



# City Growth and Regeneration

Committee Plan 2023- 2024

6-monthly Progress Report



**Belfast**  
City Council

# 1. Inclusive Economic Recovery

Strategic Priority and In-Year Deliverable	Progress made between 1st April and 30th September
<b>Cultural Strategy</b> (SRO: John Greer)	
<b>Progress the 'A City Imagining Plan':</b>	<p>The latest comprehensive update will be presented to <a href="#">November's CG&amp;R Committee</a>. Summaries from previous updates are shown below.</p> <p><a href="#">August CGR Committee</a> was updated on the <b>funding scheme for artist led organisations</b> to provide financial and development support. Committee agreed the proposals for the allocation of funding. £100,000 has been allocated to support Artist Studios &amp; Makers Spaces in 23/24.</p> <p><a href="#">June's CGR Committee</a> was updated on the various grants used to support the Cultural Strategy 'A City Imagining'. These include <b>Cultural multi-annual grants</b> (CMAG) and an extension of the <b>Pathfinder grants</b>. CMAG grants cover two main areas: Arts &amp; Heritage and Festivals &amp; Events. Committee was advised that, for the new financial year in April 2024, it was planned to launch CMAG in August 2023 (it is currently open until 6 October 2023) with approval of awards and contracts by March 2023. A range of measures to promote the grants will be used. Committee was also updated on the evaluation of the grants process and the recommendations made to improve the process. <a href="#">June's committee</a> were also advised about DfC's <b>Access and Inclusion</b> Programme 2023-24.</p>
<b>Implement "Music Matters" Music Strategy:</b>	<p><a href="#">August's</a> and <a href="#">September's</a> CGR Committees were updated on progress with the <b>Music Strategy</b> and asked to approve the programme of work for the remainder of the year. Key areas of progress to date included agreeing the final strategy and agreeing an allocation of £900k for 2023/24 and 24/25.</p> <p>In September, Members were asked to approve funding for the <b>NI Music Prize</b> to honour and celebrates the very best of new, established and emerging NI music. It is a key music event for the city of Belfast and will host an audience of 1,000 people.</p>
<b>Progress Belfast 2024 Year of Cultural Celebration for Belfast</b>	<p><a href="#">June's CGR Committee</a> was presented with an update on <b>Belfast 2024</b>. Committee noted the summary of the strategic case and developments for delivery for Belfast 2024, in particular, the <b>programming and proposed governance</b> model.</p> <p>Committee also approved the Belfast 2024 <b>outline programme budget</b> of £7.1million; the increase in allocation for the local Open Call aspect of programme development; the commissioning partnership with the Power Plants project for research and development; and the additional 3 Creative Bursaries giving 16 in total across Belfast 2024.</p>
<b>City Recovery, reopening the city and support for businesses</b> (SRO: Cathy Reynolds)	
<b>Business Cluster &amp; Community Grants</b>	<p><b>BCCG</b>; Work continues with community and business groups to finalise the delivery of the BCCG's with all works expected to be complete by March 2024. The BCCG's have deliver c£15.m of capital support to 67 community groups and business clusters across the city to bring forward shop frontage improvements, environmental improvements, outdoor spaces, community gardens and upgrades to sports facilities.</p>
<b>Vacant to Vibrant</b>	<p><b>Vacant to Vibrant</b>. Almost 300 application packs have been issued, and officers are currently working with a number of applicants, providing support to develop their proposals. A total of 14 applications have been approved, with one application pending approval and a further 9 applicants actively engaging with officers to finalise their applications with an expectation that these will be submitted Winter 2023/24, and a further 9 applicants are progressing with support via the Matchmaking Service. To date this has resulted in over 50 employment opportunities, estimated rates value</p>



