

Public Document Pack

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

21ST May, 2025

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following items will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 am on Friday, 23rd May, 2025.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

4. Physical Programme and Asset Management

(c) Area Working Groups Update May 2025 (Pages 1 - 18)

6. Equality and Good Relations

(a) Appendices to the Minutes of Shared City Partnership Meeting on 12th May 2025 (Pages 19 - 22)

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| Subject: | Update on Area Working Groups |
| Date: | 23 May 2025 |
| Reporting Officer: | Sinead Grimes, Director of Property & Projects |
| Contact Officer: | Shauna Murtagh, Portfolio Manager |

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| Restricted Reports | |
| Is this report restricted? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime | |
| <p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <p>After Committee Decision</p> <p>After Council Decision</p> <p>Sometime in the future</p> <p>Never</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; position: relative;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; border: 1px solid black;"></div> </div> </div> | |

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

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues |
| 1.1 | To present to the Committee for approval the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Area Working Groups. |

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| 2.0 | Recommendation |
| 2.1 | <p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the minutes of the meeting of South AWG – 19 May 2025 as attached. |
| 3.0 | Main Report |
| 3.1 | <p><u>Area Working Group Minutes</u></p> <p>It was agreed in June 2016 that the minutes of the meetings of the Area Working Groups would be presented to the SP&R Committee for approval going forward, in line with the Council's commitment to openness and transparency and to ensure a consistent approach with other Member-led Working Groups. The Committee is asked to approve the minutes of the most recent meeting, as attached.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None</p> |
| 3.3 | <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None</p> |
| 4.0 | Documents Attached |
| | Appendix 1 - Minutes – Meeting - South Belfast Area Working Group 19 May 2025 |

South Belfast Area Working Group

Monday, 19th May, 2025

MEETING OF SOUTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

HELD IN THE CONOR ROOM AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McKeown (Chairperson);
Councillors Brennan, T. Brooks, Bunting,
Groogan, Kelly, and McKay.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Property and Projects;
Ms. S. Rafter, Neighbourhood Services Integration
Manager;
Ms. A. Diver, Climate Programme Manager;
Mr. A. O'Neill, Assistant Estates Surveyor; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 24th February were approved by the Working Group.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in Item 4, Enterprise and Business Growth Support Offering, in that she was an employee of the Forward South Partnership. However, as no decisions were required, and the presentation was for Members' information, there was no requirement for her to leave the meeting.

Physical Programme Update

The Director of Property and Projects presented the undernoted report to the Working Group:

"1. Introduction

The Council's Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that

the Council is delivering on behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to note:

- The Physical Programme update for South Belfast including the recently completed project – Sporting Pitches Investment 24/25 – Belvoir Activity Centre MUGA at Appendix 1.
- Correspondence from DfI regarding Finaghy Bridge (LIF) at Appendix 2.
- The update on Sólás (NRF) which has secured further funding and that the project will be delivered by the Group.
- Note the updated list of external capital funding opportunities attached at Appendix 3.

3. Local Investment Fund (LIF)

Members are reminded that LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG area; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation. Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding spend to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery process: 24 projects received ‘In Principle’ letters under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 23 have been completed and 1 project is still at initial stage. Further details are below.

| LIF breakdown – South | LIF 1 | | LIF 2 | |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Stage/ Description:</i> | <i>No. Projects</i> | <i>Amount (£)</i> | <i>No. Projects</i> | <i>Amount/ (£)</i> |
| Number of Projects Completed | 12 (92%) | £1,053,600 | 11 (100%) | £796,000 |
| Number of Projects in Delivery | | | | |
| Number of Projects in Pre-construction | | | | |
| Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence) | 1 (8%) | £30,000 | | |
| Total Number of Approved Projects | 13 | £1,083,600 | 11 | £796,000 |

The table below provides an overview of the remaining live project. Members are asked to note the status and ongoing actions.

| LIF Ref | Project | Funding | Stage | Status | Action/ Recommendation |
|---------|----------------|---------|--------------|--|--|
| SLIF017 | Finaghy Bridge | £30,000 | Design stage | Approved at SP&R Committee in May 2016 to undertake improvements to the bridge. Meeting held on 17 April and agreed to seek quotes for art work and traffic management to carry out some improvement works. Letter from DfI Minister dated 29 April 2025 advises that DfI has no plans for the bridge but will assist with development of a project and highlight that its progression rests with the Council. See Appendix 2. | Continue engagement with the group. Members are asked to consider the Finaghy Bridge allocation following correspondence from owner DfI. |

4. **Belfast Investment Fund (BIF)**

Members are reminded that BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment from Council. BIF – South Belfast was allocated £5.5m; with an additional £500k ringfenced for new areas (outer South) that had joined the District area under Local Government Reform. In South Belfast, 6 projects received an In-Principle funding commitment, thereby fully allocating its £5.5m, and £500k pot of funding. Each project is taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place.

