



13 June 2024

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Development Committee to be held in The Chamber, Cookstown at Mid Ulster District Council, Council Offices, Burn Road, COOKSTOWN, BT80 8DT on Thursday, 13 June 2024 at 19:00 to transact the business noted below.

Yours faithfully

Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive

AGENDA

OPEN BUSINESS

1. Notice of Recording
This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site [Live Broadcast Link](#)
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
4. Chair's Business
5. Deputation: Arts Council

Matters for Decision

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 6. | Development Report - Brantry Area Rural Development Association | 3 - 60 |
| 7. | Development Report | 61 - 146 |
| 8. | Tender to Supply Willow Cookstown Leisure Centre | 147 - 148 |
| 9. | Choose To Live Better Funding | 149 - 152 |
| 10. | Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three-Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027) | 153 - 236 |

Matters for Information

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 11. | Development Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 16 May 2024 | 237 - 258 |
| 12. | Communities & Place Departmental Service Plan 2024-25 | 259 - 304 |
| 13. | Lough Fea Footbridge | 305 - 306 |
| 14. | Economic Development OBF1 | 307 - 388 |

Items restricted in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The public will be asked to withdraw from the meeting at this point.

Matters for Decision

15. Cookstown Saturday Market Scoping Study

Matters for Information

16. Development Committee Confidential Minutes of Meeting held on 16 May 2024
17. Macmillan Move More Programme

Report on	Development Report
Date of Meeting	13 th June 2024
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney – Assistant Director of Development
Contact Officers	Martina Totten – Social Inclusion Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To consider and agree to act as a Sponsor Body for the Community Asset Transfer and development of a community space at 74 Reahaghey Road, Aughnacloy by Brantry Area Rural Development Association.
1.2	Council officers would seek to use the approach taken for this scheme as a test pilot in the development of a policy position for further CAT Sponsorships.
2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>A request has been submitted to Council to act as a Sponsor Body for Brantry Area Rural Development Association in the acquisition of a property through the D1 Disposal process, under the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) procedure.</p> <p>Council officers met with the officials overseeing the delivery of CAT's in the Department of Communities (DfC) and DTNI, who has been employed to support the Community & Voluntary Sector in the CAT process, to discuss the roles and responsibilities for Council as a Sponsor Body.</p>
2.2	<p>Community Asset Transfer</p> <p>The Department for Social Development (now DfC) developed the policy framework to support CAT in Northern Ireland (Appendix 1) which defines CAT as a change in management and / or ownership of land or buildings, from public bodies to communities.</p> <p>CAT should be recognised as a flexible tool with a broad range of applications, depending on the imagination and ambition of those involved. It represents a means of investing in regeneration and positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.</p> <p>CAT can bring benefits to both parties involved in the transfer and should also bring benefit to the wider community which an asset can be used to serve. Research shows that the benefits include:</p> <p><i>Benefits to the Community</i></p>

- It can improve neighbourhood-based service provision, increasing accessibility for local people, which is particularly important in rural areas;
- It can bring a sense of community identity and pride and the potential for increased community cohesion;
- It can lead to additional jobs, training and business opportunities;
- It can contribute to physical regeneration; and
- It can bring increased confidence, skills and aspirations locally.

Benefits to the public sector

- It can lead to more efficient use of public sector assets – community organisations often make extensive use of volunteers and their local knowledge and hands-on management of the asset can result in lower overheads and better value-for-money, as well as a more intensive use of the asset;
- It can enable community organisations to support public service provision in ways that are more responsive and better related to local need; and
- It can enable effective partnerships between the public sector and the third sector to enhance local services.

Benefits to the Third Sector

- It can lead to increased sustainability for organisations and improved leverage with external agencies - an asset can provide a community organisation with greater financial viability and reduce its dependency on grants;
- It can enable a community organisation to apply for external funding that is not available to a public authority, or even to secure loan finance on the value of the asset; and
- It can facilitate collaboration and resource sharing amongst organisations.

2.3 Sponsoring Department

DfC has published a Community Asset Transfer: Guidance for Asset Owners (**Appendix 2**) which provides more detailed guidance for owners in receipt of a Community Asset Transfer interest, including the role of a Sponsoring Body.

In summary; ‘The sponsor body role is to confirm existence of compulsory purchase powers for the intended purpose to allow the transfer to take place, as required under the Stormont Regulation and Government Property Act (NI) 1933. Acting as sponsor body, when not the asset owner, confers no future liability for the asset or the services run from it, nor responsibility for issues such as clawback. There may be instances where it is desirable for the sponsor to play an enhanced role, but this would be subject to agreement between the asset owner and sponsor’.

2.4 Project Proposal

The Social Inclusion Manager met with Brantry Area Rural Development Association and DTNI, to discuss their plans for the asset. They wish to acquire a small rural cottage at 74 Reahaghey Road, Aughnacloy to provide them with additional space, which will enable them to extend and enhance their community activities and programmes. A copy of the Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Land or Property Questionnaire they have completed for the D1 process is included in **Appendix 3**.

2.5	<p>MUDC Strategic Priorities</p> <p>A key requirement will be for Council to establish whether or not the proposal makes a significant contribution to strategic or service priorities.</p> <p>Council is currently developing a Community Wealth Building (CWB) Framework for the District. CWB promotes asset-based development and community-owned land and property as significant drivers of regeneration across some of the most socially deprived places in the region. Community owned assets also deliver a range of social and community outcomes including retail facilities, mental health and wellbeing programmes, environmental regeneration, physical activity improvements and family support.</p> <p>The scheme also meets a number of our current Corporate Plan commitments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working collaboratively across the public, private, community and voluntary sector to achieve shared objectives • Addressing rurality • Promoting Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations
3.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: None</p> <p>Human: None</p> <p>Risk Management: NA</p>
3.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: N/A</p>
4	<p>Recommendations</p>
4.1	<p>Members are recommended to agree for Council to be a Sponsor Body to the Community Asset Transfer and development of a community space at 74 Rehaghey Road, Aughnacloy by Brantry Area Rural Development Association</p>
4.2	<p>To use the approach taken for this scheme as a test pilot in the development of a policy position for further CAT Sponsorships.</p>

5	List of Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: CAT Guidance for Asset Owners Appendix 2: CAT Policy Framework Appendix 3: Brantry Area Rural Development Association D1 Questionnaire

Community Asset Transfer Process in respect of Transfer of Central Government Surplus Assets

1.0 Background

The [NI Executive's Community Asset Transfer \(CAT\) policy](#) was developed to support the commitment in the Programme for Government (2011-2015) to “invest in social enterprise growth to increase sustainability in the broad community sector”.

The policy provides a framework to facilitate community ownership of surplus public sector assets as an option as part of the normal disposal process. It recognises that CAT will not always be the preferred option, that disposal at full market value/open market process will often be the preferred option for asset owners but that within the disposal process CAT may be an option to be considered if such an interest from the Third Sector is expressed.

Voluntary and Community Division (VCD) in DFC have lead responsibility for the implementation of the policy and can offer advice to asset owners in receipt of a CAT interest. VCD have appointed Development Trusts NI (DTNI) as their Third Sector delivery partner to support those Third Sector Organisations (TSO) interested in CAT.

In order to avail of CAT opportunities the TSO must secure a public sector sponsor body who has the necessary compulsory purchase powers to enable the TSO to access the public trawl. The exact role of a sponsor body can vary. The possibilities are laid out in detail at **Annex A** alongside other stakeholder roles. It should be noted the asset owner can sponsor the proposal if they have the necessary compulsory purchase powers.

2.0 Process

There are three main stages to the CAT process comprising the following:

Stage 1a	Trawl
Stage 1b	Expression of Interest Questionnaire
Stage 1c	Questionnaire Review
Stage 2a	Business Plan
Stage 2b	Business Case Preparation
Stage 3	Approval, Transfer and Post Transfer Monitoring

Stage 1a – Trawl

Land and Property Service's (LPS) Central Advisory Unit (CAU) circulate copy LPS Internal Trawl (D1) Notices to appropriate parties including DTNI.

DTNI must respond to LPS CAU within 15 working days to confirm whether there is interest **in principle** for CAT.

Stage 1b – Expressions of Interest

Following Stage 1a of the normal trawl process, any interest registered from DTNI will trigger LPS CAU to issue a bespoke CAT questionnaire. TSO with support from DTNI (if availed of) has a period of 40 working days to respond to LPS CAU. As highlighted within the CAT Policy, where there is competition for assets third sector organisations will be encouraged to collaborate.

Stage 1c – Questionnaire Review

Following receipt of questionnaires, LPS CAU will circulate to the asset owner, sponsor body (in principle or confirmed) and DfC VCD. The asset owner should review the questionnaires, with input from DfC VCD and any potential sponsor body.

This determination on the potential CAT to proceed to the preparation of a business plan should be made and confirmed to LPS CAU within 20 working days. Whenever a decision is made not to continue with a CAT, the disposing body is required to provide the decision in writing setting out the rationale for the decided route. This will be clearly communicated to the proposed acquiring body, DTNI, DfC and CAU.

Should competing interests emerge at EoI stage reflecting both statutory and third sector interests, the Asset owner will review the EoI's in the context of all the Department's requirements and with input from relevant stakeholders to provide advice on which to base a decision. In such cases asset owners should also refer to the LPS CAU Disposal Guidance. Within the context of CAT, any negative decisions should be communicated to stakeholders, with communication again should it subsequently proceed to a market sale.

The operation of the Stage 1c assessment will require that all stakeholders i.e. asset owner, sponsor body (if different) and TSO, are signed up to proceed to the Stage 2 assessment, otherwise the asset owner is free to pursue alternative disposal routes.

In proceeding to Stage 2, two main scenarios will arise out of the Stage 1c Questionnaire Review:

Scenario 1 – The asset owner is also the sponsor and is responsible for assessing and endorsing the suitability of the TSO proposal.

Scenario 2 – The asset owner is not the sponsor and will agree the level of support it requires from the sponsor to facilitate the TSO proposal before moving to Stage 2.

Stage 2a – Business Plan

Should agreement be reached to proceed to Business Planning stage access to independent expertise to assist with the Business Plan will be made available.

It is important that the asset owner, third sector organisation, sponsor, and DfC work constructively together with the independent resource support to communicate, share information and pursue a transfer in good faith. The relevant stakeholders should be encouraged to engage to discuss the preferred route to transferring the asset so that the Business Plan is drafted appropriately.

The following options are available at Stage 2 and the chosen route to CAT will determine the author and format of any subsequent Business Case and the title to transfer or lease. Please note that where full market value is being received the asset owner must only complete a business case if it is a requirement of their business as per usual disposal procedure:

Option 1 - Asset owner is sponsor and is willing and able to sell at less than market value direct to the TSO, subject to business plan and business case.

Business Plan	TSO
Business Case	Asset Owner

Option 2 - Asset owner is not sponsor but has obtained sponsor body commitment and is able to sell at less than market value direct to the TSO, subject to business plan and business case. This requires the identification of an alternative sponsor body which should have been confirmed in principle at Stage 1.

Business Plan	TSO
Business Case	Asset owner with input from Sponsor Body in terms of review, policy input, strategic context, alongside confirmation of sponsor role.

Option 3 - Asset owner is sponsor and is not willing or able to sell at less than market value. Disposal to community organisation at market value.

Business Plan	TSO
Business Case	Asset Owner – requirement varies between asset owners depending on delegated authority’s etc. basic format only <u>if required</u> , including record justifying decision to sponsor but excluding the less than market value requirement.

Option 4 - Asset owner is not sponsor and is not willing or able to sell at less than market value. Disposal to community organisation at market value.

Business Plan	TSO
Business Case	Asset Owner - requirement varies between asset owners depending on delegated authority’s etc. basic format only if required. Sponsor to provide policy input/strategic context if required alongside confirmation of sponsor role.

Option 5 - Asset owner is not sponsor and is not willing or able to sell directly at less than market value - NBV (or reduced value) Transfer to Confirmed Sponsor with sponsor body commitment for subsequent CAT at less than market value.

Business Plan	TSO
Business Case	Asset Owner, with input from Sponsor – requirement varies between asset owners depending on delegated authority’s etc. basic format

only if required. Revert to Option 1 i.e. sponsor becomes Asset Owner and takes on full responsibility for any transfer.

A timescale of 4 months for completion of Business Plan is suggested. The inclusion of key milestones and an agreed time bound process should bring a clearly defined structure to the process for Third sector organisations and asset owners.

Stage 2b – Business Case

Subject to the completion of a Business Plan at Stage 2a, Business Case to be completed by asset owner with input from the sponsor body within a 2 month period. However asset owners should be able to commence their Business Case preparations in parallel with the Business Plan rather than sequentially.

For Options 1 & 2 above, the asset owner's business case will need to address the justification for a disposal at less than market value. This may require Department of Finance (DoF) and Ministerial approval.

For Options 3, 4 & 5 the asset owner's business case does not need to address the issue of disposal at less than market value and does not require Ministerial/DoF approval, however the sponsor body will require to address this in Option 5 to cover their subsequent transfers to community organisations.

The principle of proportionality should apply in terms of the magnitude of the Business Case against the level of value of the asset

Stage 3 – Approval, Transfer and Post-Transfer Monitoring

This element of the process is highlighted to acknowledge that once a final Business Case is agreed and prepared to support progress of the CAT transfer at Stage 2b, each asset owner will have a different approval requirement ranging from senior management board, department board and Ministerial approval depending on the nature of the CAT proposal and their governing legislation. However, it is important to ensure that relevant parties to the approval process are consulted throughout Stage 2 and feedback is reflected in the development of the Business Plan and Business Case in order to avoid delays in addressing issues at the final submission stage.

Following approval, the asset owner and TSO should refer to their respective legal support for completion of the appropriate contracts and incorporate any agreed conditions, clawback and monitoring arrangements.

Stakeholder Objectives and Roles & Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Objectives	Roles & Responsibilities
Disposing Bodies	<p>The main objective is to process surplus asset disposals to:</p> <p>(i) use the trawl process to identify reuse potential outside it's department which meets Programme for Government (PfG) objectives</p> <p>(ii) generate a capital receipt to reinvest in capital works</p> <p>(iii) generate a capital receipt to meet a budgetary target.</p> <p>(iv) dispose of surplus assets in a timely manner to reduce current liabilities.</p>	<p>Responsible for the release of assets for disposal which are surplus to requirements. (Is a requirement of MPMNI Annex 4.8.12 – 4.8.15)</p> <p>Also Section 2 of Land & Property Services (LPS) Disposal Guidance (as issued in March 2013) prompts the identification of surplus assets for disposal.</p> <p>Mandatory Asset Management Plans (AMPs) are produced annually by each department and include a section on planned asset disposals.</p> <p>Accountable for the ultimate decision on the chosen disposal route.</p> <p>Complete and seek approval for appropriate level of business case to assess the budgetary impact of a CAT transfer.</p> <p>Potential liaison with Strategic Investment Board (SIB) business plan resource.</p>
<p>Department for Communities (DfC)</p> <p>Voluntary & Community Division (VCD)</p>	<p>Support the public sector in its implementation of the CAT Policy 2014.</p> <p>Support the development of sustainability, enterprise and innovation in the Third Sector.</p>	<p>Provision of advice and guidance to public sector on CAT policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Throughout the process to provide advice and guidance to asset owners from both a CAT policy perspective and wider Third Sector contexts (community development, social enterprise and Regional Infrastructure support). Specific input at Expression of Interest (EoI) stage may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Knowledge of Third sector organisations

Stakeholder	Objectives	Roles & Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knowledge of DfC specific and wider funding environment ○ Good practice for other CAT considerations ○ Any specific policy inputs. <p>- Oversight of DTNI contract and their focused role in the CAT process, including their management of timelines within the Eol stage, their communication with stakeholders including asset owners.</p> <p>Working with SIB on the provision and application of independent expertise to Third Sector organisations (TSOs) to assist in the preparation of viable, sustainable business plans to support asset transfer.</p>
Development Trusts NI (DTNI)	Support third sector community organisations to identify and deliver CAT proposals where DTNI assistance is requested/identified as a requirement	<p>DTNI is grant funded by DfC to provide expertise and experience to support the third sector to avail of CAT opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide information and support/signposting to organisations interested in CAT. - Carry out early stage assessment of capacity and capability of the organisation and to support completion of Expression of Interest stage. - Facilitate organisations participation in the LPS Internal Trawl Notice, known as a D1, process, adhering to set timescales. - Support organisations to secure an appropriate sponsor body. <p>In some instances there may be a specific role for DTNI to support/advise the Third Sector organisation in the business planning stage but this to be agreed with DfC.</p>