	<p>c.£800k over the course of the lease periods and the reactivation to support 13 historic / heritage / buildings of interest.</p> <p>A match maker service has now been commissioned and to identify premises and to assist potential businesses to land their required space</p>
<b>City Development and Investment (SRO: Cathy Reynolds)</b>	
<b>Regeneration Framework</b>	Work is advanced on the development of a <b>Regeneration Framework and Project Prioritisation Process</b> . A significant programme of engagement has been completed including Party Group Leaders, MPs, Permanent Secretaries and other stakeholders, as well as internally across the organisation. This is aligned to the ongoing work via City & Organisational Strategy to develop a project pipeline for Council aligned to funding opportunities and city priorities.
<b>Secure Belfast additional investment</b>	The Lobby paper seeking to secure Belfast's <b>additional investment and funding</b> to realise the city and Region's growth ambitions is in final draft format. This has been informed by extensive engagement including Party Group Leaders, MPs, Permanent Secretaries and other stakeholders, as well as internally across the organization.
<b>City centre investment fund</b>	A review of the <b>City Centre Investment Fund (CCIF)</b> is ongoing. This is aligned with the city's development aspirations.
<b>Institutional investor / development partner</b>	As reported to <a href="#">CGR Committee</a> in September 2023, the Expression of Interest process, re an <b>institutional investor / development partner</b> , was launched in March 2023 and closed in May 2023. Subsequent to September's 2023 <a href="#">SP&amp;R</a> decision and ratified at Council In October 2023 the competitive dialogue process has been approved and was launched to market in October 23.
<b>Strategic direction to major projects</b>	Officers continued to actively engage on major <b>private sector led regeneration schemes</b> through the established Project Reference Groups to ensure alignment with Council's strategic corporate priorities.
<b>Progress citywide strategic opportunities</b>	As reported to PGL Forum in August 2023 and <a href="#">CGR Committee</a> in September 2023 work continues to identify land (both public and private) with housing potential through the agreed mechanism under the <b>Housing Led Regeneration Group</b> , established under the Community Planning Partnership City Development Board, which currently includes representatives from BCC, NIHE, SIB, DfC & LPS.
<b>2 Royal Avenue</b>	As agreed by <a href="#">SP&amp;R Committee</a> in August 2023, an application for funding for the refurbishment of the first floor of <b>2 Royal Avenue</b> to provide a dedicated space for organisations representing the LGBTQIA+ sector is being progressed under PEACEPLUS Investment Area 1.1. The Operator Feasibility Model in respect of the building is in final draft, and work is continuing on the delivery of DfC capital funding to enhance and open the rear of the building into Bank Square.
<b>The Sixth</b>	Work on the Sixth was also progressed via the BelTel LLP.
<b>Regeneration Assets</b>	Ongoing management of the Regeneration Assets in line with the objectives of the CCIF.
<b>Belfast Campus</b>	The Council are supporting the transition of CCRF in line with the opening of the Belfast Campus and transition to BAU. We continued to support the <b>UU Community Campus Regeneration Forum</b> , including its transition in line with the opening of the Belfast campus.