Summary of BIF allocated projects.

| | |
|-------|---|
| South | Stage 3 - Lagan Gateway - £2.1m; Lanyon Tunnels - £1.3m; Bredagh GAC - £700k; Arts & Digital Hub - £584k; Coffee Culture - £286k Stage 1 - Sandy Row Open Space project- £479k |
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|-----------------|---|
| Balmoral DEA | Stage 3 - Knockbreda Parish Church Hall - £250k Stage 2 - Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC - £250k |
|-----------------|---|

| Ref | Project | Funding | Stage | Status | Action/ Recommendation |
|-------|--|---|---------------------|---|---|
| BIF04 | Lagan Gateway | £6,545,000 <i>BIF - £2.15m</i> <i>UGV- £950k DfC</i> <i>- £470k DfI- £2m</i> <i>DfI Rivers -</i> <i>£975k</i> | Stage 3 - Committed | Planning decision is awaited for Phase 2. Detailed designs are ongoing. External match funding is in place from DfI. The contractor procurement exercise has commenced. | Continue engagement with the public and key stakeholders. |
| BIF07 | Market Arches | £3.3m <i>BIF -£1.3m</i> <i>UV – £2m t</i> | Stage 3- Committed | Planning decision awaited. Business case being developed. TEO have confirmed capital funding for this project under Urban Villages. | Officer engagement with Executive Office and DfC as key funders |
| BIF48 | Sandy Row Arts & Digital Hub | £1,129,023 <i>BIF-£584,167</i> <i>UV-£706,856</i> | Stage 3- Committed | On site. Planned completion in summer 2025. Official launch in Autumn – date to be confirmed. <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects.</i> | Continue engagement with the group. |
| BIF46 | Coffee Culture | £1,149,821 <i>BIF-£286,519</i> <i>SOF-£100,000</i> <i>UV- £463,302</i> <i>DfC-£300,000</i> | Stage 3- Committed | Agreement reached in principle with NI Water - awaiting written confirmation. Contractor can be formally appointed once permission is received from TEO. <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects.</i> | Continue engagement with the group. |
| BIF33 | Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC | £250,000 | Stage 3- Committed | Agreement reached between Belvoir FC and NIHE on lease - valuation to be updated. Discussed at Due Diligence in March 2025. The | Continue engagement with the group and partners. |

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|-------|------------------------------|-----------|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| | | | | lease process is progressing and Solicitors have been appointed. | |
| BIF47 | Sandy Row Open Space project | £479,314* | Stage 1- Emerging <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects</i> | Ongoing engagement between the Council and Translink in relation to the potential project site at Blythefield. Stakeholder meetings with officers continue as the project progresses. Translink remediation strategy required. The Council will carry out community consultation on design. <i>*The remaining balance of the ringfenced allocation for the Sandy Row Area projects</i> | Continue engagement with the group. |

5. Social Outcomes Fund

SOF is a £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. 3 projects in South Belfast received an In-Principle funding commitment, and 2 have completed. Similar to LIF and BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. Members are asked to note the progress update of the remaining project in the table below.

SOF – South Belfast project overview

| Project | Award | Status and update | Action/ Recommendation |
|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| SOF02 Coffee Culture | £1,149,821 <i>SOF-£100,000 BIF-£286,519 UV- £463,302 DfC-£300,000</i> | Agreement reached in principle with NI Water - awaiting written confirmation. Contractor can be formally appointed once permission is received from TEO. | Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders. |

6. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF) is a capital fund with a current overall budget of £10,280,000 to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long-term difference in their communities. The overall NRF allocation for South was £1,978,637, and 5 projects received an In-Principle funding commitment. Each NRF project is taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place. Projects remaining at Stage 2 continue to have the support of a Client Manager for their proposals.