Stakeholder	Objectives	Roles & Responsibilities
Third Sector Organisation (TSO)	Deliver public benefit through the utilisation of public sector assets creating civic value and supporting government objectives.	Community ownership and management of public assets encompasses a range of third sector organisations, for example. Voluntary and community groups, faith-based organisations and social enterprises. The CAT Policy envisages third sector organisations delivering public benefit through management of public sector assets. The third sector organisations are responsible for developing a business plan within agreed timescales which identifies need for the services, demonstrates the viability of the proposed use of an asset, delivery against PfG outcomes and addresses the sustainability, accountability and decision making conditions as highlighted in the CAT policy.
Sponsor Body	<p>Facilitate the transfer of the asset to the community organisation via the public sector trawl in accordance with LPS Disposal Guidance requirements.</p> <p>Consider the need and activity of the third sector organisation's proposed use of the asset as contained within the Business Plan and provide formal endorsement as agreed with the asset owner.</p>	<p>The sponsor body role is to confirm existence of compulsory purchase powers for the intended purpose to allow the transfer to take place, as required under the Stormont Regulation and Government Property Act (NI) 1933.</p> <p>In order to provide this the sponsor body should be content that the proposed use of the asset complements or contributes towards their policy intentions in the area and they are willing to endorse the project (and input to the Asset Owner's business case if necessary) and provide confirmation of this to asset owners when the proposals relate to assets owned by other government bodies.</p> <p>The transfer remains between the asset owner and third sector organisation. There may be particular circumstances where the asset owner may wish to seek</p>

Stakeholder	Objectives	Roles & Responsibilities
		<p>to transfer the asset to the sponsor body (or another Department) for onward transfer to the TSO, however this would be subject to negotiation and agreement of both parties.</p> <p>Acting as sponsor body, when not the asset owner, confers no future liability for the asset or the services run from it, nor responsibility for issues such as clawback.</p> <p>There may be instances where it is desirable for the sponsor to play an enhanced role but this would be subject to agreement between the asset owner and sponsor.</p>
<p>Land & Property Services (LPS)</p>	<p>Facilitate the sharing of information on surplus assets with community organisations through inclusion of DTNI in the public sector trawl, as suggested within the CAT Policy 2014.</p> <p>Provide valuation advice to the asset owner and details of any expressions of interest.</p>	<p>LPS Central Advisory Unit (CAU) is responsible for policy and guidance on the disposal of surplus public sector property in Northern Ireland as well as the management and operation of the clearing house service for surplus land. The clearing house provides the main source of information on surplus assets which can be considered for CAT. LPS District Valuers provide the asset owners with a market valuation and details of the expressions of interest through the trawl.</p> <p>LPS do not participate in assessing the investment readiness of third sector proposals or the production of business plans or asset owner's business cases.</p>

Community Asset Transfer in Northern Ireland

Enabling and Supporting Community Ownership and Management of Public Assets



**Urban Regeneration and Community Development Group
Department for Social Development**

May 2014

MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

The development of a new policy framework to support Community Asset Transfer in Northern Ireland fulfils a number of Government commitments. It supports the Executive's commitment in the Programme for Government (2011-2015) to "invest in social enterprise growth to increase sustainability in the broad community sector". This work also supports the Concordat between the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Government which contains a commitment to investigate the potential for community asset management and ownership in Northern Ireland.

The framework will also contribute to delivery of other Executive priorities including the Economic Strategy and the Delivering Social Change programme. The need for economic development and new social policy initiatives are clearly linked and Community Asset Transfer will provide regeneration opportunities, new service delivery potential and local job creation.

Following extensive public consultation and discussions with key stakeholders across the public sector, I am now pleased to bring forward firm proposals for implementation of this policy framework. It presents an exciting agenda for change and real opportunities for people to make positive changes within their communities. Community Asset Transfer can be a real catalyst to stimulate regeneration and greater community cohesion across Northern Ireland. This policy framework sets out how Government can support community ownership and management of public sector assets and empower local communities.

The document includes some case studies, both local and from other parts of the UK, which demonstrate that successful asset transfer can bring real social, environmental and economic benefits to communities. It can also lead to wider regeneration and bring associated benefits in health, education and community well-being.

My Department will continue to work closely with Development Trusts NI and other stakeholders to test and implement this policy framework. A number of demonstration projects have been identified for this purpose and I look forward to hearing of their progress.



Nelson McCausland MLA

Minister for Social Development

Community Asset Transfer in Northern Ireland - Enabling and supporting Community Ownership and Management of Public Assets

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. The Benefits of Community Asset Transfer	5
3. Strategic context – opportunities to support Community Asset Transfer.....	7
4. Creating an enabling environment for Community Asset Transfer	11
5. Conditions (Ground Rules).....	12
6. Current Barriers to implementation of Community Asset Transfer	14
7. Information/awareness	16
8. Public Sector Asset Management	17
9. Skills Development.....	19
10. Funding	20
11. Community Right to Bid/Right to Buy.....	22
12. Impact Assessments.....	24
13. Next Steps	24
Annex A: Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI)	25
Annex B: References	26
Annex C: Case Studies	32

1. Introduction

Community Asset Transfer is a change in management and / or ownership of land or buildings, from public bodies to communities. “Community” ownership and management of public assets encompasses a range of third sector organisations e.g. voluntary and community sector groups, faith-based organisations, community enterprises and social enterprises. Throughout this document the term ‘third sector organisation’ is used in this broad sense.

Community Asset Transfer should be understood as a spectrum which ranges from management agreements and leases of varying duration through to full ownership. Not all third sector organisations will aspire to full ownership of assets although for many this will be the preferred option. Shorter leases, including ‘meanwhile’ leases can be useful for managing risk and building capacity and may be a stepping stone to longer term arrangements.

Community Asset Transfer should be recognised as a flexible tool with a broad range of applications, depending on the imagination and ambition of those involved. It represents a means of investing in regeneration and positive social, economic and environmental outcomes which can be used to support Executive priorities. This policy framework will facilitate community ownership or management of surplus public sector assets as a mainstream option as part of the normal disposal process. It will not always be the preferred option and disposal at full market value will still apply in many cases.

A number of public sector organisations in Northern Ireland already have some experience of transferring assets to community partners. Up until now however there has been no coherent policy context to support the process and inform decision making. This policy framework will address this gap and will create a more enabling environment for Community Asset Transfer in Northern Ireland.

In introducing this policy framework it is recognised that transfers will work best where there are positive working relationships between the asset holder and the organisation to which it is transferred. The transfer has to be beneficial to both parties and carried out in a spirit of partnership. We have the advantage of being able to learn from how asset transfer has worked and is working in other regions of the UK. We also need to take account of the different arrangements in Northern Ireland, but the underlying principles remain valid. It is helpful to look at case studies and

so we have included a number of these at Annex C. The case studies highlight many of the issues that arise during the asset transfer process.

It is important to note that a decision by a public body to dispose of an asset at less than market value carries an opportunity cost, that is, while there will be benefits of a non-monetary nature delivered by the transfer, there will be a corresponding gap in public finances that will not be available for investment in other public services. That will be an important consideration in any transfer and for that reason the associated business case will be assessed with the same rigour as for a capital grant.

It should also be emphasised that, in many cases, disposal at full market value will continue to be the preferred option for asset owners. The policy framework will, however, ensure that Community Asset Transfer is a mainstream option as part of the disposal process.

2. The Benefits of Community Asset Transfer

There is evidence to show that, in the right circumstances, community ownership and control of assets produces a range of benefits. Community Asset Transfer can bring benefits to both parties involved in the transfer and should also bring benefit to the wider community which an asset can be used to serve. Research shows that the benefits include:

Benefits to the Community

- It can improve neighbourhood-based service provision, increasing accessibility for local people, which is particularly important in rural areas;
- It can bring a sense of community identity and pride and the potential for increased community cohesion;
- It can lead to additional jobs, training and business opportunities;
- It can contribute to physical regeneration; and
- It can bring increased confidence, skills and aspirations locally.

Benefits to the public sector

- It can lead to more efficient use of public sector assets – community organisations often make extensive use of volunteers and their local knowledge and hands-on management of the asset can result in lower overheads and better value-for-money, as well as a more intensive use of the asset;
- It can enable community organisations to support public service provision in ways that are more responsive and better related to local need; and
- It can enable effective partnerships between the public sector and the third sector to enhance local services.

Benefits to the Third Sector

- It can lead to increased sustainability for organisations and improved leverage with external agencies - an asset can provide a community organisation with greater financial viability and reduce its dependency on grants;

- It can enable a community organisation to apply for external funding that is not available to a public authority, or even to secure loan finance on the value of the asset; and
- It can facilitate collaboration and resource sharing amongst organisations.

3. Strategic context – opportunities to support Community Asset Transfer

Community Asset Transfer is one of a number of tools that aim to support the Third Sector and assist organisations move towards sustainability. This section explains the wider context within which this policy framework is set.

UK Policy Context

Community Asset Transfer is well supported by policy, legislation and funding elsewhere in the UK. The idea is central to the Scottish Government’s Community Empowerment agenda and to the Coalition Government’s Localism Agenda and the concept of the ‘Big Society’. It is also being actively promoted by the Welsh Assembly Government as a means of enhancing community capacity and supporting social enterprise.

In developing this policy framework for Northern Ireland we have taken account of policy and practice elsewhere and the increasing body of research and guidance available to support Community Asset Transfer (see [Annex B](#)). The opportunity has been taken to build on and learn from experience of others and to draw on case study examples and the skills and professional networks which have been built up.

NI Policy Context

The Community Asset Transfer policy framework is complementary to a range of other current Executive priorities to promote economic growth and tackle poverty. The Economic Strategy and the Delivering Social Change Programme are intended to stimulate economic growth and tackle underlying causes of poverty and social disadvantage across Northern Ireland.

Community Asset Transfer will provide regeneration opportunities and enable Third Sector organisations to increase service delivery potential and provide new employment within local communities. This links with the Department for Social Development’s wider objective to ‘support social economy growth’ within the wider voluntary and community sector and with the recently established Social Economy Incubation Hubs.

The Urban Regeneration and Community Development Framework sets out the strategic direction for this work over the coming years and following transfer of powers to the new district Councils. It provides an enabling framework which will encourage:

- A more targeted anti-poverty approach by better addressing the underlying causes of spatial deprivation and exclusion;
- A stronger emphasis on the outcomes to be achieved from urban regeneration and community development initiatives and how these can change neighbourhoods; and
- Maximising the limited resources available to develop more sustainable forms of urban regeneration and community renewal.

Public Sector Asset Management in Northern Ireland

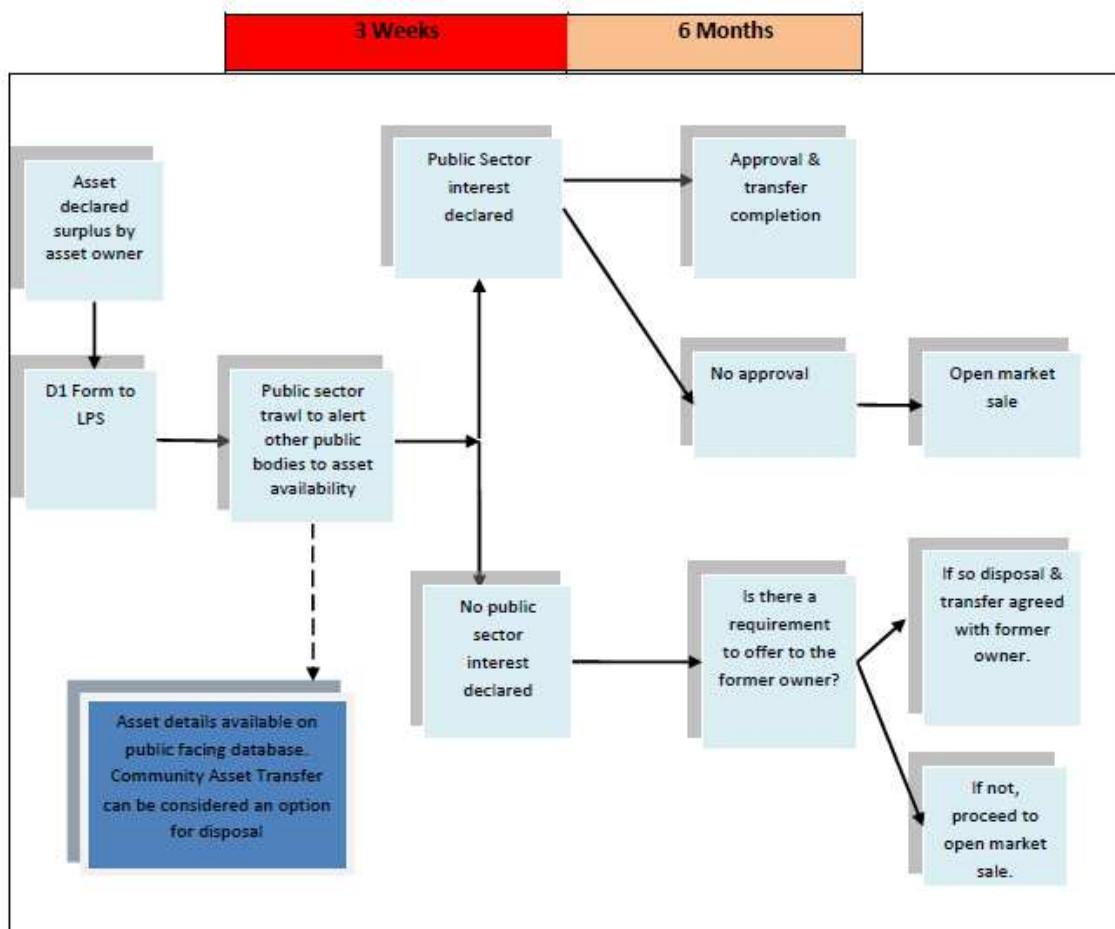
The Executive has established a small Asset Management Unit (AMU) who are working with every department and until June 2013 reported progress to the Budget Review Group. In January 2011, the Executive tasked the AMU with developing and delivering:

- a region-wide Asset Management Strategy;
- departmental Asset Management Plans updated annually; and
- ePIMS as a central asset database.

In addition the AMU was tasked with helping departments to deliver a programme of asset disposals. All of the tasks set by the Executive are being delivered and in June 2013, the Executive approved the region-wide Asset Management Strategy. The AMU is now working with departments to deliver the recommendations of the Strategy.

We have been working closely with the AMU both in the development of the Asset Management Strategy and in the implementation of recommendations to ensure that policy on Community Asset Transfer is reflected appropriately. One of the key objectives for the AMU is to identify savings opportunities from the running cost of assets and as a by product deliver additional capital income for the Executive by identifying and disposing of assets that are deemed to be surplus. An overview of the disposal process is illustrated below including indicative timescales for the process and the point at which Community Asset Transfer can be considered as an option for disposal. It should be noted that consideration of Community Asset Transfer as an option at the public sector trawl stage does not imply a preference for disposal and all cases will be assessed by the asset owner in accordance with disposal procedures. It is in the context of the disposal process outlined that

Community Asset Transfer will need to be considered. As part of its role, the AMU is creating a central asset database. The information held on this database will help to facilitate the implementation of Community Asset Transfer by enabling access to information on surplus public assets. In addition to the work of the AMU on behalf of the Executive, there is a keen focus on asset management within local government in advance of the implementation of local government reform and the creation of new councils in 2015.



Social Enterprise Agenda

The Northern Ireland Economic Strategy acknowledges the contribution that social enterprise can make to achieving business growth, supporting economic development and tackling disadvantage. The Strategy contains a commitment to support 160 new social economy start-ups and invest in social enterprise growth.

Social Enterprise NI is a newly established consortium of social enterprises and social entrepreneurs which aims to provide a “central meeting place where the sector can collaborate, share knowledge, information and best practice to create real social change”. The consortium is funded by DETI and is engaged in a three year work programme which will complement the aims of Community Asset Transfer.

The emerging importance of the social enterprise agenda has been highlighted by recent research conducted on behalf of DETI and DSD. The research mapped the third sector in Northern Ireland and considered its capacity to become more enterprise driven. Both Departments will be taking forward recommendations from the report, some of which will directly support the out-working of this policy framework.

Work of other Third Sector partners

DSD has engaged Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI) as a delivery partner to support the implementation of Community Asset Transfer. DTNI will build capacity and expertise within the third sector to enable community organisations to take advantage of future opportunities.

The Building Change Trust has a strategic objective to build, strengthen and utilise community capacity and assets. It has been working with DSD and other public sector bodies to support investment readiness and skills development within the third sector.

4. Creating an enabling environment for Community Asset Transfer

Introduction

This policy framework aims to create an enabling environment for Community Asset Transfer in two main ways. Firstly, it will establish some conditions or 'ground rules' to govern individual transfers and help both parties to a transfer to understand the circumstances in which the transfer of an asset may be appropriate. The ground rules are laid out in Section 5. Secondly it will seek to address the barriers which exist in terms of regulation and guidance, finance, skills and awareness, through a series of pragmatic actions. These are laid out in sections 7-10.