<p><b>A Bolder Vision for Belfast</b></p>	<p>Council officers continue to take a civic lead on <b>A Bolder Vision</b> by ensuring that pending schemes take account of, and deliver on the objectives of, A Bolder Vision for Belfast. Further detailed updates are included under <i>Access, Connectivity, Active and Sustainable Travel</i> later in this document.</p>
<p><b>Increase tourism spend through sustainable tourism products (SRO: John Greer)</b></p>	
<p><b>Deliver year 2 of the 10-year Tourism recovery plan “Make Yourself at Home”</b></p>	<p>The latest comprehensive update will be presented to <a href="#">November’s CG&amp;R Committee</a>. Summaries from previous updates are shown below.</p> <p><a href="#">June’s CGR Committee</a> was presented with an update on the development of the <b>Neighbourhood Tourism</b> Investment Programme. This builds on the support that has been in place since 2017. The current support will remain in place until April 2024. Subsequently we will move to investment in a 2-year programme to develop and enhance tourism products and experiences across the city, sharing and distributing the benefits of a vibrant tourism sector throughout local neighbourhoods. This will be aligned with work on the cultural strategy and development of Belfast Stories.</p> <p><a href="#">August’s Committee</a> were provided with an update on ‘<b>One Young World</b>’ and the Council’s role in supporting the event. It is expected to attract 2,000 + young delegates (including 20 from Belfast) plus some 40+ global leaders, 100+ international journalists and 100’s of leading global companies.</p>
<p><b>Deliver the Annual Events programme</b></p>	<p>In addition to the update presented to <a href="#">November’s CG&amp;R Committee</a>. Summaries from previous updates are shown below.</p> <p><a href="#">August’s</a>, <a href="#">June’s</a> and <a href="#">October’s Committees</a> were presented with updates on the <b>annual events programme</b>. In particular, they were updated on the bids to secure <b>Fleadh Cheoil</b> and the <b>European Football Championships</b> in 2028; and progress with St Patrick’s Day and the Maritime Festival.</p> <p>Members will be aware that significant work has taken place in recent years to realign City Events with Council’s wider cultural and tourism ambitions. This has included a renewed focus on working in partnership and developing programmes that support the local cultural sector and represent an authentic Belfast Experience.</p> <p>At <a href="#">April 2023 Committee</a>, Members agreed the Year 2 Action Plan of Event Delivery against MYAH. The 6-month update against these targets and deliverables is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 large - scale city events (Maritime) was delivered attracted local audiences and out – of - state visitors, with two to follow (Christmas and St Patrick’s Day).</li> <li>• Maritime Festival successfully delivered in September 2023, including an audience of 80,000, securing TNI funding of £60,000. In lieu of a large-scale creative piece (Council decision), a Maritime village including craft, food and science fair was delivered. Initial estimates suggest a potential Economic impact of £1.33 million. However, a full Debrief report and Developmental Action plan will follow soon for Committee approval.</li> <li>• Christmas 2023 – after consideration of event health and safety considerations, and programming options as brought by Officers; Members have agreed to the traditional format and Officers have continued to research initiatives with local creatives to enhance the co-design of creative offering. Event planning and developmental work continues with all relevant stakeholders.</li> <li>• St Patrick’s Day 2024 – Officers continue to progress delivery, via a tender of the new model and associated commissioning approach to the creative sector, to ensure delivery of elements such as: a parade, music programme and community engagement. Good Relations Unit have advised there will be no budget enhancement available for the 2024 event. A marketing campaign is currently being scoped.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lord Mayor’s Day 2023 was delivered with engagement of the Lord Mayor’s Networks. A Debrief report was previously brought back to Committee.</li> <li>• Eurovision - event delivered in May 2023 in 2RA through provider Maywe and Council engaged in a UK wide partnership approach, led by the BBC. Debrief report was previously presented to Committee.</li> <li>• International Events – As part of the international events programme for 2025-2028, Officers continue to participate in the ongoing bidding process for Fleadh Cheoil for 2025 and beyond (Members have been provided with regular update reports in-year on this). Euro 2028 has been secured as part of a 5 Nation Bid (regular reports have been provided and a further report will be provided before the end of the financial year when the governance and human and financial resourcing has been more clearly mapped). Members will also be aware of the ongoing bid for the Oireachtas na Samhna (report previously presented to Committee in October).</li> <li>• A collaborative programming approach continues to be adopted to the Council managed portfolio of events intertwined with bidding and securing international events.</li> <li>• One Young World – this event was successfully delivered during October 2023, with 2,200 delegates and corporates in attendance from over 190 countries. A Debrief and Evaluation continues to be collated and a full debrief report will be brought to Committee in the second half of the financial year.</li> <li>• Sports Events Grants continue to support local organisations with 9 organisations funded within year.</li> <li>• Belfast 2024 – the Events Unit continue to work with colleagues in Belfast 2024 to plan and support the operational and logistical delivery of the programme.</li> </ul> <p>The Events Unit continue to scope the governance requirements across the city in relation to both the council managed events portfolio and international events bid programme in conjunction with stakeholders</p>
<b>Encourage business start-ups and support indigenous business growth (SRO: John Greer)</b>	
<b>Provide ‘Starting a Business’ services:</b>	<a href="#">August’s Committee</a> was updated on the new <b>Enterprise Support Service</b> – the regional initiative that will be led by Belfast City Council. The service will commence from October 2023 and will be formally launched in November 2023.
<b>Support social enterprises and co-operatives:</b>	A response to <b>DfE’s one-year social enterprise action plan</b> was approved at the October meeting of the CG&R Committee. Officers are engaging with DfE on implementation – with a focus on ensuring alignment with councils and the NIESS work
<b>Provide ‘Growing a Business’ services by:</b>	Update as per input on Starting a Business (above)
<b>Support City Markets (SRO: John Greer)</b>	
<b>Enhance St George’s Market:</b>  <b>Deliver Continental Market:</b>  <b>Support external markets:</b>	<p>Work is under way to support delivery of the <b>investment plan</b> – initial work is focusing on addressing excessive storage levels which are impacting on the ability to hold additional events.</p> <p>A <b>Twilight Market</b> is planned for Halloween 2023</p> <p>Planning work is under way for the <b>Christmas 2023 market</b> – activity is planned to complement the planned lights switch-on on 18 November 2023</p>
<b>Promote and market the city internationally (SRO: Cathy Reynolds)</b>	

