issues. Projects include a sustainable and active travel hub at QUB, temporary active travel hub at Cathedral Gardens, a pilot E Cargo bike scheme etc.
	Revitalisation Fund: Local Business Interventions	445 businesses have claimed their funding allocations. The closing date for all claims was the 25th June. There are currently 13 claims in progress. 49 businesses withdrew from the process. Innovation Factory occupancy levels have risen to 60% as of the end of Aug. There is high interest from new firms in sectors including tv/film, digital, engineering, charity and green tech. Brexit support has been provided for 26 businesses including retail, construction, ICT and manufacturing. The Digital transformation programme is currently being procured and is expected to launch in November. It will support over 1000 businesses across NI.

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
	City Reference Group and High Street Task Force	Engagement is ongoing and we are liaising with city stakeholders via the City Reference Group and internally via City Recovery Leadership Group. High Street Task Force Call for Evidence launched on Monday 25th October and will close on 6 December. Officers are currently working on draft response.
Increase tourism spend through sustainable tourism products	n/a	<p>Progress against tourism priorities up to the end of Quarter 2 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of draft 10-year tourism plan, Make Yourself at Home; • completion of year 2 of Global Destination Sustainability Index securing top 20 ranking; • launch of Green Tourism accreditation with industry partners; • support for City Connections local tourism programme; • development of Belfast Visitor Experience Framework; • completion of research on impact of Belfast on regional visitor economy; • completion of market research of the Belfast's tourism narrative and review of Belfast positioning and brand. <p>Additional areas of work included securing product development funding to pilot meanwhile use experiential tourism venues in the city centre and securing Belfast as host for the global summit, One Young World in 2023.</p>

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
Encourage business start-ups and support indigenous business growth	Provide 'Growing a Business' services:	<p>We have completed our business survey, with Belfast Chamber, and received approximately 400 responses. We will repeat this every six months to inform our work plans.</p> <p>So far this year we have delivered business growth support for 243 businesses in areas such as growth strategies, resilience, enhancing digital and online presence, tendering, plus specialist support for businesses with high growth potential.</p> <p>The 'Way to Scale bootcamp' launched in Aug with 20 Belfast based businesses and 37 participants.</p> <p>We have partnered with Fintech NI to develop a Fintech Action Plan for the region.</p> <p>We are currently working with the other councils to identify replacement business growth funding post 2023 and are jointly delivering a Digi Transform programme across the region.</p>
	Provide 'Starting a Business' services:	<p>Progress to date includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Awareness Activity - over 450 individuals to test and develop new business ideas. • Start-up support - 306 individuals to develop 200 business plans and 120 jobs. • Social Enterprise and Cooperative Support - 40 organisations this year with one to one mentoring, advice, and guidance. 4 organisations were Cooperatives. We are now focussing on cooperatives with six outreach events (120 attendees), and two further events planned in Oct plus a 'best practice' visit. • Launch of the Social Economy Fund on 14 Oct. <p>Through SOLACE Economy recovery group work is underway to identify the scale of replacement funding & options for Councils post 2023. We are also working with the other councils, Invest NI & DfE on a more ambitious start-up approach post 2023.</p>

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
	Manage and support the city markets	<p>St George's Market and Smithfield Market are now fully operational, following a series of closures and restrictions impacting on business.</p> <p>After a one-year hiatus, the Continental Market will take place from 20th November to 23rd December 2021. It will align closely with the Christmas animation programme.</p>
Promote and market the city internationally	Strategic Networks:	<p>Officers are continuing to support the joint public / private sector Renewed Ambition Programme. The programme of work is continuing at pace focusing on maximising the impact of the joint partnership approach for developing regeneration, infrastructure and a modern inclusive built environment. This involves delivering a programme of content aimed at the real estate audience, both locally and further afield; drive a programme of engagement and advocacy to facilitate two-way conversations with policy makers and politicians, and showcase real opportunities in Belfast; and deliver research to show the positive impact that real estate investment can deliver for our communities.</p> <p>A Workshop took place on 18 Aug 2021 with the CGR Committee, Renewed Ambition Programme (RAP) Task Force, and the City Development Board to present the initial findings from the research into the wider social, economic & environmental impact of real estate investment. work is ongoing to complete the research, including engagement with Executive Ministers.</p> <p>RAP Task Force representatives presented to CGR Committee on 8th September.</p> <p>Work is progressing around Belfast representation at a number of sessions with national and international audiences focusing on housing regeneration and city centre living, digital innovation, sustainable development etc. We are continuing to engage with local and national partners (including DIT and INI) to leverage their networks to attract investment.</p>