Any proposed asset transfer must support the priorities of the Executive and aim to create the widest public value. The list below is indicative of the kind of outcomes that should be achieved by successful asset transfer:

- Delivering community benefits;
- Supporting development of social enterprise;
- Contributing to social, environmental or economic regeneration;
- Improving, safeguarding, creating local services/amenities;
- Supporting the sustainability of a community organisation; and
- Improving social cohesion.

This list of potential outputs highlights again the principles of partnership and mutual benefit which are at the core of this policy framework which aims to create an enabling environment in which willing partners can come to an agreement which delivers the best outcome for all involved. Asset transfer will not be the right option for all third sector organisations and experience from elsewhere warns that it should not be an end in itself, neither should it divert organisations from their core activities.

Asset holders in collaboration with the Asset Management Unit will be required to take a view as to which assets are suitable for Community Asset Transfer. Not all publicly held assets will be available for consideration.

The goal is to make the best use of the public estate and work in partnership to secure the widest public value from our publicly owned assets. In creating a more enabling environment for Community Asset Transfer this policy framework will provide a means of investing in regeneration and positive social, economic and environmental outcomes which can be used to support Executive priorities.

The conditions are set out in the following section, grouped under a number of headings to explain the underlying rationale.

5. Conditions (Ground Rules)

Sustainability

Third sector organisations must develop a business plan which demonstrates the viability of the proposed use of an asset. The business plan must take account of all the costs associated with developing and managing the asset (including repairs, refurbishment, running costs etc).

Third sector organisations will need to demonstrate the capacity to develop and manage the asset appropriately. In considering this a public sector organisation can take account of the commitment demonstrated by a community organisation, the resources and support available and the potential to improve capacity.

The spectrum of transfer options can vary widely, including a freehold, long lease, shorter lease or a licence to occupy.

Legal arrangements (contracts, leases etc) will ensure that community organisations are enabled to manage and develop the property as an asset in the long term, while providing necessary safeguards, proportionate to the risk. Safeguards may include imposing certain restrictions on the use of an asset.

For transfers where grants or loans are required to develop the asset, the length of tenure will need to be long enough to secure external investment. In these cases community asset transfer would be expected to mean a long lease, of at least 50 years, or a freehold.

Accountability

Third sector organisations will need to be incorporated, constituted for social benefit and to demonstrate an 'asset lock' provision to ensure that the asset is retained for community benefit.

Third sector organisations will be expected to maximise opportunities for community cohesion.

Third sector organisations will need to demonstrate community support for their proposals and a commitment to accountability, open access and maximising the use of an asset by and for the community.

Decision making

Assets will include both land and property.

Asset transfer may be used as a strategic method of achieving wider regeneration objectives or community ownership of new services or hubs. Transferred assets will often, although not necessarily, have been declared surplus to requirements.

Assets may be transferred at less than market value or 'best consideration'. The level of discount against market value will be set on a case by case basis, and must be commensurate with the level of anticipated non-monetary benefits, which will be judged on the basis of the nature of the property, an assessment of the third sector organisation's business plan and the extent of the public value associated with a transfer.

The decision to transfer an asset will not be considered as setting a precedent. Each asset transfer will be judged on its own merits and the detail of the transfer arrangements will be arrived at through individual negotiation.

Where there is competition for assets third sector organisations will be encouraged to collaborate. Where this is not possible an open and transparent competitive process will be used.

The decision to transfer an asset will in all cases be supported by an economic appraisal.

The decision to transfer an asset will take account of any potential EU State Aid issues.

6. Current Barriers to implementation of Community Asset Transfer

A cross-departmental Steering Group on Community Asset Transfer identified a number of barriers which will need to be addressed to enable the practice to be used more extensively and more creatively. The Steering Group was supported in its analysis by research evidence and by early engagement with key stakeholders through a number of policy development workshops. Barriers exist both within and between the public sector and the third sector and are described below. A series of practical measures to address these barriers is set out in Sections 7-10 (pages 16-21).

Information and awareness

- There is currently a lack of awareness (both within the public sector and the third sector) of the potential beneficial outcomes associated with Community Asset Transfer and of how it can be applied;
- There is a poor understanding within the public and third sectors of the risks associated with Community Asset Transfer and how to manage them;
- There is currently inadequate public facing information available about the availability of surplus public sector assets and whether or how they can be acquired;
- There is often uncertainty within public sector organisations about the discretion they have to transfer assets into community ownership or management;
- There is not enough access to information and case studies where asset transfer has been implemented; and
- There is no one centre of expertise that can provide advice and support to organisations interested in asset transfer.

Regulation and guidance

- Individual government departments may be constrained by legislation when considering the purpose for which they can transfer an asset via a capital grant;
- There is uncertainty about how to construct leases which balance tenants' rights against the need to manage risk in the transfer process; and

- Local government currently has no delegated authority to allow for the disposal of assets at less than market value.

Skills

- Public sector organisations often lack the skills to assess the benefits associated with the proposed use of an asset, or to judge the feasibility of a proposed use;
- Many third sector organisations are not “investment ready” and may lack the skills and capacity to successfully manage and develop assets.

Funding

- There is a lack of financial support available to invest in early pre-feasibility work to explore potential use of assets, build business cases etc;
- Assets may need additional investment to make them “fit for purpose” and to repair, refurbish or convert them for an alternative use.

The following sections present a series of actions organised under the headings of information/awareness, public sector asset management; skills development and funding. The collective impact of these proposals should be to:

- Raise the profile and understanding of Community Asset Transfer as a tool for investment and regeneration;
- ‘Mainstream’ Community Asset Transfer as an option for public sector asset management and address current operational barriers;
- Create and maintain the necessary skills within public sector and third sector organisations to support implementation of Community Asset Transfer and the long term sustainable management and development of assets; and
- Provide investment to support the implementation of Community Asset Transfer.

7. Information/awareness

Actions	Impact
<p>Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI) will run a programme of information and awareness raising to target audiences from the public sector, third sector and political representatives.</p>	<p><i>The aim of these actions is to raise the profile and understanding of Community Asset Transfer as a tool for investment and regeneration.</i></p> <p>Implementation These proposals will be supported by the Strategic Investment Board's Asset Management Unit and endorsed by the Department of Finance and Personnel.</p> <p>DSD is currently resourcing the Development Trusts NI to effectively fulfil its role in supporting these proposals.</p>
<p>We will develop and disseminate guidance and toolkits for the third sector.</p>	
<p>We will promote existing guidance and signpost to relevant UK resources.</p>	
<p>We will ensure effective communication of any substantive changes to the guidance governing Community Asset Transfer within the public sector.</p>	
<p>DTNI will develop and make available information on case studies, both of local examples and from elsewhere in the UK.</p>	

8. Public Sector Asset Management

<p>Actions</p> <p>Consideration of Community Asset Transfer will be embedded into strategic asset management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Asset Transfer will become integrated into all Departments' practice, as one of the options for dealing with under-utilised or surplus property assets; - Departments will regularly review the transfer potential of its assets; and - We will ensure that there is agreement within government on appropriate accounting arrangements for assets that are disposed of at less than 'best value'. <p>Current operational barriers to Community Asset Transfer will be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will create a single point of contact for information on surplus public sector assets; - We will ensure timely access for the public to relevant information on available surplus assets; and - We will explore ways in which access can be given in a user-friendly way to key information on a public sector asset database, to include local government assets. <p>Where necessary we will amend guidance to better facilitate the transfer of assets and clarify the mechanisms available to support Community Asset Transfer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes will focus on the Land and Property 	<p>Impact</p> <p><i>The aim of these actions is to 'mainstream' Community Asset Transfer as an option for public sector asset management and address current operational barriers.</i></p> <p>Implementation</p> <p>These actions will be supported by the Department of Finance and Personnel, the Strategic Investment Board's Asset Management Unit and the Department of the Environment.</p>
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Service Central Advice Unit Disposal Guidelines and Managing Public Money NI guidance.

We will explore what legislative changes are necessary, if any, to facilitate Community Asset Transfer and make recommendations.

We will make appropriate arrangements to allow greater local government discretion in the disposal of assets at less than market value.

We will support research into evaluating non-monetary costs and benefits with strategic partners.

Through the Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation and civil service training courses, we will promote good practice guidelines on quantifying non-monetary costs and benefits and valuing non market impacts.

We will work with others to improve our understanding of impact measurement and develop more robust methodologies to support decision making, monitoring and evaluation.

9. Skills Development

Actions	Impact
<p>We will develop skills and expertise to support both public sector and third sector organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will maximise learning from the wider UK and EU experience while ensuring that guidance is tailored to Northern Ireland circumstances; and - We will address public sector skills gaps. <p>We will support a Community Asset Transfer demonstration programme to increase understanding of skills requirements and gaps within the public sector and third sector.</p> <p>We will ensure effective partnerships and ‘synergies’ with other complementary initiatives e.g. Social Enterprise NI, Building Change Trust - Investment Readiness and ‘Inspiring Impact’, the NICVA-led consortium on skills development, Belfast Buildings Trust etc, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognising overlap with existing initiatives; and - avoiding duplication and maximising collaboration. <p>We will work with others to establish an independent centre of expertise on Community Asset Transfer to act as advisor, broker and repository of best practice, evaluation, monitoring etc, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring a distinct offering; and - working in partnership with others (as above). 	<p><i>The aim of these actions is to create and maintain the necessary skills within public sector and third sector organisations to support implementation of Community Asset Transfer and the long term sustainable management and development of assets.</i></p> <p>Implementation These actions will be supported by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.</p> <p>DSD is currently resourcing the Development Trusts NI to effectively fulfil its role and will work with other third sector partners.</p>

10. Funding

Actions	Impact
<p>The transfer of assets into community ownership and management is recognised as a means of investing in regeneration and positive social, economic and environmental change which can be used to support Executive priorities.</p> <p>Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI) will lead a Community Asset Transfer demonstration programme involving assets from a range of public sector organisations.</p> <p>We will work with others to develop more social finance instruments and promote existing and emerging opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the transfer of an asset can be used to e.g. encourage innovation, lever additional finance and reduce grant dependence; - There is a particular need for grants to support pre-feasibility studies and business planning; - There is scope for initiatives such as Community Shares to complement the aims of Community Asset Transfer. <p>We will work with others to establish a funding stream to support pre-feasibility work on potential asset transfer projects.</p> <p>We will seek opportunities from within existing grant programmes to support Community Asset Transfer e.g.</p>	<p><i>The aim of these actions is to provide investment to support the implementation of Community Asset Transfer.</i></p> <p>Implementation These actions will be supported by Department for Social Development and Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and a range of government funders.</p>

Social Investment Fund, Neighbourhood Renewal, Rural Development Fund.

We will explore opportunities from within European Union funds to support Community Asset Transfer (under the social investment umbrella).

We will evaluate the DTNI demonstration programme and consider the lessons learned in terms of the range of resources needed to support Community Asset Transfer.

11. Community Right to Bid/Right to Buy

Community Rights form part of the policy context for Asset Transfer in Scotland and England. The Right to Buy was first introduced in Scotland for rural areas in 2004 and the Scottish Government is proposing to expand the power through the Community Empowerment Bill to cover urban areas.

Community Right to Buy in Scotland

The Community Right to Buy allows communities with a population of less than 10,000 in Scotland to apply to register an interest in land and the opportunity to buy that land when it comes up for sale.

To take advantage of the Community Right to Buy process, communities must submit an application form to register an interest. All applications to register an interest in land are recorded in the [Register of Community Interests](#) in Land (RCIL) held by the Registers of Scotland. PDF versions of the documentation held are available for public viewing through the RCIL.

After an application has been submitted and passed initial checks, it is forwarded to the landowner and if applicable any heritable creditor, for their comments. At this stage a temporary Prohibition is placed on the landowner/heritable creditor preventing them from transferring or marketing the land. Any comments submitted by the landowner/heritable creditor will be fully considered by Ministers when making their decision to approve or reject the application.

The "Right to Buy" can only be activated when the landowner has indicated that the registered land is to be sold or where the provisions of the Act have been breached.

Once a community body which holds a registered interest in the land for sale, confirms that it wishes to proceed with its "Right to Buy", it has six months to conclude the transfer of land or longer if agreed with the landowner.

In England the Localism Act introduced a range of community rights in 2012 including the right to bid (for assets), the right to build and the right to challenge (to deliver services).

The Community Right to Bid in England

The Community Right to Bid allows communities and parish councils to nominate buildings or land for listing by the local authority as an asset of community value. An asset can be listed if its principal use furthers (or has recently furthered) their community's social well-being or social interests (which include cultural, sporting or recreational interests) and is likely to do so in the future. When a listed asset comes to be sold, a moratorium on the sale (of up to six months) may be invoked, providing local community groups with a better chance to raise finance, develop a business and to make a bid to buy the asset on the open market.

Further information can be found at <http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/>

The recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation report on Community Asset Transfer in Northern Ireland recommended the introduction of equivalent community right to bid or buy legislation in Northern Ireland.

There is a shortage of case study evidence from England and Scotland on the practical outworking of these rights; they have only recently been introduced in England and have not been extensively applied in Scotland either.

The Department is content that community rights has been identified as a further important enabling element for Community Asset Transfer. This forms part of a wider agenda that we will continue to explore more fully in the context of the Reform of Local Government in Northern Ireland and the implications of community planning.

12. Impact Assessments

Human Rights

The Department believes that the proposals are compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Equality

Under the terms of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department carried out screening for equality impact and is satisfied that the proposals will not lead to discriminatory or negative differential impact on any of the section 75 groups. A copy of the screening form can be viewed on the Department's website:

www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/consultations

13. Next Steps

In taking forward the implementation of the Framework, the Department for Social Development will:

- Within 3 months develop an implementation plan that will describe how and when the actions outlined above will be taken forward; and
- Work with the Department's delivery partner, Development Trusts NI (DTNI) to manage a programme of demonstration projects. The purpose of the programme will be to test this policy framework to determine if it is doing what it was designed to do.

Annex A: Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI)



Development Trusts NI (DTNI) was established in 2010 and is a Northern Ireland registered Charity¹.

DTNI is grant funded by the Department for Social Development (DSD) to provide expertise and experience to achieve the establishment of new development trusts in Northern Ireland, to promote awareness of asset transfer, and to identify and nominate from within its membership a selection of organisations whose work and interest in community development, urban regeneration and asset acquisition will form part of a demonstration asset transfer programme.

These demonstration initiatives will draw extensive support from DTNI. DTNI's aim in this work is to "encourage, support and empower local communities to develop new and inspiring projects, thus enabling them to become independent and sustainable".

DTNI will actively work with the Department for Social Development during this consultation period. As an advocate for the Voluntary and Community Sector, DTNI will ensure that those issues of importance to the sector are highlighted.

DTNI Contact details

3rd Floor, Cathedral Quarter Managed Workspace
109-113 Royal Avenue
Belfast BT1 1FF

Mobile: 07595 979642

Email: info@dtni.org.uk

DTNI is a member-led organisation with a board of directors drawn from its membership and from the private sector. They are specialists in community asset ownership, enterprise, collaboration, social action, local regeneration, commissioning, community voice and advocacy.

DTNI is part of a wider movement which includes Development Trusts Association Scotland, Development Trusts Association Wales and Locality in England. Together there is now a UK wide network with over 850 members. Members of Development Trusts NI automatically receive membership of the UK-wide Association.

¹ Charity Number XT27682.

Annex B: References

Making Assets Work – The Quirk Review

Published in 2007 the five key recommendations from this report by Barry Quirk, CEO, Lewisham Council was the catalyst for the reform of government policy to reflect community ownership and enable the possibility of transfer of government owned land and property to the community sector

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/makingassetswork>

Opening the transfer window. The Governments Response to the Quirk Review

The Government accepted the five key recommendations of the Quirk Review and in this paper set out the building blocks to set Community Asset Transfer in motion.

<http://libraries.communityknowledgehub.org.uk/resource/opening-transfer-window>

Managing risks in asset transfer – Communities and Local Government

Drawing from experience this useful paper provides [English] local authorities and community-based organisations manage and minimise the possible risks to be encountered in the transfer of land and property assets from the public to the community sector.

<http://www.dtascommunityownership.org.uk/sites/default/files/managing-risks-in-asset-transfer.pdf>

Community Empowerment Action Plan (Scotland)

Announced in March 2009 this action plan provides clarity on what community empowerment is, why it is important and how communities can get involved. The action plan provides a range of best practice examples from across Scotland.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/engage/empowerment>

DTA Scotland – Promoting Asset Transfer Final Report Nov 2011.

Published by the Development Trusts (Scotland) in 2011 this report supported the need for sustained programmes of support and funding at national and local levels.