<p><b>Positioning the City to Compete:</b></p>	<p>Officers supported the delivery of the <b>Renewed Ambition Partnership</b> programme of activity.</p> <p>This is focused on the five key pillars of Research; Events; Advocacy and Engagement; Communications and Repository (including attending MIPIM and UKREiiF 2023 to facilitate engagement with institutional investors and developers); and showcase investment and regeneration opportunities in Belfast and the wider city region. Follow-up activity, including facilitating city visits is on-going.</p> <p>As approved by <a href="#">CGR Committee</a> in August 2023 Council Officers have commenced supporting the 23 / 24 programme including governance processes, administering programme funded expenditure and entering into associated contracts on behalf of, and with oversight from, the Taskforce in line with Council’s procurement processes. As included within the presentation from the Chair of the Taskforce to Committee in August 2023, the partnership has undergone a rebrand to the “<b>Belfast City and Region Place Partnership</b>”. The launch of the 2023 / 24 Programme is scheduled to take place on 14 November 2023.</p> <p>Through our <b>investor support activity</b>, we continued to provide advice and connections to potential investors, including the Northern Ireland Investment Summit in September 2023.</p> <p>The <b>Building Impact Report</b> was shared with Committee following the Committee meeting in August 2023. Work is on-going to support the implementation of the report recommendations.</p> <p>Monitoring and analysis of valid planning applications to inform the <b>City Development Tracker</b> continues on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance and updating of the <b>Invest in Belfast website</b> with information on Belfast, the key growth sectors and specific investment and development opportunities.</p> <p>Continued roll out of the <b>investment CRM system</b>, ongoing maintenance and management.</p>
<p><b>Future City Centre Programme and Belfast City Centre Regeneration &amp; Investment Strategy (SRO: Cathy Reynolds)</b></p>	
<p><b>Continue to progress the Future City Centre Programme</b></p>	<p>In order to address the pertinent issues impacting on the city centre today, work has progressed to revise the “<b>Future City Centre</b>” (<b>FCC</b>) <b>Programme</b>. This has involved a comprehensive programme of research and engagement, including engagement with Members via the City Centre All Party Working Group, the updated Pragma report, cross departmental officer workshop and wider stakeholder views raised as part of community planning and articulated in the refreshed Belfast Agenda. Reporting to the CGR Committee on the refreshed FCC Programme and Monitoring Framework is scheduled for November 2023.</p> <p>Ongoing progress within this quarter include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work has commenced on the Southwest Quarter scheme involving 4 business cluster &amp; community grant schemes alongside an environmental improvement/connectivity scheme on Gt Victoria St &amp; Shaftsbury Sq.</li> <li>• The 5C’s scheme supported by Developer Contributions continues through DfI engagement prior to planning.</li> <li>• The Developer Contribution funded Little York/Little Patrick Scheme is in planning.</li> <li>• Procurement process has commenced to bring forward Blackstaff Sq as a catalyst project in conjunction with DfC.</li> </ul> <p>Work has commenced on the final Entries project within this Phase, focusing on reopening Sugarhouse Entry.</p>