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
	Invest in Belfast Website	The web page and hosting is being updated and are currently being transferred in house and being re-developed. The website provides an online platform to show case the city's key growth sectors (inc creative and digital; fintech, hospitality and tourism etc) and real estate opportunities to attract investment from prospective investors and end occupiers to deliver on the city's inclusive growth ambitions and job creation etc.
	Provide the Investing in Belfast service	We continue to facilitate requests from businesses wishing to relocate to Belfast, though there has been a reduction in requests, as a result of Covid.
Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor (DBEC)	n/a	On behalf of DBEC, we have been leading the procurement & management of a development plan, action plan and strategy. The successful contractor has been appointed and preliminary officer and political meetings are scheduled for November.

City Regeneration and Development		<p>Progress continues across the various strands of the programme as reported in other sections of this report. A summary of highlights is below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic acquisition of 2 Royal Avenue progressing short term and long term uses. • The City Centre Living Vision Public Consultation closed on 24th Sept 2021. Work is ongoing to incorporate consultation feedback and finalise the vision. The mapping of other key City Centre Social Infrastructure is progressing. • Bringing forward projects to create vibrancy and animate city centre streets such as Planning consent granted for enhancement pavement works in Adelaide Street and Planning consent for Castle Place issued • Bringing forward a range of interventions to create permeability, promote safe and open spaces, enhancing the build heritage and history of places within the city centre to drive footfall and create focal points for example the nearing to completion of the Entries and Lanes programme Phase 1, Phase 2 approvals are well advanced and procurement is underway. • A Bolder Vision – city centre connectivity study, developed jointly between Council, Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure, public consultation opened on 30th September. The consultation will seek the view of consultees on a number of proposed 'Key Moves' to deliver radial change, as well as other short, medium and long term interventions. This will support transformation in critical parts of the city to create a green, people focused, connected city centre for current and future users. The 12-week public consultation will run until 23rd December. Stakeholder engagement, both online and in person, is taking place with the draft vision programmed to complete by March 22 • The Belfast Urban Greenway (BUG) Initiative will seek to enhance connectivity to and from the city centre and create an urban greenway concept through the city centre. stakeholder engagement to commence Autumn 2021
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Area of work	Sub-area	Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As part of the Future City Centre Programme work is progressing to finalise a Vacant Premises programme including, ongoing data gathering and analysis; the refresh of the 'Retail & Leisure Proposition' for the City Centre to provide an updated overview of the city centre's performance in terms of retail and leisure-based occupiers and trends, together with evidence-based recommendations; appointment of a commercial agent to assist with a pilot 'matchmaking' service to align potential business/occupier interest with suitable properties and to assist with the recommendations from the 'Retail & Leisure Proposition'. An emerging Vacancy Grants programme is also being developed. In addition there is a complementary area based programme for the arterial routes – 'Supporting Vibrant Business Destinations' which is aimed at providing specific interventions on conjunction with the businesses.• The Digital transformation programme is currently being procured & expected to launch in Nov.• Working with the Innovation Team re the digital innovation strand of the BRCD to ensure it meets local business's needs.• Engaged with the RSA, to bring forward a Digital Badges project to support employability interventions.

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
	Joint Regeneration Group	<p>The Joint Regeneration Group made up of officers from Council, DfC, DfI, NIHE, LPS and SIB continues to meet on a monthly basis. In order to maximise and provide a focused approach to collaborative working, the JRG have adopted a geographic focus, weaving in agreed thematic areas, eg Housing, Connectivity etc. JRG key areas of focus include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing led regeneration opportunities• Wider Inner North West to also include the University area, Royal Avenue, and extending up to Castle Street.• Greater Clarendon, Titanic Quarter, Queens Quay, Harbour area• Linen Qtr to include Lower Ormeau, Shaftesbury up to QUB, Gasworks etc• City wide major developments and regeneration priorities / projects.