<http://www.dtascommunityownership.org.uk/sites/default/files/PAT%20Final%20Report%20Dec%202011.pdf>

Scottish Government's Community Empowerment Bill

On 6th June 2012 the Scottish Government launched a 12 week exploratory consultation on a range of ideas for the proposed Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill. Proposals included the extension of a community right to buy to urban Scotland and giving local authorities greater powers to deal with empty homes and buildings. Consultation on a draft Bill is planned for Summer 2013.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/engage>

Final Evaluation of the Asset Transfer Unit May 2011

An independent evaluation of the performance of the Asset Transfer Unit over its first two years in operation. The evaluation conducted by SQW and initiated by Locality found that the profile and reach of the Unit was impressive and that although it is too early to properly assess the impact of the Unit in asset owner capacity to promote asset transfer, where the Unit has been involved capacity has increased. Departments and Agencies considered that a core dedicated Unit such as the Asset Transfer Unit is required to continue the momentum of improvement in asset management and promotion of transfers

<http://www.sqw.co.uk/files/1013/8712/6248/16.pdf>

Joseph Rowntree Foundation: Community assets: emerging learning, challenges and questions – Julian Dobson, 2011

This paper explores the opportunities, challenges and questions arising for community organisations, funders, policy-makers and government based on learning from recent events on community assets and research papers and briefing documents published in 2010 and 2011.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/community-assets-learning-challenges-questions>

Joseph Rowntree Foundation: Community organisations controlling assets: a better understanding – Mike Aiken et al, 2011

This study examines the benefits that come from community organisations owning or managing assets, what makes for success and what are the challenges. It also provides key messages for practitioners and policy-makers in taking forward the community assets agenda.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/community-organisations-controlling-assets>

Joseph Rowntree Foundation: Community asset transfer in Northern Ireland

This report demonstrates asset transfer has had positive effects on community relations, segregation and social inclusion. Innovation in the statutory sector has had a significant impact on area-based regeneration, public health, community development, education and training and childcare provision. The report also proposes the need to consider new legislation similar to the Right to Challenge and Right to Buy elsewhere in the UK and that new forms of finance, skills and support for practitioners are needed.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/community-asset-transfer-northern-ireland>

Building Change Trust Observatory – Development Trusts.

This paper provides an overview development trusts, it explores their contributions as community enterprises to combating poverty, and considers the transfer of public assets to communities as a way of establishing and growing development trusts. It describes the innovative 'meanwhile use' of

temporarily vacated commercial spaces as a complementary strategy to development trusts' long term approach. It also highlights the work of the recently formed Development Trusts NI, and the Building Change Trust.

<http://www.dtni.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/CFNIObsPBDevelopmentTrusts92011.pdf>

Building relationships in communities BRIC - Queens University

BRIC is a four year programme designed to encourage greater levels of social integration within Northern Ireland's housing sector. It is run with assistance from the EU's PEACE III Programme. The project is delivered by the Rural Development Council, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the training consultancy TIDES. The idea is to help Housing Executive staff promote sharing within the currently highly segregated social housing market. The project focuses on peace and reconciliation and helps promote the idea of a shared society.

www.nihe.gov.uk/index/community/community_cohesion/bric.htm

Social Finance in Northern Ireland: Innovative Thinking and Action

This study aims to produce a blueprint report that will guide the development of new social finance products in Northern Ireland. To develop the blueprint the study will review social finance supply and demand in Northern Ireland; explore new developments in the UK, Ireland, elsewhere in Europe and the US; identify gaps in the market, explore potential funding and delivery mechanisms and provide an estimate of future demand.

<http://www.charitybank.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Social%20Finance%20in%20Northern%20Ireland.pdf>

Social Economy Evaluation assignment July 2011. (KPMG Report to DETI)

KPMG was commissioned by a DETI-led Steering Group to undertake an evaluation of the Social Economy in Northern Ireland (NI). The study was charged to examine the role of the Social Economy sector and its unique value in terms of the economic, social and environmental impact in the NI context; evaluate the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010/11 with an explicit focus on future direction and priorities and evaluate the Social Economy Network's performance.

www.detini.gov.uk/social_economy_evaluation_report_final.pdf

Focus on Social Economy Enterprise

This is a simple but very useful factsheet produced by the Rural Network NI in 2009. In simple terms it explains the Social Economy Enterprise business model. It was used as simple reference tool at a time when DETI were inviting views on the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2009-2011

<http://www.ruralnetworkni.org.uk/download/files/Social%20Enterprise.pdf>

Programme for Government 2011-2015 (NI)

On 12th March 2012, the First Minister and deputy First Minister published the Programme for Government 2011-2015. The Programme for Government identifies the actions the Executive will take to deliver its number one priority – “a vibrant economy which can transform our society while dealing with the deprivation and poverty which has affected some of our communities for generations.” The Executive is committed to formulate community asset transfer policy across government; publish a list of existing government assets and identify potential for asset transfers. It commits to disseminate policy and outline best practice for Departments and to baseline research of VCS/SE continuum and to identify opportunities for growth of social economy model within the Voluntary and Community Sector.

<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/work-of-the-executive/pfg.htm>

Concordat between the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Government

The Concordat is an agreement between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector which outlines key values and principles and establishes a set of shared commitments on how Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector can work together to better serve the people of NI. The Concordat establishes new and refreshed structures of engagement between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector to help shape the effective use of resources, including the development of good professional practice and the provision of appropriate accountability.

<http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/consultation-concordat-for-relationships-between-govt-vc-sector.pdf>

Managing Public Money NI

Produced by DFP this manual provides guidance on the proper handling and reporting of public money. It sets out the main principles for dealing with resources used by public sector organisations in Northern Ireland (NI).

<http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/index/finance/afmd/afmd-key-guidance/afmd-mpmni.htm>

Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Property In Northern Ireland

This guidance is published by the Land and Property Service Central Advisory Unit (DFP). It provides property disposal guidelines for public bodies and best practice for public sector bodies.

www.deni.gov.uk/disposal_of_public_sector_property.pdf

FUNDING

Big Lottery - Asset transfer and capital programmes

<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/research/communities-and-places/community-assets>

Charity Bank

<http://www.charitybank.org/>

Community Development Finance Institution

<http://www.cdfa.org.uk/>

Community Shares

<http://www.communityshares.org.uk/>

Government Funding Database

<http://govfundingpublic.nics.gov.uk/Home.aspx>

New Philanthropy Capital

<http://www.thinknpc.org/>

LEGISLATION AND ASSOCIATED GUIDANCE

Stormont Regulation and Government Property Act (NI) 1933

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/apni/1933/6/contents>

The Local Government Act 1972 (NI)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/apni/1972/9/contents>

Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Property In Northern Ireland

www.deni.gov.uk/disposal_of_public_sector_property.pdf

The Local Government Act 1972: General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 (Wales) 2003

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70>

Circular 06/03: Local Government Act 1972 general disposal consent (England) 2003

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7690/462483.pdf

NAFWC 41/2003 : Local Government Act 1972 general disposal consent (Wales) 2003

<http://wales.gov.uk/pubs/circulars/2003/english/NAFWC41-03-e.pdf;jsessionid=53AD9975E3FDFBCC707D5C8C4993D47C?lang=en>

Disposal of land by local authorities (Scotland) regulations 2010

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2010/160/contents/made>

Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations General Guidance

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/319642/0102183.pdf>

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2003/2/contents>

Scottish Public Finance Manual

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Finance/spfm/Intro>

The Localism Act 2011

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

Localism Agenda and the concept of the 'Big Society'

<http://www.localism-agenda.com/background/>

USEFUL LINKS

Asset Transfer Unit (England)

<http://locality.org.uk/asset-transfer-unit/>

Building Change Trust

<http://www.buildingchangetrust.org/>

Development Trust association Scotland

<http://www.dtascot.org.uk/>

Development Trust NI

<http://www.dtni.org.uk/>

Land and Property Service

<http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/lps/index.htm>

Locality

<http://locality.org.uk/>

Investment Readiness in the UK

www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/er_invest_ready.pdf

The Place Station

<http://www.theplacestation.org.uk/>

Social Enterprise Northern Ireland SENI

<http://www.socialenterpriseni.org/>

Social Enterprise UK

<http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/about/about-social-enterprise>

Annex C: Case Studies

Asset Transfer; A Continuum of Possibilities.

The debate around community asset transfer in Northern Ireland (NI) at the moment is very much premised around an understanding that equates transfer with ownership. While that is true in many instances in Northern Ireland and across Britain it is only part of the picture. All community and voluntary organisations utilise assets to deliver their services, these may be rented on an as needed basis, by way of an annual or longer term rental agreement with a third party that may be a private, public or another third sector asset owner. Equally those assets might be mortgaged or owned outright.

In Northern Ireland Asset Transfer (or Community Asset Transfer as it is commonly referred to) is the process by which a community or voluntary organisation might acquire a surplus public sector asset be that land or building(s). That asset will be sought with the express intention of furthering the organisations social and business aims and objectives, its continued development and the delivery of its services for its community.

Asset Transfer is better understood if seen as a continuum of possibilities as opposed to the wholesale transfer of a physical asset from one body to another. At one level it may be where an organisation moves from being a tenant in a local council run community centre to one where it adopts the management function of that asset. Such an arrangement may be on an annual or other short term lease or it may be longer, perhaps 5 or 10 or even up to 25 years. Lease arrangement might be accompanied by conditions and covenants on how and for what purpose the asset can be used.

As we move along that continuum of possibilities we progress through options considering whether the asset may be co-owned, utilised for a meanwhile use or transferred in full by way of sale under market conditions or at a nil or nominal cost. Where the surplus asset is disposed of under market conditions there are likely to be fewer or no restrictions on its future use, though listed buildings; those with a heritage or preservation value, are subject to strict planning and development controls. Other assets, such as those providing residential care or sports facilities for example may remain covenanted for the provision of health and social care for the elderly or leisure and recreation respectively.

Outside of the debate on the transfer of surplus public sector assets an organisation may also develop its asset base on terms of its own making, undertaking new capital build projects or entering the market and purchasing assets in open competition with others.

Across the community and voluntary sector in NI there are many examples of asset transfer and asset ownership. Some groups have been supported by way of one of grants and other philanthropic investments which have been wisely invested in capital projects (buildings and land). Having a capital asset base has in turn assisted those organisations sustain and grow their activities. DTNI believe that community and voluntary organisations should seek to acquire and develop an asset base. We consider that the NI Executive' enabling framework on 'Community Asset Transfer' will help define the means by which a new 'asset class' of community development and enterprise organisations will emerge and grow.

Here we present a number of short case studies which look at different forms of ownership; from facilities management to outright ownership, a continuum of possibilities.

OUTRIGHT OWNERSHIP: Limavady Community Development Initiative

Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI) serves the community of the Borough of Limavady in NI. Founded in 1987 the focus for the organisation was on job creation. A quarter of a century old, the Charity is still going strong and now employs some 60 people and is one of the largest community groups in NI; it continues to grow and work towards sustainable service delivery and is increasingly less dependent on grant funding.

The Asset: Roe Valley Hospital

One of the major factors in the growth of LCDI has been its acquisition of Roe Valley Hospital in 1997 (one of the best examples of a Union Workhouse on the island of Ireland). The availability of the asset came about in part because the building was in need of redevelopment to which the Department of Health was not committed to support.



Roe Valley Hospital: Limavady Community Development Initiative

The opportunity for LCDI to acquire the Roe Valley Hospital came about at a time when it had outgrown its original premises. It was also in possession of European funding that would support them make a new capital purchase. The process of engaging with the asset owner (The Department for Health) began in 1997 though wasn't completed (actual purchase and move) until 1999. The complex was then subsequently regenerated with a mix of capital development grants and loans and developed as a major multifunctional community based facility. The majority of the space in the complex is rented and the income is a major contributor to the organization's sustainability.

General Manager Damien Corr said:

The move was for LCDI an audacious one, we were ambitious, passionate and rash enough to believe in ourselves that we could own and manage this asset and make a major contribution to the community and borough of Limavady. That belief in ourselves was paramount to our ultimate success. It took commitment and effort to convince public sector officials to take us seriously but as to the bona fides of our business proposal. The success of our proposal was in part being able to convince the statutory health authority that what we would bring to ownership would better serve the community in the longer term. And to be fair, once we had convinced them on the merits of our proposal which meant emphasising the social impact and longer term social return their support became invaluable.

The department in turn became central to what we wanted to achieve; they showed a degree of innovation not normally associated with the public sector. The extent of that willingness was revealed when they accepted our bid for purchase which was some £50,000 less than the highest bidder.

LCDI clearly understood what the benefit of owning the asset would mean: A sustainable income, an opportunity to grow as an organisation. So successful was their business plan that the building has been paid for with only residual debt on outstanding loans remaining. The building currently generates approximately £250,000 per annum from the key anchor tenants. Some of those anchor tenants are the health and social care providers that previously occupied the building when owned by its parent body the Department of Health.

There were no conditions on sale other than those associated with those attached to the loan agreements entered into to purchase and refurbish the hospital. LCDI were not expected to continue to use the site to provide health and social care. In fact they made the case and campaigned for the retention of social care services within the facility post refurbishment to which the then local health care trust agreed to. That agreement and subsequent tenant lease agreement to remain on site for 15 years was core to LCDI acquiring matching loans from banks and other social investors.

To facilitate the new arrangement and to acquire the asset LCDI established Roe Valley Community Property Limited. It is the owner of the asset and LCDI is its sole shareholder and all profits gift aided back to LCDI.

Key Learning Points:

- Engage early and positively with the public body that is seeking to dispose of the asset.
- Recognise that the public body has its own mission and objectives and bear these in mind when pursuing your own goals and look for joint wins and co-solutions to problems that may emerge.
- Don't get giddy about what you might own; rather ask why we shouldn't take the asset and think through and generate solutions.
- Do your homework; understand what you need to do and who you need to engage with. For example lottery turned down an initial request for money from LCDI – so they engaged with lottery personnel to design a solution.
- Don't expect that it will happen overnight – passion is necessary but not enough, you need lots of people on your side.
- Make the case for community ownership - don't expect it to be handed to you on a plate. Negotiate, Negotiate, Negotiate.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT: Roden Street Community Development Group

The Asset: Grosvenor Community Recreation Centre

The Roden Street Community Development Group began life as the Roden Street Action Team, initially based in a Save the Children facility in Roden Street adjacent to the interface. The original group began life as a result of a group of local, concerned residents. The area at that time was facing acute difficulties centered around housing, environmental problems, anti social issues and interface tensions.

Roden Street CDG are now based in the Grosvenor Community Recreation Centre on the Grosvenor Road, Belfast and they have a 10 year lease on the building which up for renewal in 2015. They provide a broad range of services for a diverse range of users including Belfast's Filipino community. They provide a broad range of services in respect of social development including parental support, childcare, physical activity programmes and other initiatives connected to health and social care, healthy living and well being.

Roden Street CDG have a Facility Management Agreement with Belfast City Council (BCC) for a full size 3G pitch at Grosvenor Recreation Centre (GRC). The site was previously an old hard porous surface in poor condition with limited local usage, which has been transformed into a dramatic and well used 3G facility for use by the local community and others. BCC contributed £100,000 to the project and the Big Lottery New Opportunities Fund for PE & Sport provided additional funding of

£634,614. That application for investment was fronted by Roden Street CDG and St Josephs Primary School and was targeted at modernising existing sports facilities for school and community use with specific criteria that identified local schools who would be eligible for free use during term time.



Conditions of Use

The contract comes with a number of conditions and covenants on use. Key amongst these is free use of the Facility during term time Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 4.00pm to 3 local schools that are specifically named in the contract:

- St Joseph's Primary School
- St Peter's Primary School
- St Clare's Primary School

In addition to the free use stipulation, Roden Street CDG are also committed to:

- Facilitating access by members of the public, sporting clubs, groups and schools to use the facility subject to the payment of user charges;

- Ensuring that a full and varied sports development programme is carried out at the facilities and prepare and implement a sports development programme that is subject to approval by the Council;
- Forwarding a proposed timetable of usage on a monthly basis and an end of month timetable of usage; and
- Forwarding any reports as required relating to usage, such as teams, bookings, variations, maintenance or any other matters the Council may require a report on.

Alongside the 3G pitch Grosvenor were provided with a plot of land that is now managed and used by them and is presently functioning as a community garden. There are no conditions on use of the plot other than it cannot be sold.