<b>Belfast City Centre Regeneration &amp; Investment Strategy (BCCRIS)</b>	A number of priorities and projects identified within Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy continue to be progressed via BCC and other private /public sector partners.
<b>Regeneration Projects</b>	<p>The <b>Joint Regeneration Group</b> (BCC, DfC, DfI, NIHE) met on a monthly basis to coordinate the public sector approach to Housing-Led Regeneration, A Bolder Vision, public realm projects, refresh of the Belfast Agenda and the FCC programme. Updates were provided to Committee in <a href="#">August</a> and <a href="#">September</a> 2023 in relation to DfI funding for the “Grey to Green” and Active Travel Enablers.</p> <p>The council continued to lead the <b>Community Planning Partnership’s City Development Board</b> with a focus on the refresh of the Belfast Agenda and associated emerging draft action plans aligned to the newly identified priorities of the City Development Board, ie, Housing Led Regeneration; Future City Centre Programme and Citywide Regeneration; Connectivity, Active &amp; Sustainable Travel and supported the launch of the public consultation for this which was launched in August 2023 and is scheduled to close on 2 October 2023.</p>
<b>Developer Contributions</b>	Committee received an update in respect of <b>Developer Contributions</b> (historical contributions) in <a href="#">April 2023</a> . These continue to be monitored and scheme proposals utilising the contributions are being progressed.
<b>City Infrastructure (SRO: Cathy Reynolds)</b>	
<b>Champion the Council's preferred position for major infrastructure projects.</b>	<p>We continue to provide civic leadership and strategic input to the <b>major city infrastructure projects</b> and represent Council on citywide boards, enabling, facilitating, and influencing major infrastructure development and investment.</p> <p>Committee received presentations at the Special meeting of Committee in <a href="#">June 2023</a>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• from Belfast Harbour Commissioners and Titanic Quarter Limited in June 2023 on the development of the Queens Island Transport Plan</li> <li>• from DfI on the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (Committee are being asked to consider Council’s response to the Eastern Transport Plan at the October 2023 Committee meeting).</li> <li>• From DfI on the York Street Interchange Place Making &amp; Active Travel review in February 2023</li> </ul> <p>Committee agreed responses to the DfI EQIA Consultation in <a href="#">August</a> 2023 and the All-Island Strategic Rail Review (AISRR) in <a href="#">September</a> 2023.</p> <p>Committee are scheduled to receive the DfI Spring and Autumn 2023 Reports at a future meeting.</p> <p>Committee received a presentation from DfI on the emerging Eastern Transport Plan, with a draft public consultation report to be presented to the October meeting of the CG&amp;R Committee.</p> <p>Officers continue to input to Strategic projects through the Streets Ahead, Living with Water and Belfast Rapid Transport Programme Boards with reports brought to Committee when appropriate.</p>
<b>Committee Assets (SRO: John Greer)</b>	
<b>Zoo</b>	<p>Regular updates have been presented to the CGR Committee. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in <a href="#">April</a> to review <b>fees and charges</b>;</li> </ul>