South Belfast – NRF overview

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|--------------|--|
| South | <p>Stage 3 - Sólás New Build project, GVRT Branching Out project, Lagan Water Access Activity Hub, Redevelopment of former School of Music, Market Heritage Hub</p> <p>Stage 2 (Reserve) - Redevelopment of Riddel's Warehouse</p> <p>Stage 1 (Reserve) - The Avenue Arts Centre, An Droichead Annex, Lagan Legacy</p> |
|--------------|--|

South Belfast – NRF projects at Stage 3 - Delivery

| Project | Funding | Stage | Status | Action/ Recommendation |
|---|---|--------------------|--|--|
| Sólás New Build project | <p>£2.5m</p> <p><i>NRF- £362,141</i> <i>COF- £800,000</i> <i>Various funders and group</i></p> | Stage 3- Committed | Funding package of £2.5m has been secured by Sólás from NRF, Community Ownership Fund, various foundations and the Group's own funds. Procurement of contractor is underway. Project was approved at Due Diligence on 15 May 2025. | <p>Continue engagement with the group.</p> <p>Members are asked to note that the project has secured further funding, and that project will be delivered by Group.</p> |
| GVRT- Branching Out project | £500,000 | Stage 3- Committed | Planning application approved. Discussions continue with potential funders. | Continue engagement with the group. |
| Lagan Water Access Activity Hub | £308,248 | Stage 3- Committed | Design for boathouse prepared and ground surveys have been undertaken. Planning application for boathouse submitted in April 2025. | Continue engagement with the group. |
| Redevelopment of former School of Music | <p>£2,308,248</p> <p><i>NRF-£308,248</i> <i>UV- £2m</i></p> | Stage 3- Committed | Business case being developed. TEO have confirmed £2m capital funding for this project | Continue engagement with the group. |

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| | | | under Urban Villages. Stakeholder meetings to take place in May on progress. | |
| Market Heritage Hub | £800,000 NRF- £500,000 COF- £300,000 | Stage 3- Committed | Purchase of the property, although advanced, is still subject to agreement with the vendor and remains a risk. Funding secured from COF. Council and Group are preparing for an application to HF for restoration of the building. | Continue engagement with the group. |

7. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is a rolling programme to either enhance existing Council assets or build / buy new assets or facilities. Table below provides an update on current live projects South Belfast area. Members are asked to note status and update.

South Belfast – Capital programme overview

| Project | Status and update |
|--|--|
| Playground Improvement Programme 24/25 | <i>Stage 3 Committed.</i> City-wide playgrounds improvements. Works at three sites across the city including Balfour Avenue Playground. Progressing. Balfour Avenue Playground onsite, to be completed by July 2025. |
| Sporting Pitches Investment 24/25 | <i>Stage 3 Committed.</i> Project completed. Agreed at P&C Committee in June 2024. Works at various sites across the city including Belvoir Activity Centre MUGA and Strangford Avenue Playing Fields. |
| Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide | <i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> Works progressing. Progress made with the commencement of the installation for Phase 5a. Members agreed in February to proceed with the gating order for Phase 5b, with an estimated completion timeline following the enactment of four to six months. |
| City Hall – Installation of Stained Glass Windows – LGBT and NHS | <i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> Unveiling of new LGBTQ+ window will take place on Thursday 22 May 2025. NHS – Members agreed that scope of window be extended to include request from Families Bereaved From Covid for a permanent memorial be included in design of new window. Officers to engage with organisation to seek their views on proposed way forward. |
| City Hall External Christmas Tree provision | <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted.</i> Options are being explored and the City Hall Installations Working Group is receiving updates. A two stage procurement process may be put in place with potential |

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| | suppliers to provide samples as part of the submission. |
| Electric Vehicle Charging Network | <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted.</i> Land Asset Assessment underway to identify a long list of sites suitable in principle. Progressing. |
| Waterfront Hall Chiller Units | <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted.</i> Detailed design of the new chiller system is underway. |
| Waterfront Hall Smoke Curtains | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Modelling of the auditorium has been completed. This report will now inform future needs and ancillary works. |
| Palm House, Botanic Gardens | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> This early-stage Council heritage asset project is being considered as a candidate for partnership working with the Heritage Fund. Updated feasibility study is being developed to support the application process. |
| Historic Cemeteries | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Restoration programme for heritage cemeteries in the city including Knock Cemetery, Clifton Street, Friars Bush and Balmoral Cemetery. Scoping work underway. |
| Historic Tiled Street Signs | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Capital restoration programme for the historic Belfast tiled street signs across the city. Scoping of signs is continuing along with opportunities for external funding. |
| City Hall Preservation | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Programme of works to ensure the preservation of the City Hall building. |
| Mobile Changing Places modular facility | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> This facility will be for use across the city. Specification developed and project now moving to procurement. |
| Communications Boards | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Inclusive communication boards in playgrounds. Initial capital funding secured via UKSPF recouped monies for first phase of installation at 29 playground sites. Officers are working on procurement for supply of boards. One board installed at Taughmonagh playground in April; one to be installed at Balfour Avenue playground under the CNS Playground Improvements in July. |
| Ormeau Park Basketball upgrade | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Upgrade to existing court. Next step is to appoint the design team to take the scheme forward. |
| Strangford Ave Playing Fields Enabling Works | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Enabling works for active travel container and gate improvements. Design for enabling works is complete and procurement is scheduled for Spring. Containers to be transferred in Autumn. |
| Musgrave Park Sensory Garden | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Upgrade to sensory garden. Next step is to appoint the design team to take the scheme forward. |
| Ulster Hall Lighting Scheme | <i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Feature lighting to exterior of Ulster Hall. Design and delivery is to be fully funded by DfC and Linen Quarter BID. Progressing. |
| Belfast Bikes Expansion | The tender for a new provider/ operator has been completed. |

8. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government departments on key capital investment programmes, namely Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office as well as a number of schemes with DfC and DfI. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to South Belfast.

Urban Villages Initiative

The table below is the status update on UV projects in South Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined South Belfast geography (Sandy Row; Donegall Pass and Markets).

UV – South Belfast projects overview

| Project | Status and update |
|--|--|
| The Lockhouse - Gateway to the River / Walkway | Stalled on site due to NI Water issue. Option to resolve this issue agreed by project board. Architects have changed the design accordingly and discussions with contractor ongoing. |
| Sandy Row Arts & Digital Hub | As above at BIF48. Planned completion in Summer 2025. |
| Coffee Culture | Agreement reached in principle with NI Water - awaiting written confirmation. Contractor can be formally appointed once permission is received from TEO. |
| Market Arches | As above at BIF07. Business case being developed. |
| Redevelopment of former School of Music | As above at NRF. Business case being developed. |
| Donegall Pass Good Relations Hub | Business case being developed. |

PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan - Capital Project

Members are asked to note the update on PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan capital project in South Belfast. The Letter of Offer has been accepted and returned to SEUPB.

| Project | Status and update |
|---------------------|--|
| Annadale Open Space | Part of the overall Belfast PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan. The procurement for the design team is underway and anticipate that a design team will be appointed by early Summer 2025, with the view to submit a planning application by Autumn 2025. The first stakeholder meeting has been arranged for 13 May 2025. These meetings will be held on a quarterly basis to provide status updates and to receive community feedback. |

DfC funded projects

Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Communities in South Belfast.

DfC – South Belfast projects overview

| Project | Status and update |
|---|--|
| Holylands Alleygating and Cleansing Project | Project progressing. Link to the citywide Alleygating Phase 5 project. |

DfI funded projects

Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Infrastructure in South Belfast.

DfI – South Belfast projects overview

9.

| Project | Status and update |
|---------------|--|
| Lagan Gateway | As above as BIF04. Planning decision is awaited for Phase 2. Detailed designs are ongoing. External match funding is in place from DfI. The contractor procurement exercise has commenced. |

Capital funding opportunities

Members are asked to note the updated version of the list of external capital funding and finance opportunities attached at Appendix 3 which may be of assistance to groups and clubs.”

The Working Group thanked the Director for the comprehensive update and for the list of external capital funding and finance opportunities which they would share with their constituents.

At the suggestion of the Director, the Working Group agreed to visit some of the completed projects throughout South Belfast.

In relation to the update received from the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the the reimaging of the Finaghy Bridge, it was highlighted that Departmental officials had offered to work with the Council to try and develop proposals to improve the appearance of the bridge, without compromising the safety of road and rail users. The Working Group was advised that DfI officials had agreed to assist with any necessary legislative processes, lane closures, utility coordination and the issue of any required consents or licences in regard to any improvements. A Member added that a tender was underway, seeking an artist to carry out the Council-led reimaging of the bridge, with a nature-based design, within the £30,000 which had been ringfenced for the project since 2016. The Working Group agreed to keep the current process under review.

In response to a further Member’s request, the Director of Property and Projects agreed to ensure that there were no undue delays in progressing the Sandy Row Open Space project.

Memorial at Donegall Road – Oral update

The Director of Property and Projects advised the Working Group that officers would bring options to the next meeting of the Working Group for a suitable Memorial to commemorate a burial ground at the Donegall Road site, with consideration being given to the wording and the type of memorial which should be erected.