Finance & Development

A management fee of £44,400 per annum is paid to Roden Street CDG in two 6 monthly payments which is sourced from the income generated by the new synthetic pitch. This fee was further subsidised by the Big Lottery Fund 2009/11 to the tune of £30,000. The average annual income generated on the site is in the region of £70,000. Though financially this appears to benefit the Council more so than Roden Street CDG, there are other non-monetary returns. For example the council are responsible for site maintenance and upkeep of the facility. There is an alternative model exercised by the council in respect of its facilities where all the income generated is retained by the group managing the facility. Shaftsbury Recreation is managed² under a similar model but with greater opportunity for income generation comes additional responsibility, such as maintenance and upkeep.

The contract term on the 3G facility runs for five years having started in 2009 and is due for renewal in 2014 with an option for extension to up to 20 years management agreement in increments of 5 year periods.

Roden Street CDG had also sought funding for additional development of the Facilities; in particular for transforming Grosvenor Recreation Centre building into a multi-use sports hall. Investments secured and approved for that purpose were undertaken at risk by the group. So though Roden Street RDC have been successful and generated additional income to enhance the facility the premises remain the property of the council. The contract between BCC and Roden Street CDG is not a tenancy arrangement or intended to be. Enhancements brought about by the Roden Street CDG do not change its relationship as facilities manager or create conditions for tenancy.

Centre Manager Tina Black considers that the arrangement they have negotiated with BCC works for their group. Though there are additional opportunities to undertake a social enterprise model of management and perhaps extend their management experience by undertaking to manage other facilities they feel that they don't have the requisite skills capacity (financial modelling, insurance, systems etc) to go beyond what they are currently managing. The newly developed Dunville Park with its 3G pitch was an option and proposed by BCC but not taken up by Grosvenor due to management and staff challenges particularly as the location was off site. For Tina Black (centre Manager) part of the problem is the challenge of scaling-up; *'who supports an organisation to embrace these opportunities. This is compounded by an indifference to asset ownership in the community and voluntary sector; In the north of Ireland we don't have a developed culture of ownership'*.

² by Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group

“We would need to know more of how other organisations work in leisure to consider a broader move into enterprise development, and though we are not ruling out further development any such move would need to be thoroughly investigated, staff skilled up and investment secured. For now the model we have, a public/social partnership works for both parties. We have developed our relationship with the council to best utilise the asset to meet the needs of our local community and in that respect we have sacrificed the opportunity to go out to a wider private market and maximise financial return. Though the demand is there - approximately 48 groups/teams are on the waiting list - we have struck a balance in favour of local demand and need. We have worked to facilitate the local community lead on a sports development programme which is what is important rather than seeing the asset as a potential cash cow. And though generally our relationship with the council is at 'arms length', they are accessible and responsive to our organisation's needs when we need them'.

Key Learning Points:

- Do your research.
- Have a varied management committee - including business owners, a solicitor for example.
- Have appropriate governance for the organization.
- Be realistic about the cost (Roden Street CDG consider that their own financial projections could have been better), don't undersell the cost of managing a building especially if you are negotiating a running costs agreement.
- Make sure your management committee are open minded - there is a need for innovative thinking and creative minds, for example it's not 9 to 5 Monday to Friday.
- Make sure staff have a sense of ownership of the asset - not merely a manager.
- Make sure the job roles and skills sets are relevant - not simply community development worker, but facilities management.
- Negotiate with stakeholders, strategically plan as to what this means for the organisation, don't just focus on the operational details which are necessary to make it work for the council, it needs to work for the local community.

Community Spaces Northampton



Locality member Community Spaces Northampton (CSN) is a new community charity managing seven community centres in Northampton.

It aims to offer a better community centre service to local people. This case study describes the bidding process and the challenges involved in a multiple asset transfer.

In 2011 Northampton Borough Council (NBC) offered eight community centres for community asset transfer and expressions of interest received from 16 organisations – including six organisations bidding for all eight centres.

Organisations expressing an interest were given ten weeks to prepare a business plan with financial projections.

The assessment of the seven business plans received resulted in the selection of two bidders, one bidder to take over one centre, and a partnership – Community Spaces Northampton – to take over the remaining seven. CSN was an informal partnership led by the Alliston Garden Youth & Community Centre (AGYCC).

The development work to establish CSN formally was supported by Locality and Northamptonshire Social Enterprise Development Agency and included:

- formation of CSN as a charitable company
- legal support in lease and management agreement negotiations
- visit to Fresh Horizons to see at first hand a community business managing community centres
- HR support including TUPE
- condition surveys of all buildings
- business planning and accountancy support in setting up finance systems

Work continued after transfer to recruit and train trustees and a co-ordinator, raise finance for capital improvements, establish CSN's profile and undertake an organisational restructure.

Regular meetings with NBC officers were critical to the transfer process – to track progress, identify sticking points and find solutions.

TUPE was a significant issue with two caretaking staff spending more than 50% of their time working at the seven centres and therefore transferring to CSN. To reduce the liability for CSN, the Council

offered an indemnity and drafted an agreement enabling the caretakers to remain in the Council's pension scheme.

Glendale Gateway Trust



Glendale Gateway Trust was set up in 1996 following a village appraisal. Based in the market town of Wooler, it covers the beautiful but sparsely populated area of Glendale in North Northumberland.

The first project undertaken by the Trust was development of a resource centre, the Cheviot Centre, to provide meeting, exhibition and office space and to house the tourist information centre. The land was provided by community asset transfer on a long lease from Berwick Borough Council. The Trust raised funding for a new building which was opened in 2001.

The Trust aims to meet the needs of local people and its priorities are:

- economic development
- affordable housing
- social and recreational opportunities.

The Trust aims to ensure that there is a strong community and voluntary sector in Glendale. A wide range of community organisations use and are based in the Cheviot Centre. The Youth Drop-In Centre on the High Street has been an essential element of provision for young people in the area for more than ten years.

The Trust used its initial asset base, the Cheviot Centre and the youth drop-in building, to take forward its objectives around economic development and affordable housing. Key industry areas for North Northumberland are tourism and farming – both struggle to recruit local workers if there is a lack of affordable housing. At the same time, run-down and empty shops are a disincentive to tourism.

Focusing on these objectives, the Trust's achievements include:

- buying properties on the High Street – two have been converted to modern shops for rent to local businesses with affordable rented flats above – one property has been converted to a three bedroom house

- purchase of land behind the High Street which had not been previously developed due to problems with road access. Because the Trust owned the properties in the High Street and could allow access, the land was sold to a housing association and 15 affordable homes built
- purchase of the youth hostel in Wooler from the Youth Hostel Association in order to secure its future. The youth hostel has a crucial economic impact in the town as visitors spend money with a range of local businesses.

Overall the Trust has sought to maximise its economic impact in the Glendale area by using local traders in its building development projects. A Local Multiplier 3 calculation showed that the £43k spent to renovate the three bedroom house on the High Street was worth £129k to the local economy in Glendale.

The latest venture for the Trust is an asset transfer linked to moving the library service. The library in Wooler is now housed in the Cheviot Centre freeing up the library building for community asset transfer to the Trust to be turned into two affordable housing units.

Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Land or Property

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

Prior to completing this questionnaire please refer to the current CAU Disposal Guidance:

www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/disposal-surplus-land-and-property-publications

Acquiring Body: DTNI on behalf of Brantry Area Rural Development Association

Re: 2194/24 – 74 Rehaghey Road, Aughnacloy

Please return this questionnaire to Central Advisory Unit by: 27th May 2024

Any Information supplied in this form will be shared with Central Advisory Unit, the Asset Owner and other relevant bodies such as Department for Communities as required.

1.0	D1 Reference Number	2194/24
1.1	Address of Surplus Property	74 Rehaghy Road, Aughnacloy
1.2	Name of Interested Party	Brantry Area Development Association
2.0	For what purpose will you acquire the surplus asset?	Community Wealth Building
2.1	The Asset Owner expects to complete a sale within the year shown	2024/2025
2.1a	Will you be able to complete in the timeframe above? <i>Will you be able to complete all necessary feasibility studies, achieve all necessary approvals including funding in order to compete the sale in the stated timeframe</i>	Yes
2.1b	Please specify financial year you will be able to complete sale <i>If you answered No to Q2.1a, please state when you will be able to complete</i>	2024/25
2.2	Will you acquire the entire site?	Yes
2.3	Does the organisation/department hold Compulsory Purchase Powers for the proposed purpose?	No

Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Land or Property

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

2.4	If you answered No to Q2.3, which government department with compulsory purchase powers would invoke them for you	Mid Ulster District Council
2.5	What status does your business case have?	To be completed in 3 -6 months
2.6	What status does your funding have: Choose an Option What source(s) will provide the funding	Funding will be secured in 6 - 9 months Reserves and Borrowing
2.7	Are there any other technical or legal due diligence approvals that you will require before a sale can be completed?	Yes
2.7b	Do you accept that all work / costs undertaken prior to completion of a sale is at the purchaser's risk as part of normal due diligence?	Yes
2.8	If you answered Yes to Q2.7, please specify technical or due diligence approvals required before a sale can be completed	Building Survey
2.9	Are there any Board/Regulatory or council approvals required for this acquisition?	No
2.10	If you answered Yes to Q2.9, please provide details of what is required and expected timeframe for such approvals to be achieved	
2.11	Is your acquisition subject to achieving planning approval either outline or full?	No
2.12	Please specify the timeframe within which it will be achieved	Choose an item.
3.0	Do you wish to acquire as a Community Asset Transfer?	Yes
<i>If No please go to section 7</i>		
<i>If Yes please answer sections 3 – 7</i>		

Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Land or Property

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

3.1	How long has the organisation been in existence, and what are your objectives?	41 years
3.2	Are you acquiring as a single body or as part of a consortium?	As Single Body
3.3	Please provide details of all other bodies in the Consortium	Click here to enter text.
3.4	Does the organisation have a website? Please provide website address	No Click here to enter text.
<i>The Questions in Section 4 establish whether the organisation meets the applicant eligibility criteria</i>		
4.0	Is the organisation non-political and not engaged in supporting candidates for political office?	Yes
4.1	Does the organisation have an appropriate legal structure? <i>E.G. a registered charity, CIC, Company limited by guarantee, a community co-operative or other.</i>	Yes
4.2	If you answered Yes to Q4.1 please specify which category of body you are?	Registered Charity
4.3	Do you have a Registered Charity Number and/or a Company Number? If you answered Yes to Q 4.3 please provide registered charity and/or company number	Yes NIC108656
4.4	Does the organisation have a constitution that allows for the management/ownership of the buildings or land?	Yes

Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Land or Property

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

4.5	Does the organisation have robust process and protocols in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial Control ○ Financial Reporting & MIS ○ Related Parties ○ Compliance with funding agreements & proper use of fund ○ IT system ○ Corporate Governance ○ Information Security 	Yes
4.6	Does the organisation have robust local connection to the asset ie. Is engaged in economic, environmental, or social regeneration in an area of NI?	Yes
4.7	If you answered Yes to Q4.6 please specify the purpose of your group	We are engaged in social regeneration in the Mid Ulster Area
4.8	Does the organisation you represent provide a service in line with NI Executive's policies?	Yes
4.9	If you answered Yes to Q4.8 please specify which services you provide	Community Regeneration
4.10	What is the proposed use of the asset	Continuation of services provided as a community association
4.11	Indicate what benefits will arise from the proposed use of the asset	Higher numbers of people involved in community and cultural activities with reduced social isolation and increased community engagement.
4.12	Detail how these benefits align with the Draft Programme for Government	Improving wellbeing for all - by tackling disadvantage and driving economic growth.
<i>The Questions in Section 5 establish how much commitment has already been applied to this acquisition and where support has been secured</i>		
5.0	What is the status of your business plan for this acquisition?	In progress, Business Plan 3 - 6 months
5.1	Will you release a copy of the business plan if requested?	Yes

Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Land or Property

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

5.2	Confirm that a sponsor body has endorsed the acquisition subject to approvals.	Yes
5.3	If you answered yes to Q5.2 please provide evidence of this confirmation from the sponsor body and attach when submitting questionnaire	Proposal is going to MUDC and we is in line with their new CAT Policy
6.0	Can you pay full market value?	Yes
6.1	If you answered No to Q6.0 please provide details of what value you might consider	Click here to enter text.
6.2	With regard your answer at Q6.1 please provide a brief summary of the rationale for this position, cross referencing the responses at 2.1a and 2.1.b	Click here to enter text.
7.0	Questionnaire Completed By	Louise Downey Secretary
<p><i>Please ensure you have supplied any supporting documentation when submitting this questionnaire eg.</i></p> <p><i>a. Written confirmation of your sponsor body's support</i></p> <p><i>b. Details of any business plan or case already existing (Max 500 words)</i></p> <p><i>c. High level assessment with reference to the physical suitability, the financial viability and the timeline feasibility regarding your acquisition of this site/property (Max 500 words)</i></p>		

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Report on	Development Report
Date of Meeting	13 th June 2024
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Assistant Director of Development
Contact Officers	Philip Clarke – Neighbourhood Development Manager, Catherine Fox – Arts Development Manager, Brian McCormick – Seamus Heaney HomePlace Manager, Martina Totten – Social Inclusion Manager, Denise Smith – Diversity & Integration Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to update members and seek approval for the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling Community Grant Awards • PCSP Plan 2024 - 24 • Development Department -Update
2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>Community Grants – Sports Representative Grant</p> <p>Members are advised that the grants assessment panel have received and assessed 1 application for Team Sports Representative Grant and 8 Individual Sports Representative applications. Please see attached in Appendix 1 grant award recommendations.</p>
2.2	<p>PCSP Plan 2024 - 24</p> <p>PCSP submits an annual plan to DOJ and NIPB for funding. Please see attached plan for information at Appendix 2.</p>
2.3	<p>Development Update</p> <p><u>Neighbourhood/Community Development</u></p> <p>Community Grants – letters of offer have been issued to all community grant recipients.</p> <p>The next stage of the community grants for Good Relations and Local Community Festivals Grant will open on 6th June for applications, for a 3 week period.</p>

The Community Development Strategy is being progressed and an engagement session with members being planned.

Covid Small Settlement projects – Coalisland Canal – A DEA meeting on the engagement feedback has been scheduled and design options will be presented. Moy design is being progressed based on engagement with key agencies and post PAN analysis.

Railway Park – The next stage of the capital planning process is currently being completed, with an Addendum to the OBC. This will be considered by the Capital Planning Board and SMT, before being presented to P&R Committee for final funding.

Gortgonis – The Department of Education has indicated that they are moving forward with the development of the site. Officers are currently reviewing and updating all legal matters, as well as designs. Update concept designs will be shared with DEA members before further discussions with relevant community stakeholders. Final concept designs will then be presented to committee, for approval to move to next stage of the Capital Planning process.

Connecting Pomeroy – The Forest building launch is 30th May, the building will formally open 3rd week of June – to allow for all policies, process and systems to be confirmed. The Forest Park Magical Kingdom will officially open at this time also to allow for seeding to 'take'. Officers are aware that the site has been accessed by the public and one piece of equipment not complete has been formally fenced off. Logistical management of the site is being finalized – updated signage at roadway, pull in laybys being created, potential additional green car park space being identified, warden support at key times to manage traffic flow.

Social Inclusion

The delivery of the Test and Learn phase for Community Wealth Building is ending. A final report with learning and recommendations for strategy and action plan development will be presented to the CWB working group on 19th June. It will be brought to the next Development Committee.

The delivery of the Anti-Poverty Plan is continuing with a Family Fayre and Pre-loved Market taking place in Meadowbank on Saturday 15th June, in partnership with the Waste and Sustainability team. Families will be able to sell and buy pre-loved baby and children's items such as prams, cots, clothes, toys etc. There will also be family fun activities, information stands and demos, all focused on families.

Good Relations & Peace

The new plan for Good Relations 2024 – 25 has been submitted to TEO for funding, no further update at this time. Pre development work has commenced across the programmes to be ready for funding.

An update has been received that an outcome on the submitted Peace Plus application will be received September 2024. Some minor queries on the programme delivery are being addressed. Pre programme development has commenced.