<p><b>Belfast Bike Scheme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in <a href="#">June</a> to further consider <b>fees and charges</b>; and to present <b>performance levels</b> in terms of finances, visitor numbers, educational activity and the animal collection; and to consider donations to the approved conservation projects;</li> <li>and <a href="#">August</a> to outline future options for the <b>Elephants</b>.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">June's CGR Committee</a> was presented with an update on the <b>Belfast Bikes' Scheme</b>. This included information about the newly opened additional bike stations at Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre, Olympia Leisure Centre, Kennedy Centre, and Waterworks. It also outlined plans for further expansion.</p> <p>In terms of performance, it was reported that sourcing replacement bike parts and purchasing new bikes has resulted in an increase in the average daily bikes on the street. There were 16,282 registered Belfast Bike users at the end of Q4 (2022-23). It was also noted that Income from fees and charges in Q4 was down compared to average.</p> <p><a href="#">August's committee</a> was provided with a further updated. This included information on the notice of motion to provide <b>free transport for younger people</b> and outlined the cost implications. Members agreed to consider this proposal as part of the rate setting process for 24/25 and would also write to the Department for Infrastructure and the Department of Health to request investment in this proposal, to be delivered on an annual basis.</p>
<p><b>Belfast Stories (SRO: Wendy Langham)</b></p>	
	<p><a href="#">June's CGR Committee</a> was presented with an update on the Belfast Stories project. This presented key areas of progress including the feedback from public consultation and outlined plans for the next phase of the project.</p> <p>Key progress includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>completion of the procurement process of the Integrated Design Team and Project Management Design Assurance Team (as within November 2021 SPR approval to progress with key professional services appointments).</li> <li>the RIBA design stage 1 can commence in Q4 now the teams are in place.</li> <li>completion of the Belfast Stories Audit.</li> <li>a stories collection pilot will commence in Q4.</li> <li>the statutory process regarding the abandonment of the adopted alleyway commenced and is well underway.</li> </ul> <p>to support engagement, a Members' Working Group has been established and will meet in October. We are setting up a Stories Network to support wider stakeholder engagement with the first meeting in November.</p>
<p><b>Access, Connectivity, Active and Sustainable Travel (SRO: Cathy Reynolds)</b></p>	
<p><b>Active Travel and Connectivity</b></p>	<p>A Connectivity, active and Sustainable Travel Members' All Party Roundtable discussion took place on 30 August 2023 which provided an overview of the various streams of work underway, challenges and opportunities and where they feed into Council's strategic priorities and governance structures.</p>
<p><b>A Bolder Vision for Belfast</b></p>	<p>BCC continues to work with DfI and DfC on finalisation of the <b>Bolder Vision Strategy</b> with the emerging draft Strategy approved by <a href="#">CG&amp;R Committee</a> in August 2022.</p> <p><b>Engagement</b> is ongoing with departments (in the absence of Ministers) through the Oversight Group (CX, and Perm Secs from DfC and DfI) and the Steering Group (Directors BCC, DfC, DfI).</p> <p>DfI have accelerated the Belfast city centre element of the ETP to address the <b>Climate Action Plan</b> through modelling options for the provision of the strategic transportation network and to help inform the emerging capital project list. Updates will be provided to CG&amp;R as this work progresses.</p>



	<p>Council Officers continue to develop a <b>pipeline of projects</b> aligned to A Bolder Vision to identify, prioritise and work up catalyst connectivity projects to attract external funding.</p> <p>With reference to engagement with DfI, updates were provided to Committee in <a href="#">August</a> and <a href="#">September</a> 2023 in relation to DfI funding for the “Grey to Green” and Active Travel Enablers including the provision of covered and secure cycle stands across the city.</p> <p>The <b>Active Travel Hub at QUB</b> has been delivered and is now operating successfully. The <b>Cathedral Quarter Active Travel Hub</b> has been delivered and in is now into its second year of the pilot. Officers continue to develop a pipeline of projects for external funding opportunities aligned to ABV to deliver on the CAST action plan.</p>
<b>Horizon Europe Urban Planning 2030</b>	<p>Project commenced and Grant Agreement received from UKRI. Project financial and progress reporting underway with UKRI and Horizon Europe and regular attendance and reporting to the UP2030 consortium and liaison partner, <i>Mapping for Change</i>. Five workshops have taken place including Visioning, Active Travel, Greening, Retrofit and Strategic Partners. Meetings have taken place with representatives from the geographical areas covered within the pilot, Falls, Sandy Row, Markets, Donegall Pass and Linen Quarter; with focused engagement planned for the coming months.</p>
<b>Waterfront Proposition – Belfast Waterfront Promenade</b>	<p>Committee agreed in October 2022 to contribute funding to the development of a framework for a fully connected waterfront - building on existing and proposed plans and schemes and aligned to local and central government objectives including A Bolder Vision, private sector development and community group proposals. An update on the framework and work of the Waterfront Task Group is being reported to Committee in October 2023 with work ongoing to develop projects of significant scale for funding.</p>
<b>Belfast – Cork Harbour Cities</b>	<p>An update on the progress of the Cork Belfast Docklands Regeneration Shared Island Initiative was presented to SP&amp;R Committee in August 2023 it was agreed the prioritised project for the Belfast Dockside Regeneration as the Sailortown to Titanic Quarter Active Travel Bridge. Members will note also the alignment of this to the work of the Waterfront Task Group.</p>
<b>Car Parking Strategy</b>	<p>As agreed by CG&amp;R Committee in June 2022 the refresh of the Car Parking Strategy is deferred pending the finalisation of the LDP &amp; BMTP. The Car Parking Working Group has been reconvened in light of the adopted LDP and consultation on the Eastern Transport Plan (former BMTP). Officers continue to work with DfI to establish the implications of the emerging ETP work on the Car Parking Strategy</p>
<b>Educational underachievement (SRO: John Greer)</b>	
<b>GCSE Support Programme</b>	<p>October’s <a href="#">CG&amp;R Committee</a> was provided with an update advising that 434 young people had been engaged through the <b>GCSE support</b> programme.</p>
<b>Access to employment (SRO: John Greer)</b>	

