



Subject:	Council Improvement Objectives for 2021-22
Date:	19th March 2021
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Contact Officers:	Christine Robinson, Strategy, Policy and Partnership Manager Patricia Flynn, Strategic Policy & Planning Officer

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"/>
Sometime 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
1.1	To present the draft corporate improvement objectives for 2021 - 2022 and to seek Committee approval to issue these for public consultation in line with our statutory performance duty obligations.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the draft improvement objectives for 2021-22, and subject to any refinements, to authorise the public consultation required as part of the council's improvement duty.
2.2	The proposed improvement objectives for 2021-22 are as follows:

	<table><tr><td>Our city</td></tr><tr><td>We will support our city to recover by helping to restore the social and cultural vibrancy of our city spaces and places in a safe and sustainable way</td></tr><tr><td>Our services</td></tr><tr><td>We will take steps to ensure our services adapt and improve in the short and longer term</td></tr><tr><td>Our communities</td></tr><tr><td>We will work to support our communities, helping them to become stronger, healthier and more resilient</td></tr><tr><td>Our economy</td></tr><tr><td>We will work in collaboration with others to protect and create jobs and support people into employment</td></tr><tr><td>Our environment</td></tr><tr><td>We will take action to protect the environment and improve the sustainability of Belfast</td></tr><tr><td>Our digital innovation</td></tr><tr><td>We will improve digital inclusion and enhance our digital infrastructure to support jobs, our economy, sustainability and wellbeing</td></tr></table>	Our city	We will support our city to recover by helping to restore the social and cultural vibrancy of our city spaces and places in a safe and sustainable way	Our services	We will take steps to ensure our services adapt and improve in the short and longer term	Our communities	We will work to support our communities, helping them to become stronger, healthier and more resilient	Our economy	We will work in collaboration with others to protect and create jobs and support people into employment	Our environment	We will take action to protect the environment and improve the sustainability of Belfast	Our digital innovation	We will improve digital inclusion and enhance our digital infrastructure to support jobs, our economy, sustainability and wellbeing
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3.0	Key Issues												
3.1	We have a statutory duty to agree improvement objectives and produce an annual improvement plan, by 30 th June each year. Last year, the Department for Communities (DfC) agreed to suspend the improvement plan process to enable councils to refocus efforts and reconfigure services to support the covid-19 pandemic response. However, DfC has now confirmed that an improvement plan will be required for 2021-22, including the requirement to consult with residents.												
3.2	The Improvement objectives and plan does not include everything that council plans to do that year, but instead focuses on a smaller set of key improvement priorities, as informed by resident priorities and evidenced by need. For the past 4 years, we have aligned our improvement objectives to the key priorities within the Belfast Agenda. However, given the current situation and the lack of uncertainty around when restrictions might end, it is either no longer possible to deliver or sustain some of this activity. It is also questionable as to whether these improvement objectives would continue to be the highest priority for our residents and the city. For this reason, and to ensure focus remains on priority areas, we are proposing to realign the improvement objectives to the Belfast recovery plan published in September 2020.												

3.3	<p>Our recovery plan has six main pillars, each helping to support our communities and economy to recover by building on our strengths and assets as a city and wider city region. Appendix 1 shows how these pillars have been adapted for our 2021-22 improvement plan and how it aligns to previous improvement objectives. Indicative areas of activity have been included for illustration. However, given the fluidity of the current situation, detailed activity and associated performance measures, the Strategy, Policy and Partnership Unit will work with services to refine the detailed actions and performance measures. Given current circumstances, we will take a pragmatic approach, which takes into account resourcing implications and covid restrictions. Activity will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. DfC are currently reassessing the statutory performance indicators in light of covid; we await the outcome of this process.</p> <p>Next Steps</p>										
3.4	<p>Councils are legally required to consult on their improvement objectives and to publish an Improvement Plan by 30th June each year. Subject to approval, we will issue the improvement objectives for public consultation via our on-line engagement platform for a period of 8 weeks. However, it should be noted that resident feedback in relation to Belfast: Our Recovery (yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfast-our-recovery) has already informed the selection of the objectives and indicative actions. During this time, we will work develop detailed actions, milestones and performance indicators and factor in public feedback. A final report and draft improvement plan will be brought to SP&R for ratification and publication in June.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>SP&R – agrees improvement objectives for consultation</td><td>19th Mar 2021</td></tr> <tr> <td>Improvement Objectives: 8 week consultation</td><td>22 Mar - 16 May 2021</td></tr> <tr> <td>Services refine actions and PIs</td><td>Mar - May 2021</td></tr> <tr> <td>SP&R approves Improvement Plan</td><td>18th June 2021</td></tr> <tr> <td>Publish Improvement Plan 2021 - 22</td><td>30th June 2020</td></tr> </table>	SP&R – agrees improvement objectives for consultation	19 th Mar 2021	Improvement Objectives: 8 week consultation	22 Mar - 16 May 2021	Services refine actions and PIs	Mar - May 2021	SP&R approves Improvement Plan	18 th June 2021	Publish Improvement Plan 2021 - 22	30 th June 2020
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3.5	<p><u>Resources Implications</u></p> <p>There are no resource implications arising directly from this report. As some of our services continue to face significant pressures and budgets remain stretched, we have taken care to ensure that the improvement objectives align to the council's recovery plan.</p>										
3.6	<p><u>Equality Implications and Rural Needs</u></p> <p>There are no equality or rural need implications arising directly from this report.</p>										
4.0	<p>Document Attached</p>										
	<p>Appendix 1 - Review of Corporate Improvement Objectives and indicative actions: 2021 - 22</p>										