In response to Member's comments, it was agreed that officers would approach Dr R. Atcheson, local historian, in relation to the memorial.

Noted.

Enterprise and Business Growth Support Offering

(Ms. M. McKay, Enterprise and Business Growth Manager, attended in connection with this item)

The Working Group was presented with the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the business support available to constituents and businesses in their areas including Go Succeed – the regional initiative to support business start-up and growth that is being led by Belfast City Council on behalf of the 11 councils.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- **Note and endorse the progress to date on the delivery of the Enterprise Support Service (Go Succeed) in South Belfast and beyond, with the objective of driving more and better businesses**
- **Promote opportunities for business support to constituents where relevant and appropriate**
- **Provide recommendations to Enterprise and Business Growth team on community and stakeholder engagement in the South Belfast area**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Go Succeed (Enterprise Support Service)

The Go Succeed service has now been operational for around eighteen months and has reached thousands of potential entrepreneurs and businesses across Northern Ireland.

By way of background, Belfast City Council led on a successful funding application to UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). This provided £17 million of support for the period

November 2023 to March 2025; £12 million programme delivery and £5 million for small grants. Following receipt of the funding agreement in September 2023, the service became operational in November 2023.

Belfast City Council, as lead for the service, has now secured additional funding via an application to UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) of £9.2 million for the 2025/2026 financial year, ensuring continuity of the service. The focus over the next year, alongside delivery of the service, will be working to secure a more permanent funding source.

The service aims to be the go-to source for expert business advice across the region. It represents the councils' collective response to our statutory responsibility and offers a set of connected enterprise support services where individuals, entrepreneurs or businesses can access a continuum of support to meet their needs, depending on their stage of development.

The key objectives of the model are to:

- Nurture a strong entrepreneurial culture, recognising enterprise as a viable career option and/or a route out of economic inactivity**
- Enable a vibrant and productive business base across Northern Ireland**
- Increase the proportion of 'innovation-active' businesses in NI and embed this more firmly with enterprise/ start-up agenda**
- Diversify the representation amongst those supported by the enterprise and innovation ecosystem**
- Delivery a service designed with the user in mind**
- Focus on adding value to existing support available in the ecosystem**
- Providing regional coverage while ensuring that delivery reflects local differences/nuances.**

Go Succeed provides a continuum of support from early-stage enterprise awareness through to starting, growing, and scaling a business. The concept was that the service would help people get the right support at the right time – and would also help maximise other available funding streams by helping businesses to navigate the complex support ecosystem.

The service has been established to deliver across three core areas – Start, Grow and Scale – with tailored support for clients aligned with their growth ambitions.

- Start: this element of the service aims to identify individuals with entrepreneurial intentions as well**

as reaching those individuals who do not have an intention to start a business but could be encouraged to do so. There is specific, targeted support for a range of underrepresented groups. The menu of support available includes masterclasses, peer support networks and 1-1 mentoring

- **Grow:** this element of the service provides support for existing businesses. 1-1 mentoring is allocated based on the business' potential to grow and innovate. Masterclass and peer support network activity are also provided to support existing businesses to make key decisions on issues such as entering new markets or accessing finance for growth
- **Scale:** this part of the service is geared to supporting start-ups that have the potential to go on and generate at least £1m in revenue after 3 years. Support is delivered through 1-1 mentoring which aims to enable access to finance or further support through Invest NI, Catalyst or others.

In addition to the tiered menu of support, small grants of up to £3,000 (up to 50% of capital costs) are available to entrepreneurs or businesses accessing support through the service who demonstrate growth potential.

The delivery is underpinned by investments such as a wide-reaching marketing and communications campaign; a call handling service to deal with phone enquiries as well as an online portal to deal with online requests for support and a regional CRM system to enable tracking of client engagement across the service.

Belfast Performance Update

Since the service launched in November 2023, we have achieved the following by way of Belfast performance:

- **4,059 individuals 'reached' through a range of community outreach activities. This has included:**
 - **Sector specific events and self-employment academies for those in the hair and beauty industry including delivery of aspirational workshops and hands-on mentoring support for over 80 newly qualified individuals.**
 - **Delivery of a female-focused 'inspiring enterprise' event for a group of 100 female entrepreneurs providing practical support to starting or growing their enterprise.**
 - **Working with apprenticeship providers across Belfast to deliver aspirational workshops to 100s of**

- 16–18-year-olds encouraging entrepreneurship as a very real and achievable pathway for consideration.
 - Facilitation of the '22 under 22' initiative, designed to unearth, recognise and fast track 22 exceptional potential entrepreneurs in the City.
 - Increasing awareness of enterprise among young people at the Young Enterprise Big Market event in St George's Market in December 2025.
- 1528 Belfast entrepreneurs supported through start up activity (1-1 mentoring, masterclasses, peer support networks) with 359 (23%) of these entrepreneurs being from the South Belfast area
- 888 Belfast businesses supported through growth activity (1-1 mentoring, masterclasses, peer support networks) with 160 (18%) of these businesses being based in the South Belfast area.