<p><b>Deliver Employment academies.</b></p> <p><b>Improving demand side support:</b></p>	<p><a href="#">September's CGR Committee</a> was updated on the <b>Belfast Business Promise</b>, as a key commitment in the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy. The Pilot Promise scheme will run from April to November 2023. In the first eight weeks following the go-live date of 24th April 2023, 35 organisations had been engaged and, of this, 21 organisations are now signed up to the Belfast Business Promise and going through the process of accreditation.</p> <p>The October CG&amp;R Committee will be provided with a full update on performance across <b>Employment Academies</b>, with almost 580 people to be supported in the course of the year.</p>
<p><b>Upskilling opportunities</b> (SRO: John Greer)</p>	
<p><b>Progress the Belfast Labour Market Partnership (LMP)</b></p>	<p>The <b>Gateway to Choices service</b> has been operational since Summer 2023. 400 people have received support from the service to date.</p> <p>The <b>Belfast Jobs Fair</b> took place in St George's Market on 10 October. Almost 70 employers were in attendance offering more than 1800 jobs.</p>

## 2. Community Recovery

Strategic Priority and In-Year Deliverable	Progress made between 1st April and 30th September
<b>Maximising housing development and regeneration opportunities</b> (SRO: Cathy Reynolds)	
<b>BCC Housing-Led Regeneration Programme</b>	Updates on specific Housing-Led Regeneration Programmes are set out in the following sections. There is ongoing work with city partners in relation to working to <b>overcome obstacles to increasing residential development</b> , including City Centre living. This work has involved while continuing to facilitate workshops with various stakeholders. These include a recent workshop with cross public sector representation from the CPP Housing Led Regeneration Group and representatives from the local development community.
<b>Citywide strategic opportunities</b>	<p>As reported to PGL Forum in August 2023 and <a href="#">CGR</a> Committee in September 2023 work continues to <b>identify land (both public and private) with housing potential</b>. This involves the agreed mechanism under the Housing Led Regeneration Group, which was established under the Community Planning Partnership City Development Board. Representatives currently include BCC, NIHE, SIB, DfC &amp; LPS.</p> <p>Further analysis on the planning and development feasibility of these sites is required to evaluate the potential to deliver housing led regeneration either in isolation or as part of wider land assembly with the public/private sector. Work also continues to extend this identification process to include Education, Health and other public sector landholdings as their data is received. A further report will be brought back to this Committee as this work progresses.</p>
<b>Strategic City Centre Cluster Sites</b>	<p>As per report to <a href="#">CGR Committee</a> in September 2023 and subsequent decision of the SP&amp;R Committee in September (subject to Council ratification on 4 October) Officers are now progressing the re-issue of a <b>reframed Development Brief to the Housing Associations</b>. This is in-line with the revised wording on the residential mix and the inclusion of a terminal deferred payment approach to the land value.</p> <p>As reported to <a href="#">CGR Committee</a> in September 2023, the Expression of Interest process, re an <b>institutional investor / development partner</b>, was launched in March 2023 and closed in May 2023. Subsequent to September's 2023 <a href="#">SP&amp;R</a> decision (subject to Council ratification on 4 October 2023), the competitive dialogue process has been approved and work is underway to support the commencement of this.</p> <p>This is supported by detailed work being completed on several initial cluster sites (from the Strategic Site Assessment work) including Concept Regeneration Plans for each of the cluster sites; ongoing engagement with other public and private sector neighbouring landowners; the adoption of a placemaking approach to development and progress through the planning process through Pre-Application Discussions (PADs), as well as site and title due diligence.</p>
<b>City Centre Living Vision</b>	The <b>City Centre Living Vision</b> is being utilised as a reference document to inform Council's strategic direction for city centre living initiatives.