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (BCCRIS):		<p>Key areas of work so far this year include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INW regeneration including the Castle St area: the Masterplan has been published with an action plan. • Cathedral Gardens: pop up play park remains open & work ongoing to establish an alternative location during Cathedral Gardens capital build. Continue to collaboratively work with Physical Programmes on the redevelopment of Cathedral Gardens and emerging public consultation in Autumn 2021. • Continue to progress a programme of work aimed at revitalising the city centre including; bringing forward a range of interventions to create permeability, promote safe and open spaces, enhancing the built heritage and history of places within the city centre to drive footfall and create focal points for example the nearing to completion of the Entries and Lanes programme Phase 1, Phase 2 approvals are well advanced and procurement is underway. Further examples include projects focused on tactical regeneration & lighting for example a number of projects are completed including pilot lighting schemes at Castle Arcade, James street South, Church Lane, Exchange Place, Warehouse Entry and Castle Street. Schemes under delivery at Pottingers Entry, Joys Entry. • Corporation Sq/ North-South Spine: Procurement is under preparation to bring to designs to RIBA Stage 3, and
	Major Regeneration Schemes:	<p>We continue to work with partners and input into major schemes. Developments for this period include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weavers Cross and Belfast Transport Hub: We continue to actively participate through the Belfast Destination Hub Programme Board. • BHC BCC MOU: Board continues to meet focused around strategic interventions and areas of collaboration. • Engaging with stakeholders in respect of major regeneration schemes including Waterside, Tribeca, UU etc

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
	Developer Contributions	A number of projects utilising committed Developer Contributions are underway including procurement for placemaking and public realm enhancement at Little York Street / Little Patrick Street. 5Cs Small Scale Catalyst Project: Stage 2 Concept Design has been accepted following two value engineering workshops.
City Infrastructure	n/a	<p>A range of projects are currently being progressed in tandem addressing the city's infrastructure requirements which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressing the Infrastructure Study collating internal feedback and reviewing. next steps including engagement with consultants with a view to updating key stakeholders in November. • Junctions Working Group – working with partners in relation to junctions issues including the inner ring road. • Belfast Rapid Transport - continuing to represent Council on the BRT Programme Board, including responding to BRT 2 consultation. • Belfast Streets Ahead – continue to represent Council and input to the proposals for BSA, including advocating for interventions to come forward at pace.
North Foreshore, Belfast Hills and Zoo	n/a	<p>Urban Scale Interventions are working on the feasibility study for the Belfast Zoo and wider site development. The Draft masterplan will be completed in November.</p> <p>Meanwhile, we are continuing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve existing animal enclosures in the zoo. • Explore development options for the Old Zoo site. • Explore the integration of the zoo into the wider surrounding area.

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
Destination Hub	n/a	The final BRCD decision has been put back until later in the year. In the meantime, we have been continuing to engage with key stakeholders to ensure interest and input into the design and content of the Hub. We have also been developing a community focused consultation and engagement plan. Work also continues on refining the business case, particularly with regard to the benefits we want to see from the Hub and how these will be measured and monitored.
City Connectivity	Active Travel and Connectivity	See below.
	City Centre Connectivity Study – Bolder Vision	A Bolder Vision – city centre connectivity study, developed jointly between Council, Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure, public consultation opened on 30th September. The consultation will seek the view of consultees on a number of proposed 'Key Moves' to deliver radial change, as well as other short, medium and long term interventions. This will support transformation in critical parts of the city to create a green, people focused, connected city centre for current and future users. The 12-week public consultation will run until 23rd December. Stakeholder engagement, both online and in person, is taking place with the draft vision programmed to complete by March 22
	Belfast Urban Greenways (BUG)	The Belfast Urban Greenway (BUG) Initiative will seek to enhance connectivity to and from the city centre and create an urban greenway concept through the city centre. stakeholder engagement to commence Autumn 2021

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
	Sustainable Travel Initiatives	<p>We have progressed several initiatives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-cargo delivery: The equipment has been specified and ordered. and Funding Agreement being finalised. • Cycle Stands: The scoping study is complete. Study options were agreed at CG&R on 8/9/21. • QUB Active Travel Hub: Funding has been transferred & is due to open in Sept. • CG Active Travel Hub: We are finalising the design and the tree impact work. Subject to Planning approval, work will commence in Nov. Belfast THRIVES (Transformative Health & Regeneration Initiatives for Vibrancy, Equality and Sustainability) is a pilot partnership between Ulster University [Urban Research Lab] and Belfast City Council, to inform how Belfast's public spaces can more effectively and inclusively contribute to the liveability of the city and the wellbeing of its inhabitants. Work is ongoing with the UU Project team. • A Playful City: Over the past three years, officers have worked to elevate and embed play in the city centre, placing emphasis on the need to create family-friendly places through engagement and participation with user groups during design development. We are engaging with council partners to agree the project tangibles and delivery plans. There is also ongoing engagement with RCN in relation to the Ambassador of Play Cities. Additional workshop with Placemaking X and partners is due to take place at the end of Sept to explore city challenges.
	Belfast Bikes	<p>The Bike scheme continues to operate. The Strategic Review and proposals for expansion of the scheme were considered by CGR Committee in June 2021. Following the Council call-in process and CGR Committee meeting in September 2021, we are working closely with the Council's Equality Team to progress the equality screening and considerations.</p>