315 Belfast businesses have accessed Go Succeed Grants since the launch in February 2024, drawing down over £1 million. These grants have enabled businesses to purchase capital and/or revenue items which will support their future growth plans.

The Enterprise and Business Growth team would welcome any guidance from working group members to increase engagement in the South Belfast area. Constituent referrals or enquiries can be sent to the Enterprise and Business Growth team via gosucceed@belfastcity.gov.uk

3.2 **Go Social (Social Economy Support)**

Developing the social economy sector has been a priority of the NI Executive for some time and Belfast City Council is aware of the important and unique contribution which the sector can, and does, make to the local economy. In the 2024/25 year the demand for Belfast City Council's 'Go Social' programme, aimed at encouraging more start-ups within the local Social Economy, has increased with over 60 individuals starting their social enterprise/cooperative.

Via our dedicated 'Go Social' service we offer enhanced support to those thinking of starting up a new business as a social enterprise or co-operative and we encourage existing SE businesses to join our social economy register to help us on our journey to grow the sector. Go Social support is open to individuals, groups and existing organisations seeking to set up, or transition to, a social enterprise or cooperative model.

We recognise setting up a social enterprise or cooperative can be difficult due to navigating complex legal structures

and governance along with tackling a social cause or issue. Our Go Social support helps clients via specialist 1-1 mentoring support, access to networking opportunities and best practice visits as well as peer to peer support.

As part of our investment in the sector, Belfast City Council also deliver the Social Economy Incentive Fund which provides grants to new or developing social economy businesses in early growth stages. Each year we launch the fund in September with grants provided for up to £10,000, applications are assessed by a panel with shortlisted applicants invited to pitch. The fund is available to Belfast-based social enterprises and co-operatives, we would encourage anyone interested to sign up to our enterprise and business growth newsletter to be the first to hear about the fund launching again in September.

The Enterprise and Business Growth team would welcome any guidance from working group members to increase engagement in the South Belfast area. Constituent referrals or enquiries can be sent to the Enterprise and Business Growth team via gosucceed@belfastcity.gov.uk

3.3 Test trading

The Enterprise and Business growth team also offer fully funded opportunities for those receiving support through our services to test their products or services at St George's Market.

This opportunity gives businesses starting out, or those who have been in business for less than two years, the opportunity to test trade their products at our thriving, award winning St. George's market.

Taking part is free of charge, and businesses have the opportunity to test trade up to six times – a fantastic opportunity to gain real customer feedback, insights from other traders and hone their sales pitch.

The Enterprise and Business Growth team would welcome any guidance from working group members to increase engagement in the South Belfast area. Constituent referrals or enquiries can be sent to the Enterprise and Business Growth team via gosucceed@belfastcity.gov.uk

4.0 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications for members to consider.

5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

Equality impact assessments for all of the above services have been completed.”

In response to a number of Member's comments, the Enterprise and Business Growth Manager agreed to look into more roadshows and getting out and about within the communities to maximise engagement.

A Member also suggested that digital information leaflets be circulated to the Members for sharing on their social media.

The Working Group agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would adopt the recommendations as outlined within the report.

Update on EV Charging Point Network Project

The Climate Programme Manager, along with the Assistant Estates Surveyor, presented the Working Group with the extensive work which had been carried out to date on the potential sites within the Council's estate where EV charging stations could be installed. She outlined the process which would have to be undertaken with the providers.

In response to a Member's query, the Programme Manager advised the Members that NIE and DFI had been working closely with the Council in regard to the expansion of the EV charging network and that it was important that the Council showed civic leadership.

In relation to a further Member's queries, she confirmed that some sites could have a bank of EV chargers and that the opening and closing times of Council parks and leisure centres, for example, had already been considered and that the operational logistics could be considered further, if and when sites were deemed suitable by providers.

The Working Group thanked the officers for the update which had been provided.

**Request to present at a future meeting – Blackstaff Residents' Association:
Proposal for a Workhouse Museum and an Interpretive Centre**

The Members were advised that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee had, at its meeting on 9th April, referred a request from the Blackstaff Residents' Association to present at a future meeting to the South Area Working Group.