	<p><u>Burnavon Arts Centre</u> The Spring/Summer programme as previously noted was sold out. The development of the Autumn programme is ongoing. Ongoing support and engagement is taking place with our local strategic arts partners, and shared marketing.</p> <p><u>Seamus Heaney Homeplace</u> The Education Programme has had some 42 primary and post primary schools visit during the period from all over NI and beyond. The Key Stage 5 delivery has been rolled out utilising professors and lecturers from QUB, UU, and industry specialists, supported by PhD students from both universities. Open Ground is the platform for two workshops commencing in April, with one in partnership with RSPB. External agencies such as National Trust, HSC, PHA and local business continue to use the facilities at HomePlace for a range of meetings and conferences. In addition, The Helicon has hosted many successful shows over the period.</p> <p><u>Hill of The O’Neill & Ranfurly House</u> The Hill of The O’Neill & Ranfurly House plan is being delivered, alongside new marketing material for the range of delivery – Heritage, Park, Conferencing (weddings), Events, and Community use. These will be shared with members over the next coming weeks.</p> <p>A position paper for the Mast is being prepared with Venturei. A further update meeting with DEA members is scheduled to get the key arguments to address the mast. There has been correspondence received from the NI Water stating they cannot engage at this time, this is currently being challenged.</p> <p><u>Regional and Minority Language</u> The new plan has commenced roll out. Letters of offer for community delivery have been issued, and engagement on the bursaries agreed taking place. Ongoing support to the delivery of the signage plan is taking place.</p> <p><u>PCSP</u> No minutes.</p>
3.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Community Grants – Sports Representative – team award- £400 and Individual awards - £1700</p> <p>Human: NA</p> <p>Risk Management: NA</p>
	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p>

3.2	Equality & Good Relations Implications: NA
	Rural Needs Implications: NA
4	Recommendations
4.1	Members are recommended to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve the Community Grant Awards for Sports Representative Grant (ii) Note the PCSP Annual Plan 2024- 25 (iii) Note the Development update.
5	List of Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Community Grant Awards – ‘Sports Representative Grant Appendix 2 – PCSP Annual Plan 2024 – 25

Appendix 1 Community Grants Allocation

Team Sports Awards - June 2024 (Maximum £500)

No	Applicant Name	Sport discipline	Title Of Event/project	Band	Requested	Awarded
1	Michael Davitt GAC	Camogie	Regional Camogie Feile competition, Mullingar	3	£500	£400
					TOTAL	£400

Individual Sports Awards - June 2024 (Maximum £250)

No	Applicant Name	Sport discipline	Title Of Event/project	Band	Requested	Awarded
1	Jacqueline O'Neill	Darts	Europe Cup Slovakia	1	£250	£250
2	Bradley Rodgers	Taekwon-Do	Open ITF Taekwon-Do World Championship	2	£250	£225
3	Valerie Cappell	Indoor Hockey	Masters Indoor Hockey World Cup event in Nottingham	2	£250	£225
4	Oliver Briggs	Gymnastics	Inter-Regional Challenge Cup Final 2024, Birmingham.	3	£250	£200
5	Benjamin Briggs	Gymnastics	Inter-Regional Challenge Cup Final 2024, Birmingham	3	£250	£200
6	Thomas Briggs	Gymnastics	Scalabis Cup, Portugal	3	£250	£200
7	Hannah Briggs	Gymnastics	Scalabis Cup, Portugal	3	£250	£200
8	Flynn Hasson	Golf	US KIDS European Championship	3	£250	£200
9	Evie Duncan	Hockey	4 Nations tournament to Belgium		Ineligible as application made after event	
10	Katie Clarke	Equestrian	Pony Club UK - Dodson and Horrell National Quiz Final		Ineligible as not a sporting event	
					TOTAL	£1700

Score	Band	Team	Individual
91 - 100	1	£500	£250
81 - 90	2	£450	£225
71 - 80	3	£400	£200
61 - 70	4	£350	£175



Policing & Community
Safety Partnership

making Mid Ulster safer

Action Plan 2024-25

CONTENTS

Introduction 2

Mid Ulster Area Profile 10

Statistics..... 11

Community Audit 24

Community Survey 24

Youth Survey..... 40

Agewell Survey..... 50

PCSP Strategic Plan 2022-25..... 53

Turning the Curve 56

Action Plan 60

Acronyms.....

Introduction

Background

Mid Ulster Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) is a statutory body established under the Justice Act Northern Ireland 2011.

The aim of the PCSP is to help make the Mid Ulster community safer by focusing on the policing and community safety issues that matter most. The Partnership is funded by the Department of Justice (DoJ) and the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) through the Joint Committee.

To help make our community safer Mid Ulster PCSP will:

- Consult and engage with the local community on the issues of concern in relation to policing and community safety. The Policing Committee has a responsibility to provide views to the relevant district commander and the Policing Board on policing matters.
- Identify and prioritise the particular issues of concern and prepare plans for how these can be tackled.
- Monitor – a Policing Committee comprising the political and independent members will monitor the performance of the police and work to gain the co-operation of the public with the police in preventing crime.
- Deliver a reduction in crime and enhance community safety in their district, directly through their own actions, through the work of their delivery groups or through support for the work of others.

The PCSP consists of Councillors, Independent Members, bodies designated by the NI Assembly, and locally designated bodies. The PCSP will consult, develop and agree local action plans that will be delivered through partnership working and based on local needs.

The Policing Committee is formed from the Councillors and Independent members sitting on the PCSP. The purpose of the Policing Committee is to provide views on policing in their area, monitoring the performance of the Police against the local Policing Plan and ensure the Police deliver against local

priorities and take forward work to gain the co-operation of the public with the police in preventing crime and enhancing community safety within the district. This will complement the work of the wider PCSP that will take forward initiatives to improve community safety in the local area.

Strategic Plan

Mid Ulster PCSP was requested by the Joint Committee (Department of Justice and NI Policing Board) to develop a strategic assessment and action plan for 2022-25.

The Joint Committee has agreed three Strategic Priorities for PCSPs.

Strategic Priority 1 – To ensure effective delivery in response to local need, and improve the visibility and recognition of the work of the PCSP through effective consultation, communication and engagement

through:

- *carrying out meaningful engagement in the district with the local community, relevant statutory partners / agencies, businesses and the community & voluntary sector in the development and implementation of PCSP Action Plans;*
- *ensuring ongoing two-way engagement in the district with the local community, relevant statutory partners / agencies, businesses and the community & voluntary sector to provide a problem-solving forum to identify effective solutions to local issues, ensuring sufficient flexibility to address issues as they emerge, and seeking relevant expertise from the designated organisations as appropriate;*
- *using a range of platforms, including multi-media, to communicate and promote the work of the PCSP; and*
- *increasing awareness of the work of the PCSP.*

Strategic Priority 2 - To improve community safety by prioritising and addressing local community safety issues, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour

through

- utilising the partnership created by the statutory, elected and independent/ community membership of the PCSP to initiate and lead work to improve community safety and tackle ASB locally;
- working in partnership to develop outcome and locality focused interventions to address the most pressing crime types and behaviours impacting local community safety, as evidenced by local need, with appropriate targets and indicators so that impacts can be measured;
- drawing on best practice, promote early intervention and collaborating effectively to improve PCSP-supported projects and programmes that address the underlying causes of ASB, crime and the fear of crime in the community, including, where appropriate, a focus on changing behaviours;
- enhancing safety and feelings of safety, in particular for those who might be more vulnerable;
- engaging with partners in the district, to horizon scan in order to respond to and re-direct resources to respond to emerging local community safety issues;
- having cognisance of the Community Safety Framework in developing local plans, and providing a feedback loop to the Community Safety Board on local issues in order to inform community safety policy development – and vice versa; and
- providing comprehensive community input into decision making processes about tackling actual and perceived anti-social behaviour and giving feedback to the community on the effectiveness of interventions on meeting outcomes.

Strategic Priority 3 – To support confidence in policing, including through collaborative problem solving with communities

through

- ensuring local accountability through the Policing Committee’s role in monitoring police performance;
- identifying priorities from the PCSP Plan for consideration in the development of the local Policing Plan which are consistent with the Northern Ireland Policing Plan;
- providing views to the District Commander through the Policing Committee and supporting the PSNI to engage with the community to identify and address local problems;
- delivering initiatives that link to identified local problems that impact confidence in policing;
- carrying out meaningful local events aimed at increasing PSNI engagement with local communities to build and strengthen public confidence in policing;
- delivering PCSP initiatives in the hardest to reach communities;
- providing a platform for the PCSP and PSNI to engage with young people, including on the themes of upholding the rule of law, and of ways of increasing confidence in policing; and
- building community confidence in the rule of law by helping mitigate the harm caused to people and communities by paramilitarism, criminality and organised crime consistent with wider Programme for Government objectives and through use of co-design principles, where appropriate.

1.1 The Strategic Priorities may however be reviewed at any time by Joint Committee to ensure that they are fit for purpose in relation to the effectiveness of PCSPs.

1.2 In addressing the three Strategic Priorities, PCSPs are required to take account of a number of developments, including:

(a) The Community Safety Framework

The purpose of the Community Safety Framework is to ensure effective connectivity between the community safety work of the responsible agencies and provide an operational roadmap on how to collectively deliver the safer community objectives set out in the PfG and Community Plans, whilst providing the mechanism to respond proactively and reactively to operational need.

The Framework can be viewed at:

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/community-safety-framework>

(b) The Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-2025 and Annual Performance Plan 2020/2021

The Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-2025 and the Annual Performance Plan 2020/2021 were developed using the principles of Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA). They outline Outcomes, Indicators and Measures which clearly demonstrate improvement in police performance, in line with the draft Programme for Government (PfG).

The Policing Plan contains three outcomes for policing over the next five years:

- We have a safe community;
- We have confidence in policing; and
- We have engaged and supportive communities.

These outcomes are underpinned by 9 indicators, which will quantify the achievement of the outcome, and 11 measures which will be used to evaluate how well PSNI are performing in 2020/21. The indicators and measures are outlined in detail in the Annual Performance Plan for 2020/21.

The Northern Ireland Policing Plan and current Annual Performance Plan can be viewed at:

https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/sites/nipb/files/publications/policing-plan-2020-25-and-annual-performace-plan202122_0.pdf

(c) Criminal Justice Inspection NI report “[Working together for Safer Communities: A review of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships in Northern Ireland](#)”.

In August 2019 the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) published its findings¹ for its most recent PCSP inspection.

The positive contribution made by Police and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) to improving community safety and engagement with the police, has been highlighted in a new report.

However, the Deputy Chief Inspector said PCSPs had the capacity to develop further and CJI has made seven recommendations to enhance their profile, governance and operational arrangements.

(d) Public Satisfaction with PCSPs

The Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey was cancelled indefinitely from 2018. To gauge public satisfaction with PCSPs, consider conducting local PCSP Community Surveys or refer to the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey at www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/

¹ <http://www.cjini.org/getattachment/010eb06d-a1b7-46b9-85cd-50af58cb6f98/Policing-and-Community-Safety-Partnerships.aspx>

The Northern Ireland Safe Community Survey (NISCS), previously known as the Northern Ireland Crime Survey, may also be used. This is a representative, continuous, personal interview survey of the experiences and perceptions of crime of approximately 4,000 adults living in private households throughout Northern Ireland.

All the published findings for Perceptions of Crime can be accessed at: [Perceptions of Crime Publications | Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

The **Northern Ireland Safe Community Survey** can be accessed from: <http://nics.intranet.nigov.net/nics/news/experience-crime-findings-201920-northern-ireland-safe-community-survey>

(e) Together: Building a United Community

The Northern Ireland Executive's Good Relations Strategy, Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC), which was launched by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in May 2013, has four key priorities:

- Our Children and Young People;
- Our Shared Community;
- Our Safe Community; and
- Our Cultural Expression.

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/topics/good-relations-and-social-change/together-building-united-community-tbuc>

(f) Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality, and Organised Crime Programme

The Executive is currently implementing Phase two of the Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality, and Organised Crime Programme. The

Programme is aiming to build safer communities resilient to paramilitarism, criminality, and coercive control. This includes work to keep people safe from the harm caused by paramilitary groups and work to build resilience among individuals and communities.

Information about the Phase 2 can be accessed from:

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/executive-programme-tackling-paramilitary-activity-and-organised-crime> and [View the Action Plan and interim review for phase one of the Programme](#)

(g) Community Planning

The Criminal Justice Inspection NI report “PCSPs, A review of governance, delivery and outcomes” recommended that the Community Plan should be the focal point for delivery of the long-term aims of the PCSP and that the action plans of the PCSPs should feed into the Community Plan.

As part of the community planning process, each council area has provided an assurance that PCSPs will be considered as the key delivery mechanism for community safety actions within community plans. Accordingly, actions within the PCSP action plans should align with community safety actions within the community plan.

Mid Ulster Area Profile

Mid Ulster District has seven District Electoral Areas (DEAs), which are subdivisions of the district used for local elections. The DEAs are: Carrtogher, Clogher Valley, Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt, Moyola and Torrent

Population

The estimated population of Mid Ulster Local Government District at the Census 2021 was 150,293, of which 50% were male and 50% were female. This was made up of:

0-14	22%
15-39	32%
40-64	31%
65+	15%

The population of Mid Ulster LGD is projected to increase to 159,208 by mid 2030.

Economic Activity

In 2021 Census, 61% were in employment, and 2% were unemployed. 37% were economically inactive (people who are neither in employment nor unemployed). This group includes, for example, all those who were looking after a home or retired, long-term sick or disabled.

Qualification Level

In the Census 2021 29% were qualified to Degree level or above whilst 27% had 'no qualifications'

Statistics

Official PSNI recorded statistics were obtained from NISRA. These statistics are presented in graphs. Each graph has a line that outlines the overall trend and future trend forecast for each crime type/incident.

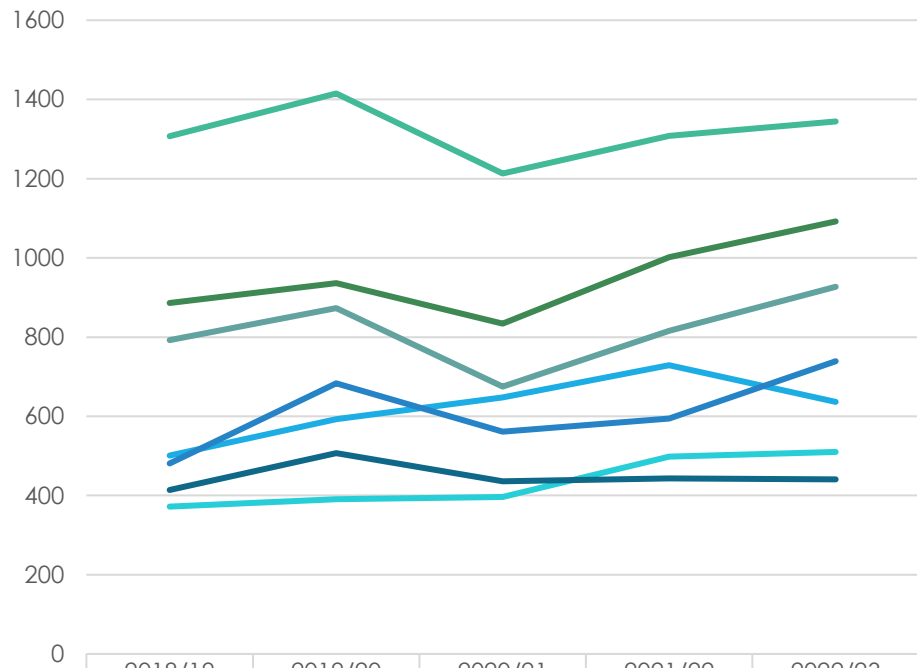
Recorded Crime

The figures for overall recorded crime have increased slightly since 2015/15 In 2019/20 the figure increased but subsequently fell in 2020/21 and then increased again in 2021/22 and 2022/23. This has pushed up the trend forecast.



The DEAs (District Electoral Areas) with the highest rate of Recorded Crime are Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt respectively. These can be viewed on the chart overleaf.

