



Subject:	Community Planning Update: City Development and Job, Skills and Education Boards
Date:	13 th October 2021
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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 or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on community planning with a specific focus on the work being taken forward by the newly re-configured 'Jobs, Skills and Education' and 'City Development' Delivery Boards.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: (i) note the on-going work of the Belfast Agenda Jobs, Skills and Education delivery Board and the City Development delivery Board; (ii) note the alignment and synergies between the Boards and the work of the Committee;

workshop was held with the Jobs, Skills and Education Board as part of the first phase of this engagement. The workshop focused on:

- i) Taking stock of the current economic and labour market position in Belfast in the context of the Belfast Agenda commitments
- ii) Securing collective agreement on a small number of priority interventions that the Board can drive forward over the next 18 months
- iii) Shape and input into the refresh of the Belfast Agenda.

3.4 The out-workings of this workshop will feed into subsequent engagement phases, allowing us to co-design action plans and a relevant, refreshed Belfast Agenda which can deliver a positive impact for everyone in the city.

3.5 A detailed report providing an overview of the Board workshop session is attached at **Appendix 1**. A number of key overarching areas emerging from workshop discussions are summarised below:

- General consensus that the priorities identified in the emerging Belfast Agenda delivery framework (2022-26) reflect the key challenges and opportunities for the city.
- Highlighted the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on widening existing inequalities – with NEETS and inactivity rates rising and therefore a greater need for a collaborative approach to addressing these challenges.
- Recognition of the importance of the emerging Labour Market Partnership and ensuring better connections across partners and with those furthest removed from the labour market. Highlight the flagship opportunity this presents for the city.
- Recognition of the significant opportunities presented by the Department for Education’s “Fair Start Action Plan” to address educational underachievement within the city and across the region. In this context, the Board (and CPP partners) will develop a Belfast specific proposition which seeks to align with, build upon and accelerate elements of this regional plan with a focus on enabling and encouraging place-based delivery with supporting budgets.
- A strong focus required to support and enable more new business start-ups, including social enterprises, in the city, given their importance to our economy
- Advocated the need to create focus and momentum on a small number of key challenges that require collaboration across partners to resolve – rather than spreading energy and resources across a wider range of activities.

3.6	<p>Workshop participants agreed that the Jobs, Skills & Education Board should focus on three priority areas and highlighted specific programmes of work to be developed further as part of the action planning process. The three priority areas are:</p> <p>Economic Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing together partners to look at how we can achieve a significant increase in the number of business start-ups, with a focus on driving city competitiveness and productivity – while also considering how this work can support inclusive growth. • Bringing forward new interventions to support the continued growth of the tech and digital sector – with a focus on creating inclusive pathways to develop new routes into this growth area. <p>Employability & Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that the Labour Market Partnership will be a critical element for bringing forward key employability and skills interventions and agreement to ensure that regular updates are provided • Exploring ways of intelligence gathering and sharing in order to inform and shape new interventions – need for short term and longer-term insights. <p>Educational Attainment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of how a Belfast-focused response to the Fair Start Action Plan can be taken forward • Exploring opportunities to enhance the support available at Key Transition Stages – with a special focus on early years.
3.7	<p>As the engagement work on the refresh of the Belfast Agenda continues, the Jobs, Skills & Education Board and its supporting task groups will now undertake further action planning work to consider how the key interventions can be moved forward. One of the critical issues will be to consider how we can secure partner buy-in and resource allocation in order to ensure that there is shared ownership of commitments and outcomes.</p>
3.8	<p><u>City Development Update</u></p> <p>Members will note that a similar workshop session is being planned to take place for the City Development Board in late October / early November 2021. The focus of this workshop will be to consider and unpack what specific interventions, programmes and actions are to be taken forward in support of the four priority areas identified by the Board and Community Planning Partnership i.e.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Housing-Led Regeneration

- ii. City Regeneration and Investment
- iii. Access, Connectivity and Active Travel
- iv. Future City Centre

3.9

In addition to the planned workshop in October, it is important to note that there has been significant work already underway and/or emerging across the City Development Board's four themes. Some specific areas which we would highlight for Members information include:-

- Agreement and establishment of a Housing-Led Regeneration delivery sub-group chaired by NIHE is underway.
- Consensus on need to bring forward transportation plan for Belfast.
- Continued delivery of £4.2m Revitalisation Programme to support recovery from pandemic.
- Ministerial and NI Executive departments commitment to the Bolder Vision and ongoing work to proceed to public consultation and next stages and implementation, alongside the importance of other city-wide connectivity priorities.
- Engagement with developers in support of the work of the Board and to ensure we maximise the benefits and potential access to opportunities from future investment schemes (inclusive growth). This will complement the cross-sectoral representation and input into community planning including the community and voluntary sector.
- Participation in the Renewed Ambition Programme engagement workshop around the Social, Economic and Environmental Impact of Real Estate

3.10

Maintaining momentum and focus

Members will be aware that in support of the development and implementation of the Covid Recovery Revitalisation Programme that an external and cross-sectoral 'City Stakeholder Group' had been established and provided important insights and, experience to help shape the programme. Whilst we are emerging from the emergency response to the pandemic with restrictions being eased, there are no doubt significant strategic and operational challenges which need to be addressed including, among other things, a clean, green, inclusive and safe city centre. It is therefore proposed that we build upon the strength and success of the City Stakeholder Group, and recalibrate and transition it into a City Centre Delivery Group reporting into the City Development Board and the Community Planning partnership.

3.11

This Group would bring a cross-sectoral perspective and input into understanding and seeking to address the key challenges facing the city and seeking to align resources as

	<p>appropriate. Subject to CPP approval in November 2021, the group would also act as a forum to advocate for Belfast and help engage/influence NI Executive, Departments and other structures (e.g. High Street Task Force) to unlock barriers. This proposal would complement and support the Council's (and CG&R Committee's) significant leadership and implementation role around city development, including supporting city centre revitalisation. It is important to note that the City Development Board and community planning provides the forum to consider and progress non-city centre considerations and priorities as referred earlier in the report.</p>
3.12	<p><u>Role of Elected Members</u></p> <p>Elected Members will be engaged at each stage of the review process underway to refresh the Belfast Agenda and shape the 4-year action plans which are to be developed over coming months. This will include, for example, Members' co-design workshops, Party Group briefings, Committee engagement and through the All-Party Community Planning Working Group.</p>
3.13	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Any financial implications arising from this report will be covered from existing budgets. The review process will involve the participation of all community planning partners, who will need to commit their resources to the review process and the agreed action plans.</p>
3.14	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural need implications in this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents attached
	Appendix 1: Jobs, Skills and Education Summary Report

