



<b>Subject:</b>	Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland - Public Consultation
<b>Date:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> May 2018
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To present for consideration and comment the draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland published for consultation on the 18th April 2018 by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)). The consultation period closes on 15 June 2018. A copy of the Draft Summary Plan is attached at Appendix 2 of this report.
1.2	The draft Marine Plan seeks to support the sustainable use and management of the marine resource. This includes safeguarding its importance for nature and seascape, whilst balancing its economic use, including for fishing, transportation, leisure and energy. The draft Plan is intended to enable public authorities, including the Council, to make decisions that may affect the marine area in a balanced and sustainable manner, integrating economic, environmental and social considerations. This includes any authorisation or enforcement decisions that affects (or might affect) the marine area, being the area generally below the high water mark. The purpose of the this report is to consider implications that the Marine Plan may have, in particular for planning decisions and Council projects in and around the harbour or otherwise potentially affecting the marine area.
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<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee notes the consultation on the draft Marine Plan. It is further recommended that the Committee considers the draft written response to the Plan (see Appendix 1) and, if appropriate, approve it for submission to DAERA.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	DAERA is consulting on the draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland, which has been developed within the framework of the UK Marine Policy Statement. The Marine Plan (when adopted) will be used by all public authorities in taking decisions which affect or might affect the marine area, including authorisation or enforcement decisions.
3.2	The draft Marine Plan is made up of a number of high level policies aimed at facilitating the sustainable development of the marine area. It consolidates existing legislation, policy measures and practices in the Northern Ireland marine area. The purpose of the Plan is to inform and guide the regulation, management, use and protection of the NI marine area, including both inshore and offshore regions. This generally applies to all areas below the mean high water spring tide, which includes parts of Belfast Harbour and the lower River Lagan.
3.3	<p>The draft Marine Plan sets its Vision as: <i>“A healthy marine area which is managed sustainably for the economic, environmental and social prosperity of present and future generations.”</i> There are 8 crosscutting objectives, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>To promote the sustainable development of productive activities, which support employment at all skill levels, while fully considering the requirements of other marine interests.</i></li> <li>2. <i>To help realise the potential of energy resources and energy storage within the marine area, while fully considering the requirements of other marine interests.</i></li> <li>3. <i>To promote the development of vibrant, accessible and sustainable coastal communities.</i></li> <li>4. <i>To promote the marine resource, its recreational value and the wider economic, environmental and social benefits to all.</i></li> <li>5. <i>To promote the preservation and enjoyment of marine related heritage assets.</i></li> <li>6. <i>To promote a healthy, resilient and adaptable marine ecosystem and an ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas.</i></li> <li>7. <i>To contribute towards climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.</i></li> <li>8. <i>To continue to develop a sound marine evidence base in a co-ordinated manner, to increase understanding and to support the development, monitoring and review of marine plans.</i></li> </ol>
3.4	There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the draft Marine Plan. It contains a number of <b>core policies</b> , which cover the general issues to be considered, and <b>key activity policies</b> , which apply to particular marine activities. The core policies include Air Quality; Climate Change; Coastal Processes; Land and Sea Interaction; Marine Litter; Noise; Natural Heritage and Water Quality. Core policies apply to all proposals and public authorities must consider them when taking decisions. The key activities policies include Aquaculture; Commercial Fishing; Dredging; Energy; Ports, harbours and shipping; and tourism and Recreation. Key activity policies must be considered by public authorities where there is direct or indirect relevance.
3.5	The Marine Plan seeks to provide a pro-active approach to the management of the NI marine area, its resources and the activities and interactions that take place within it. It will sit alongside and interact with the terrestrial planning regime and, taking account of its

<p>3.6</p> <p>3.7</p>	<p>strategic level, has been drafted to ensure compatibility with Development Plans and the Regional Development Strategy. This is also acknowledged in the SPPS, which states that all public authorities taking authorisation or enforcement decisions that affect (or might affect) the UK marine area must do so in accordance with the UK Marine Policy Statement or any adopted Marine Plan. It further states that, whilst the terrestrial planning system and the marine planning and licensing system are legally and functionally separate (with some physical overlap in the inter-tidal area), LDPs and marine plans should be complementary and particular consideration should be given to any terrestrial area development necessary to support development in the marine area.</p> <p>The draft Plan’s general presumption in favour of sustainable development of the NI marine resource, adopting a balanced approach between the interests of the economy, people and the environment. This approach is consistent with current national and local planning policy and remains consistent with the Council’s aims and objectives, including those in the Belfast Agenda and the emerging LDP. Therefore, there are not considered to be any significant negative implications arising from the forthcoming Marine Plan for Belfast and, indeed, its overall aim to secure the long-term sustainable management and development of the marine resource, including socio-economic and environmental benefits, are supported. It is also considered appropriate to ensure that any decision-making takes account of potential impacts on the marine resource, including decisions about terrestrial plans and projects.</p> <p>DAERA is facilitating consultation through an on-line survey of set questions on each section of the draft Plan. Many of these questions are not directly relevant to Belfast City Council. Therefore, it is recommended that the Council responds to DAERA in writing generally in accordance with the draft response at Appendix 2, which also includes responses to relevant questions from the on-line questionnaire.</p> <p><b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b> There are no resource implications associated with this report.</p> <p><b><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></b> None noted.</p> <p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></b> There are no relevant equality or good relations implications attached to this report. DAERA carried out an EqlA screening exercise on the draft Plan and concluded no negative impact on any of the Section 75 groups, disability duties or human rights.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p><b>Appendices</b></p>
	<p><b>Appendix 1 – Draft Marine Plan Summary (Easy Read) Document</b> Note: The full draft Plan and associated documents can be found on the DAERA website at: <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-proposed-marine-plan">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-proposed-marine-plan</a> <b>Appendix 2 – Proposed Consultation Response to the Draft Marine Plan for NI</b></p>