The South Area Working Group agreed to receive a deputation from the Association in relation to its proposal for a Workhouse Museum and Interpretive Centre at a future meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group was advised that the next meeting would take place on Monday, 18th August, 2025.

Chairperson

APPENDICES TO
Appendix I - CRT Animation Programme Timeline

| Project | Targets | Original Timeframe | Target Audience | Key Activities | Pre - Construction | During Construction | Post Construction |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| CRT1 | | | | | | Jul 2026 - May 2027 | Jun 2027 - Apr 2028 |
| LGBTQIA+ Hub | 470 Participants | Jan 2026 – Sept 2027 | LGBTQIA+ individuals, parents and carers, BAME communities, wider community | Social events, Support Groups, Health Fair, Cultural Sessions, Therapeutic Programmes, Pride Events, Training | | Initial commencement of all project activity - 186 Participants - target achievable | Ongoing delivery of all project activity - 284 Participants - target achievable |
| CRT2 | | | | | Feb-Jun 2026 | Feb 2027 - May 2027 | Jun 2027 - Apr 2028 |
| Annadale Open Space | 800 Participants | Jan 2025 – Sept 2027 | Cross Community residents, new residents, community groups / organisations, local youth practitioners, young people, | Event Management Training, Early Years/ Youth Training, Events, Detached Youth Work, Sports Sessions, Health & Wellbeing Sessions, Wildlife / Craft / Photography Workshops, Talks, Walks and Trips | Event management training, events, photography workshop | Training for earlier years providers and youth practitioners, detached youth work, sports sessions, health & wellbeing sessions, wildlife / gardening / craftsmanship / photography workshops, events, talks, walks and trips | |
| CRT3 | | | | | | May 2026 - May 2027 | Jun 2027 - Apr 2028 |
| Distillery Street | 730 Participants 500 Attendees | Jan 2025 – Sept 2027 | Cross Community residents, newer community residents, local artists | Focus Groups, Seasonal Animation, Weekend Events, Diversionsary Programme, Race together, Capacity Building, Environmental Learning, Site Regeneration, Cultural Celebrations | - | Initial commencement and ongoing delivery of all project activity. Participant, contact hours and activity numbers achievable through condensed delivery. Number of target meetings will not be achieved. | |
| CRT4 | | | | | | May 2026 - May 2027 | Jun 2027 - Apr 2028 |
| Access to the Hills | 1,200 participants, 300 attendees | Jan 2025 – Sept 2027 | Local and new residents, local community organisations, youth groups, primary schools | Capacity Building, Guided Walks and Talks, Educational / Celebration Events, Health Walks, Publications / Learning Resource, Forest School/ Sensory Classroom/ Story Telling, Outreach Session | | Initial commencement and ongoing delivery of all project activity. Condensed delivery - walk targets achievable, costs remain the same. Query whether forest school sessions can take place during construction - other sites? | |
| CRT5 | | | | | Jan 2026 - May 2026 | Jun 2026 - May 2027 | Jun 2027 - Apr 2028 |
| Sanctuary Theatre | 1,080 Participants | Sept 2024 – Sept 2027 | Local and wider Belfast residents, pupils / staff from post primary schools, performers and crew, audience members, volunteers, stakeholders | Volunteering Programme, Performances, Discussions, Workshops, surveys, Drama Productions, marketing | Initial commencement of project activity - 232 Participants | Ongoing delivery of all project activity - 384 Participants | Ongoing delivery of all project activity - 464 Participants |

Appendix II – Cross Community Breakdown Options for CRT projects within the Belfast PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan

Option 1 Cross Community Breakdown reflecting religion by target groups and delivery area

