



Subject:	NI Executive Ministerial Engagement
Date:	21 February 2020
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1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview of the key proposals set out within the recently published 'New Decade, New Approach' document; and highlighting several specific points for discussion with NI Executive Ministers.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to:
2.2	(a) Note the summary of the New Decade, New Approach attached at Appendix 2. (b) Review the proposed discussion points for Ministerial enagemnt, as set out in section 3 below, and identify any additional issues which Members may wish to raise. (c) Note that an agenda and supporting briefing papers will be prepared for each Ministerial meeting based on the list of issues agreed by Members.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware that the 'New Decade, New Approach' was published by the British and Irish Governments on 9 th January 2020 (copy attached at Appendix 1). The document is split into two main parts with a series of sub-commitments set out covering the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Priorities of the Restored Executive (pages 6-10)• Northern Ireland Executive Formation Agreement (pages 11-44)• Annex A: specific UK Government commitments to Northern Ireland (pages 45-56)• Annex B: specific Irish Government commitments to Northern Ireland (pages 57-62)
3.2	A summary of the document is attached at Appendix 2 for Members information. Clearly, there are a wide range of positive commitments set out within the deal which will benefit Northern Ireland and it will be important that we gain a full understanding of their potential impact on Belfast. Correspondence has been issued to all NI Executive Ministers seeking meetings with a cross-party delegation to discss specific issues and opportunities for the city.

Ministerial discussion points

3.3 Given the likely limitation of time secured with Ministers, it will be important that the discussion is focused on key priority areas. To help focus discussion at the meetings, the following areas are proposed for Members consideration and comment.

3.3.1 General Comments

- Joining up the skills issue across Departments
- Local government – links to UK policy and funding
- Local government – relationships with all island bodies
- The importance of place and the role of local government in place-making.
- Role of cities as Economic Drivers. Definition of a regionally balanced economy – urban policy
- Climate adaptation and mitigation planning at local and regional level including funding strategy
- Refresh of Programme for Government - alignment with Belfast Agenda - strengthened relationship between departments and Belfast CC and other Councils. New mechanisms for collaboration, co-design and delivery
- City Deal – forerunner to a new local/regional partnership and funding approach
- Further devolution agenda
- Innovation in public sector
- 5G and digital connectivity

3.3.2 The Executive Office

- The importance of local government in supporting achievement of Executive priorities. Refresh of Programme for Government – linkages to Belfast Agenda: NOTE it is recommended that BCC ask for a role in the PfG development process.
- The importance of place - strengthened central/ local government relationships – local outcome agreements.
- Potential for LGR phase II
- BRCD – governance and funding
- An understanding of the role of the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression in relation to local government
- Dealing with legacy issues such as flags, paramilitaries and bonfires
- Emergency Planning – future model for ensuring resilience
- Future of Executive funding – SIF, TEBUC etc
- The Future of Shared Prosperity Funds

3.3.3 Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

- Role of the new independent EPA
- Environment Strategy – relationship with Energy and Climate adaptation and mitigation plans
- Climate Act, strategy and funding plan

- Ni Waste Strategy and funding plans – potential for a NI Waste Authority & Infrastructure
- Air Quality Strategy, interventions and funding plan

3.3.4 **Department for Communities**

- Transfer of regeneration functions- further devolution / transfer of assets
- Community capacity building – new approaches
- Housing in Belfast – joint approaches with BCC. Review of the Private rented sector
- Welfare Reform – advice service and tribunal service
- Connectivity Study – implementation – future of streets ahead programmes
- Areas of special need, e.g. Holylands
- Culture, Arts support and funding / future of Arts Council
- Poverty Strategy / Social value procurement
- BRCD – governance and funding
- City Regeneration and Development (including place shaping, DfC regeneration funding – 5 transformation areas and city centre)
- Employability and Skills – collaboration and co-financing for the delivery of Employability NI pilot. Civic growth / affordable and joint approach to site development / public assets and maximising the regeneration potential of significant development schemes
- Legislative changes (e.g. liquor licensing reform, review of gambling legislation, Local Government Act and supplementary legislation)
- Technical aid for communities re planning
- Future design of Shared Prosperity Fund
- HED Partnership Approach

3.3.5 **Department for Economy**

- New Economic Strategy – co-design with local government
- The role of the Belfast Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission
- Brexit – support for business – negotiating the future arrangements for services – building the potential of the London – Belfast – Dublin Triangle
- Energy Strategy and need for local government involvement of local government
- BRCD – governance and funding - Innovation and Digital Plans
- Skills Strategy / talent retention – the importance of place in shaping solutions and delivering to local need and growth
- Future of further and higher education – Masen Cap
- Shared Prosperity Fund / UK Challenge Funds / UK RI
- Support for alternative economic models – co-operatives and social enterprises
- Tourism – destination Hub, Game of Thrones, community tourism
- Sub regional economies
- Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor
- Inhibitors to Investment

3.3.6	<p>Department of Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Underachievement • Future of schools – local planning and capital investment • Childcare Strategy to support employment • Plans for future of the careers service • Transition to F&H Education / employment
3.3.7	<p>Department of Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast Region City Deal – governance, funding and streamlining of the approach to business cases. Building on the model of City deals – new partnerships – new financing methods • Non-domestic rates revaluation 2020 – rates reform • Revenue raising powers and initiatives such as tourist tax and rates retention – rates incentive – APD, corporation tax, rate reliefs • Shared Prosperity Fund / UK Challenge Funds • Green Finance • Government office consolidation - next phase / impact on regeneration • Data sharing / open data – evidence bases • Multi annual budget planning – ability for more co-design of programmes
3.3.8	<p>Department for Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform agenda – future of PHA – future of joint arrangements such as the Belfast Health Development Unit • Mental health/suicide – outreach / interventions / investment • Drugs & Alcohol use – ownership of the issue • Skills shortages – potential for joint solutions
3.3.9	<p>Department for Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Development Plan – RDS and role of Belfast as regional driver of the local economy – growth ambitions • Planning review – role of Dept / LAs / Role of stat consultees • Role in driving greener and bluer infrastructure (BOSS) • Belfast Region City Deal – DFI project progress • Infrastructure investment and facilitation – water, sustainable transport and 5G • Transport infrastructure – York Street interchange, cycle network, Belfast transport study/plan • Future plans for residents parking schemes • Future role of the harbour/port • City Connectivity – implementation of the vision • Environment/climate adaption and mitigation • Dublin-Belfast fast rail – commitment and urgency to progress • Potential to fund free public transport for under 25yr olds

<p>3.3.10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance priorities & budget <p>Department of Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceleration of plans associated with Peace Walls • Bonfires/bonfire materials – policy and enforcement • Potential for new regional ASB policy, including potential for increased powers - funding - diversionary activities and interventions • Potential for a new approach to Community policing / wardens • Approaches to tackling drugs • Holylands and wider South Belfast Area. • Review functionality and effectiveness of PCSPs • Troubles related funding in Deal • Anti-abortion imagery being displayed in public places <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> None</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessments</u> None</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p> <p>Appendix 1 – New Decade, New Approach Appendix 2 – Summary of New Decade, New Deal report</p>