



Subject:	Draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan/Draft Open Spaces Strategy
Date:	7th August, 2019
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
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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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to make Members aware of the new draft Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (GBIP) and draft Open Spaces Strategy (OSS). Members will be provided with a presentation at the meeting. The Committee will note that the following information was presented and noted by Planning Committee in July 2019. However, it was considered important that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee be made aware of these draft plans, given its responsibility for the overseeing the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed to the regeneration and growth of the city.
1.2	The Council agreed the draft GBIP for consultation in June, 2018. The GBIP is a high level plan that recognises the many functions, including for health, biodiversity and

<p>1.3</p> <p>1.4</p>	<p>environmental resilience, of our green areas and water features. It represents an overarching strategy that will guide more detailed strategies and action plans over time. The new Open Spaces Strategy (OSS) for Belfast was prepared at the same time as the draft GBIP. The draft OSS was agreed for public consultation by the Council in April 2019.</p> <p>Having regard to the synergies between the GBIP and the OSS, both draft documents were published together for consultation purposes for a 12 week period from 17th June 2019.</p> <p>Copies of all documents, including the public consultation, are available on the Council's website through its consultation platform Citizenspace at: https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/parks-and-leisure/gbipandboss/</p>
<p>2.0</p>	<p>Recommendations</p>
<p>2.1</p>	<p>The Committee is requested to note the report and that the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan and Draft Open Spaces Strategy are currently out for public consultation until 6th September 2019.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Main Report</p>
<p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council appointed AECOM to help prepare a Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (GBIP) in tandem with the preparation of a new Open Spaces Strategy (OSS) for the city. The concept of a GBIP was included in the Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) Preferred Options Paper (POP) and there was wide support for such an approach. This concept has also been incorporated in to the LDP Draft Plan Strategy, which is intended to be submitted for Independent Examination shortly. The data collected and used to develop the GBIP and OSS forms part of the evidence base for the LDP.</p> <p>The GBIP acknowledges the benefits and multi-functionality of green and blue infrastructure assets across the City. Green assets include parks, playing fields, amenity open space, trees, gardens and countryside. Blue assets include rivers, water bodies and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). The overall network of these assets brings a wide range of benefits, including for health & wellbeing, biodiversity and environmental resilience. In this respect, the GBIP will also help to secure many of the objectives in the Belfast Agenda, including through greater permeability, accessibility and the potential for improved community relations.</p>

3.3	<p>The draft GBIP was agreed by the Council for public consultation purposes in June 2018. The draft OSS was agreed by the Council in April 2019. In view of the synergies between the GBIP and the OSS, both draft documents are being consulted on together in a joint approach by Planning Service and City and Neighbourhood Services Department. This timeframe also avoids any overlap with the substantial public consultation phase on the LDP Draft Plan Strategy, which lasted from August 2018 to April 2019.</p>
3.4	<p>The 12 week public consultation period for both documents commenced on 17 June 2019 and will run until 6 September. There was a public launch by the Lord Mayor in Grove Bowling Pavilion on 18 June, which was also attended by key stakeholders involved in the preparation of the documents. We will be running a series of public consultation engagement sessions at various events in venues across the city throughout July and August to further promote the draft documents and encourage comments and responses. Any comments received during the consultation period will be taken into account in finalising the GBIP and OSS through the relevant Council committees.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.5	<p>There are no resource implications associated with this report</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.6	<p>The draft GBIP has been screened out for equality impact assessment purposes. A Rural Needs Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the draft GBIP. Both assessments have been published alongside the draft GBIP for consultation purposes.</p>
4.0	Document Attached
	Appendix – Summary document for consultation