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
Educational underachievement	n/a	Our GCSE support was significantly disrupted over the last 2 years. Delivery for the current academic year is planned to be both school-based and community-based with places for at least 365 young people not currently predicted to achieve a Grade C (or below) in English & Maths. Due to the impact of COVID, particularly for those already vulnerable, additional activities are being planned (e.g. mid-term intensive learning programmes during Halloween). Through our Youth Support Programme, we are supporting 186 young people who have, or are at risk of, dropping out of education, employment or training. To date, 109 young people have progressed into positive outcomes with 40 into employment and 69 into further education/training.
Access to employment	n/a	427 people have enrolled on Employment Academy programmes, this year, across a range of sectors. 176 have completed their programme and 141 have secured employment so far (an into-work rate of 80%). Of the people still on a programme, 90 are already in work and are receiving support, qualifications or licences needed to access a better job.
Upskilling opportunities	n/a	<p>An interim Belfast Labour Market Partnership (LMP) was formed to undertake a strategic assessment of the city both in terms of supply and demand. This will allow the creation of an Employability and Skills action plan for the city. This will be resourced through Employability NI initially for a period of 18 months. It is expected that a further three-year action plan will follow this.</p> <p>Members of the interim LMP included DfC, DfE, BHSCT, Invest NI, Belfast Met, Belfast Chamber of Commerce, CBI People & Skills Forum, VCSE Panel rep and advice sector rep.</p> <p>We are also engaging with a number of external networks and partnerships including the RSA. This collaboration is based on a bespoke Digital Badges project. These badges will be used to recognise and validate the work undertaken through our programmes as an alternative to the standard practice of asking for qualifications/experience. Work is also underway with partners through the LMP to develop inclusive employment pathways into opportunities within growth sectors such as digital and green.</p>

Community Recovery

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
Maximising housing development & regeneration opportunities	BCC Housing Led Regeneration Programme	A targeted programme of work is progressing focused on housing led regeneration including responding to the DfC Call for evidence on Housing Supply Strategy, strategic site assessments (city centre and city wide) and city centre living vision
	City wide strategic opportunities	We are progressing on identification of public lands through utilising the annual Housing Land Availability Monitor undertaken as part of the LDP processes which helps provides a picture of the amount of land available for new houses, based on existing zonings and extant planning permissions. Allied to this is the Urban Capacity Study work also undertaken as part of the LDP process. This examines the potential capacity for residential development on a broader range of land in the city, irrespective of ownership or planning status. Officers are working collaboratively with a number of other public sector bodies in the mapping and identification of public sector lands for housing. This includes the establishment of a Housing Led Regeneration Sub Delivery Group within the Community Planning structures of the City Development Board, chaired by NIHE Chief Executive to oversee a detailed programme of work which will bring together the various strands of work undertaken by a number of public bodies in relation to the mapping and identification of public lands for housing led regeneration

Area of work	Sub-area	Update
Maximising housing development & regeneration opportunities	Strategic City Centre Cluster Sites	The strategic cluster sites include the Inner North West – Northern Cluster, with a development brief agreed with DfC and issued, aimed at achieving the delivery of a residential led mixed-tenure, mixed-use scheme with a focus on place-making development. The Inner North West – Southern Cluster is progressing with a concept regeneration plan seeking to maximise the regeneration potential of this significant area of the city centre, strategically located in close proximity to the core retail area, the new university, the site of the new Destination Hub and existing residential communities. Dunbar Cluster, master planning exercise in underway to maximise the place-making potential arising from the comprehensive redevelopment of a number of co-located sites. Exchange St / Corporation St; Gloucester Street and Ormeau Avenue, planning assessments all complete and progressing with concept making plans at Ormeau Avenue. In addition to the ambitious programme of work within the city centre, a citywide approach has been taken to the strategic site assessments.
	City Centre Living Vision (CCLV):	Comprehensive information has been collated, which is currently being analysed in order to be reflected in finalised vision and engagement undertaken. Further work to be undertaken includes community engagement and development appraisal related work.

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