Recorded Crime - All Offences (by DEA)

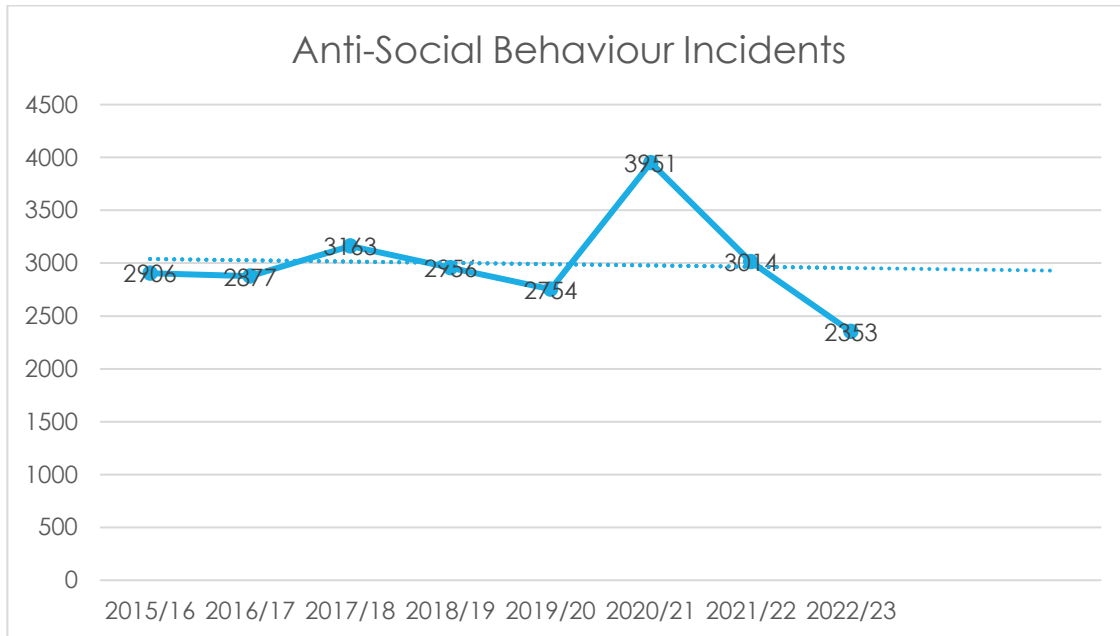


	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Torrent	501	593	648	729	636
Clogher Valley	481	683	561	594	739
Moyola	372	391	396	498	510
Dungannon	1,307	1,415	1,213	1,308	1,344
Cookstown	886	936	834	1,002	1,092
Magherafelt	792	873	675	816	927
Carrntogher	414	507	436	443	441

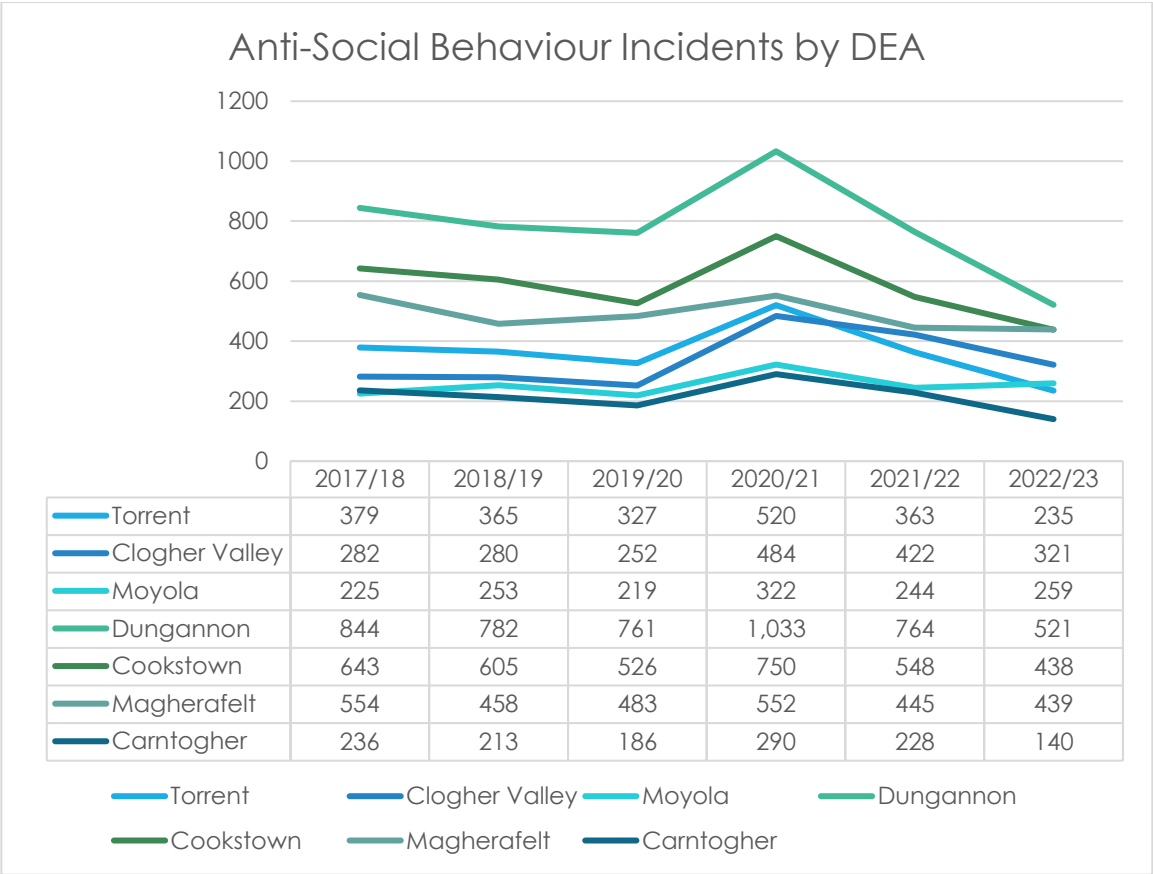
— Torrent — Clogher Valley — Moyola — Dungannon
— Cookstown — Magherafelt — Carrntogher

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) Statistics

Since 2018/19 the incidents of ASB have overall reduced across the Mid Ulster district. The figures spiked in 2020/21, this was due to the inclusion of Covid offences. For 2021/22 and 2022/23 the figures are reduced and the trend line demonstrates a downward trend for ASB.

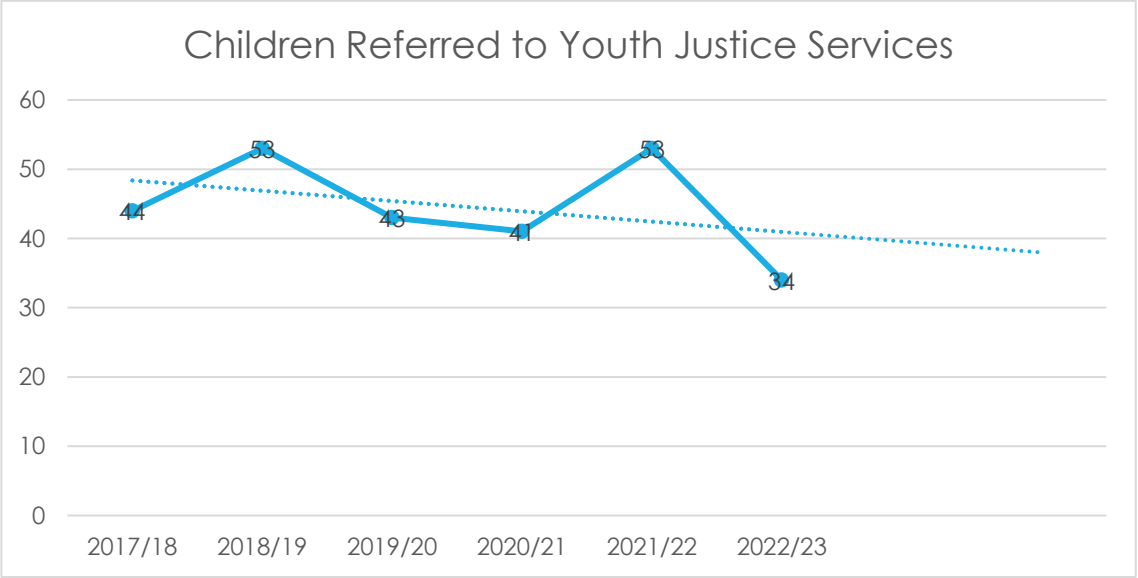


The three DEAs with the largest recorded incidents of ASB are Dungannon, Cookstown, and Magherafelt. The chart with ASB incidents in DEAs can be viewed overleaf. The recorded incidents for each of these DEAs have all dropped significantly since 2020/21



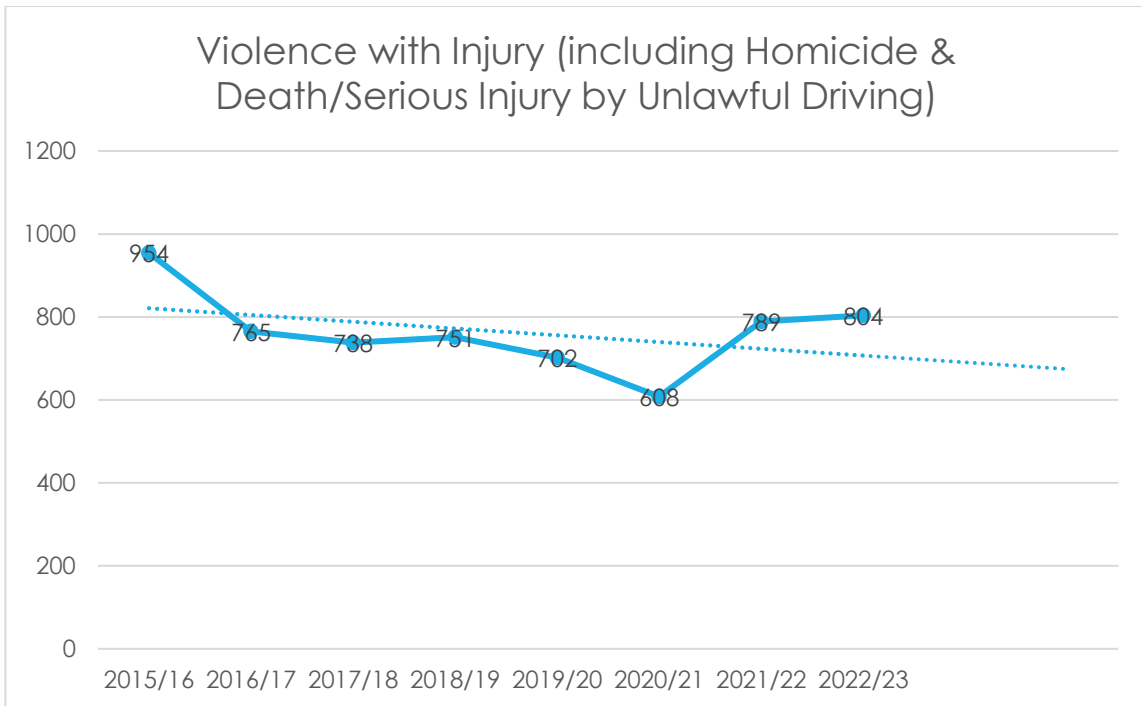
Youth Justice Agency

The statistics for the numbers of young people referred to the Youth Justice Services shows a steady level since 2017/81. The trend forecast is that figures will decline slightly.

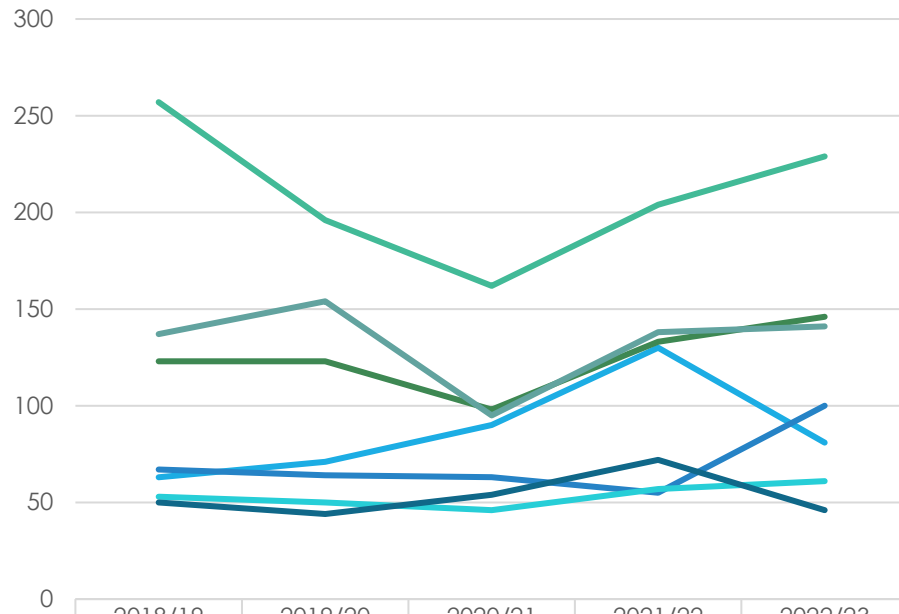


Violence with Injury

Overall, Violence with injury (including homicide) has increased in the district in the last two years. The trend forecast highlights that figures will overall decrease.



Violence with Injury (including Homicide & Death/Serious Injury by Unlawful Driving)

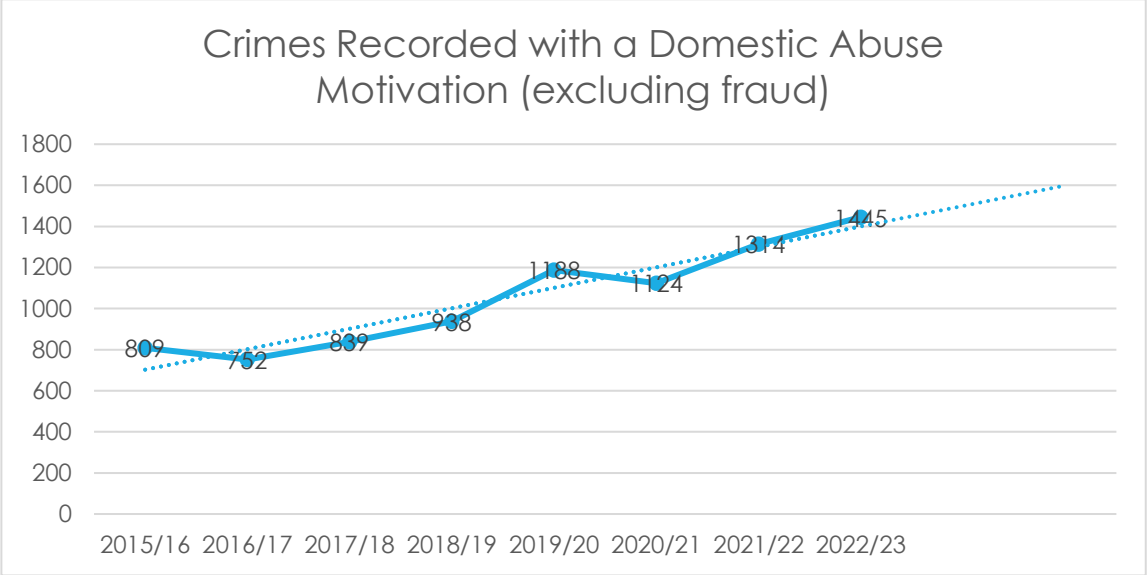


	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Torrent	63	71	90	130	81
Clogher Valley	67	64	63	55	100
Moyola	53	50	46	57	61
Dungannon	257	196	162	204	229
Cookstown	123	123	98	133	146
Magherafelt	137	154	95	138	141
Carrtoghher	50	44	54	72	46

— Torrent — Clogher Valley — Moyola — Dungannon
— Cookstown — Magherafelt — Carrtoghher

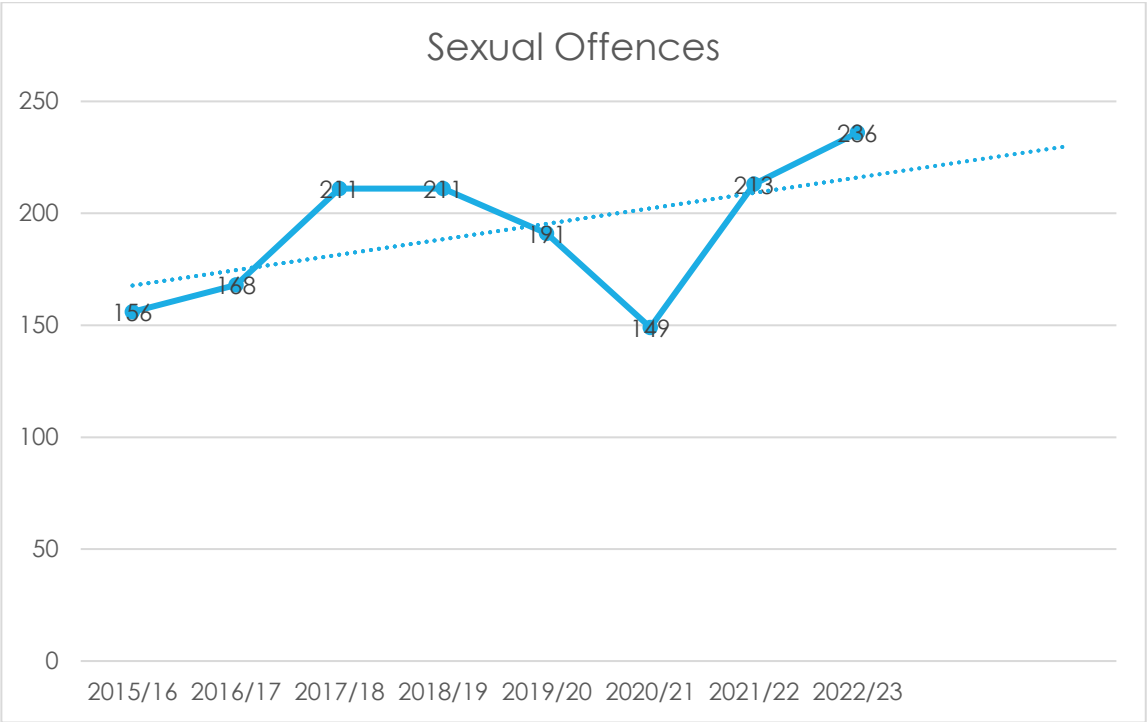
Domestic Abuse

Since 2015/16 reported crimes with a Domestic Abuse motivation (excluding fraud) have increased in the district. The trend forecast is that figures will continue to increase.