| Theme | Project | Participant Target | % Catholic | % Protestant | % None | % Other |
|--|--|--------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| THRIVING & PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES - Actual | | | | | | |
| TPC1 | Community Empowerment Programme | 1,000 | 49% | 27% | 21% | 3% |
| TPC2 | Health & Wellbeing Programme | 1,620 | 56% | 24% | 18% | 2% |
| TPC3.1 | Youth Empowerment: Juniors (9-12) | 1,500 | 47% | 24% | 26% | 3% |
| TPC3.2 | Youth Empowerment: Intermediate (12-15) | 350 | 47% | 24% | 26% | 3% |
| TPC3.3 | Youth Empowerment: Seniors (16-18) | 160 | 47% | 24% | 26% | 3% |
| TPC3.4 | Youth Empowerment: Young Adults (19-25) | 96 | 47% | 24% | 26% | 3% |
| TPC4 | Sport for Peace | 1,600 | 49% | 26% | 22% | 3% |
| TPC5 | Employability (Language Up) | 816 | 23% | 14% | 42% | 21% |
| TPC6 | Arts Across the Genres | 496 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CELEBRATING CULTURES & DIVERSITY - Actual | | | | | | |
| CCD1 | Interfaith and Belief Programme | 870 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD2 | Community Connections | 726 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD3 | Belfast LGBTQIA+ Community Engagement Programme | 625 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD4 | Community Empowerment - Ex Political Prisoners | 750 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD5.1 | Multiculturalism: Cross Community Language & Cultural Access | 1,110 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD5.2 | Multiculturalism: Cultural Spaces | 426 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD5.3 | Multiculturalism: Flagship Events | 404 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD5.4 | Multiculturalism: Culture and Built Heritage | 625 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| OPTION 1 COMMUNITY REGENERATION & TRANSFORMATION - Proposed | | | | | | |
| CRT1 | LGBTQIA+ Hub | 470 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CRT2 | Annadale Open Space | 800 | 35% | 22% | 35% | 8% |
| CRT3 | Distillery Street Redevelopment Scheme | 730 | 61% | 24% | 13% | 2% |
| CRT4 | Access to the Hills | 1,200 | 57% | 25% | 16% | 2% |
| CRT5 | The Sanctuary Theatre | 1,080 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| | Actual Community Split Avg | 17,454 | 45% | 27% | 24% | 4% |
| | Programme Overall Target | | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------|----|-----|----|----|
| | | Variance | 2% | -3% | 0% | 1% |
|--|--|----------|----|-----|----|----|

Option 2 Cross Community Breakdown reflecting religion by target groups and delivery area, with CRT delivery area 2 mi radius

| Theme | Project | Participant Target | % Catholic | % Protestant | % None | % Other |
|--|--|--------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| THRIVING & PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES - Actual | | | | | | |
| TPC1 | Community Empowerment Programme | 1,000 | 49% | 27% | 21% | 3% |
| TPC2 | Health & Wellbeing Programme | 1,620 | 56% | 24% | 18% | 2% |
| TPC3.1 | Youth Empowerment: Juniors (9-12) | 1,500 | 47% | 24% | 26% | 3% |
| TPC3.2 | Youth Empowerment: Intermediate (12-15) | 350 | 47% | 24% | 26% | 3% |
| TPC3.3 | Youth Empowerment: Seniors (16-18) | 160 | 47% | 24% | 26% | 3% |
| TPC3.4 | Youth Empowerment: Young Adults (19-25) | 96 | 47% | 24% | 26% | 3% |
| TPC4 | Sport for Peace | 1,600 | 49% | 26% | 22% | 3% |
| TPC5 | Employability (Language Up) | 816 | 23% | 14% | 42% | 21% |
| TPC6 | Arts Across the Genres | 496 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CELEBRATING CULTURES & DIVERSITY - Actual | | | | | | |
| CCD1 | Interfaith and Belief Programme | 870 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD2 | Community Connections | 726 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD3 | Belfast LGBTQIA+ Community Engagement Programme | 625 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD4 | Community Empowerment - Ex Political Prisoners | 750 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD5.1 | Multiculturalism: Cross Community Language & Cultural Access | 1,110 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD5.2 | Multiculturalism: Cultural Spaces | 426 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD5.3 | Multiculturalism: Flagship Events | 404 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CCD5.4 | Multiculturalism: Culture and Built Heritage | 625 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| OPTION 2 COMMUNITY REGENERATION & TRANSFORMATION - Proposed | | | | | | |
| CRT1 | LGBTQIA+ Hub | 470 | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |
| CRT2 | Annadale Open Space | 800 | 36% | 30% | 29% | 5% |
| CRT3 | Distillery Street Redevelopment Scheme | 730 | 46% | 26% | 24% | 4% |
| CRT4 | Access to the Hills | 1,200 | 42% | 37% | 19% | 2% |
| CRT5 | The Sanctuary Theatre | 1,080 | 29% | 36% | 31% | 4% |
| | Actual Community Split Avg | | 43% | 28% | 25% | 4% |
| | Programme Overall Target | | 43% | 30% | 24% | 3% |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------|----|-----|----|----|
| | | Variance | 0% | -2% | 1% | 1% |
|--|--|----------|----|-----|----|----|