Sexual Offences

The trend for Sexual Offences is slightly increasing as offences have increased in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The trendline highlights that will continue to increase



Stalking and Harassment

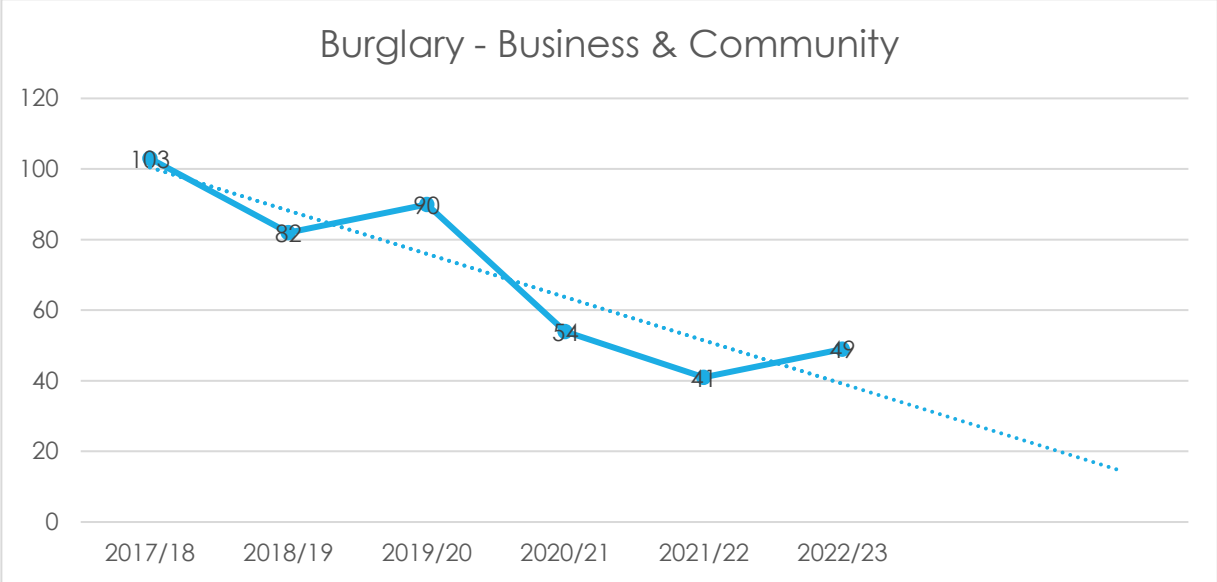
The figures demonstrate an increase in reported incidents of stalking and harassment in the district.

The Protection from Stalking Act (NI) 2022 became law on the 26th April 2022. It creates a new specific offence of stalking, capturing conduct and acts associated with stalking behaviour, and will be better focused on recognising the fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated nature of stalking behaviours and the particular risks associated with stalking.



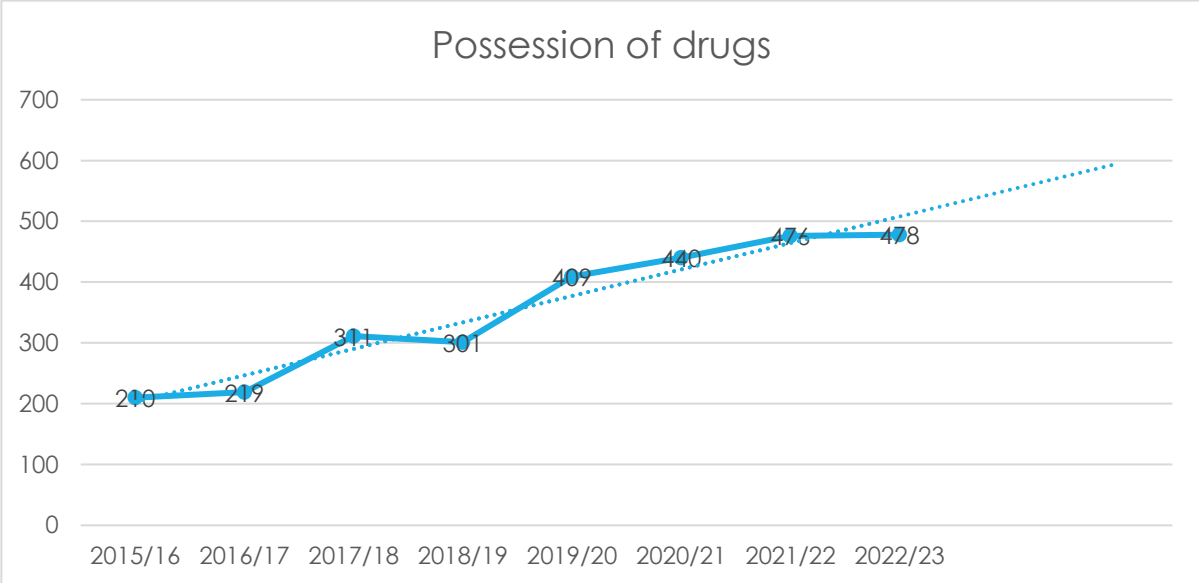
Domestic Burglary

Overall, Burglary for Business & Community has decreased in the district. The trend forecast is downward. Please note that the method of recording Burglaries changed in 2017/18.

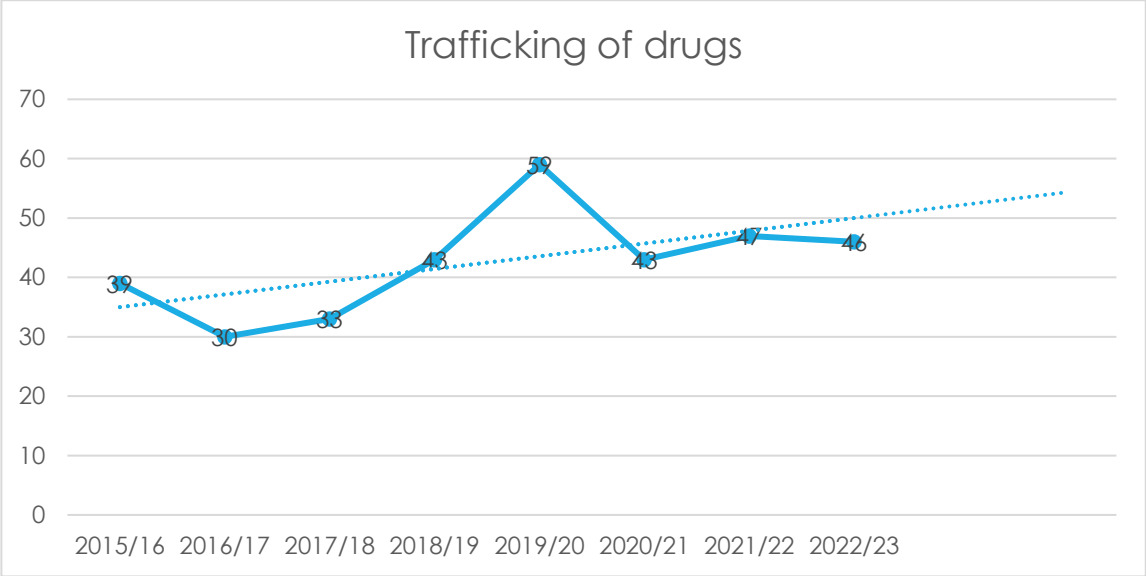


Possession of Drugs

Possession of Drugs has increased from 2015/16. The trend forecast is that figures will continue to increase.

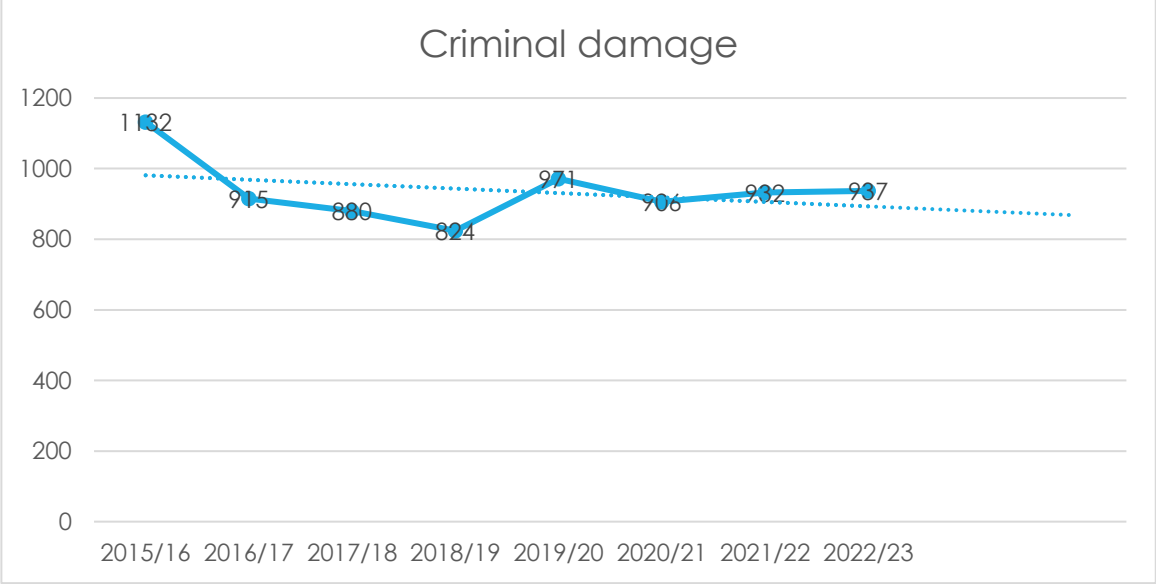


Trafficking of drugs has increased slightly in the Mid Ulster area since 2015/16. The trend forecast is upwards.



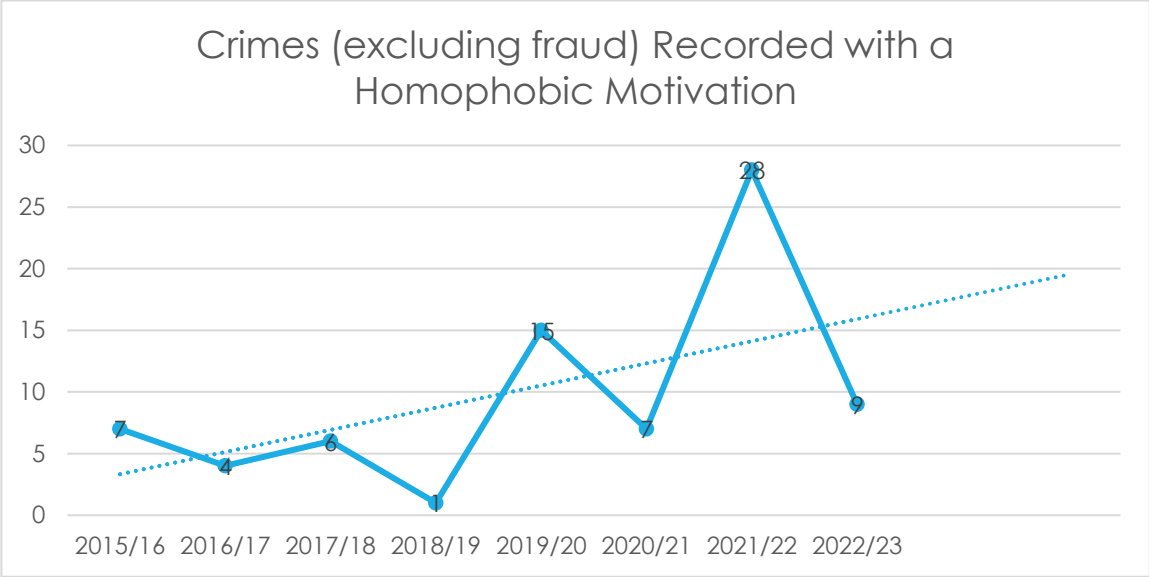
Criminal Damage

Criminal Damage has reduced since 2015/16 across the Mid Ulster area. The trend forecast is that figures will continue to reduce.

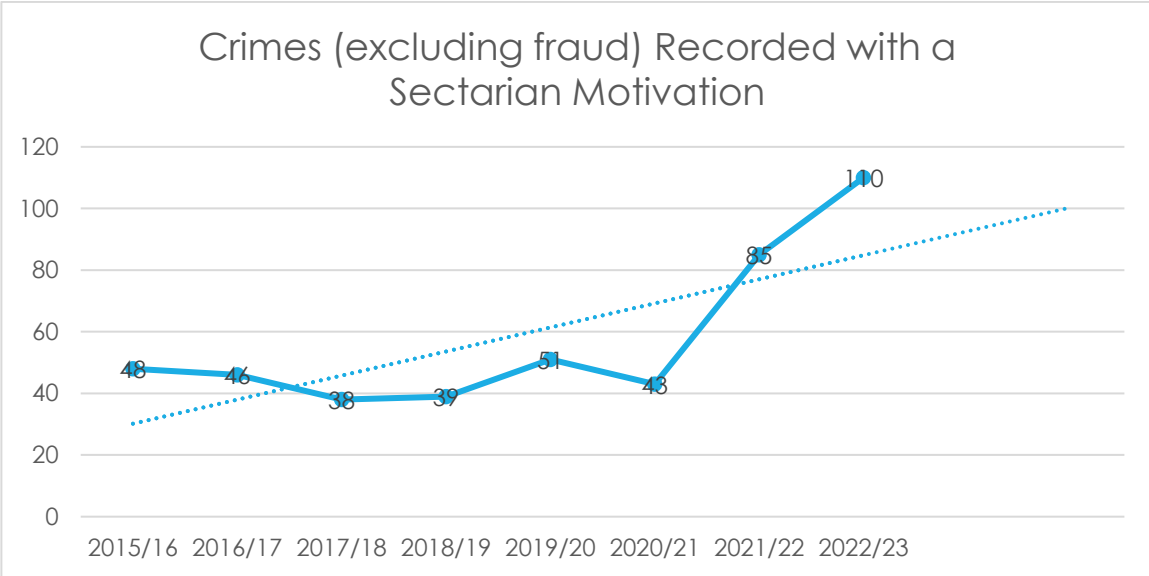


Hate Crime

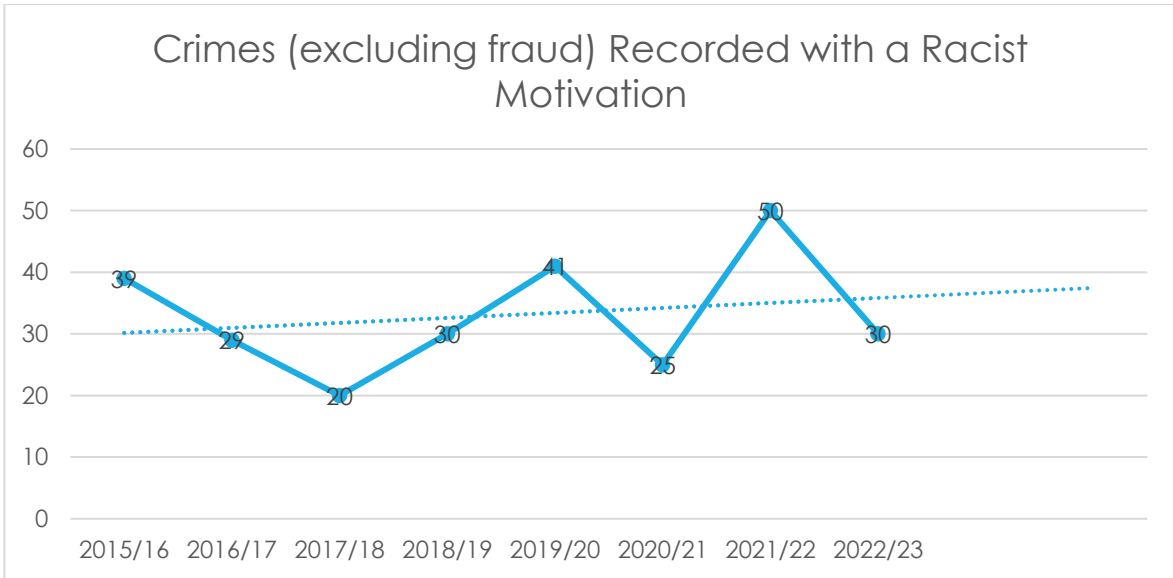
Recorded Hate Crime with Homophobic motivation has increased in 2021/22. The trend forecast is up.



Recorded Hate Crime with a Sectarian motivation has increased in 2021/22. The trend forecast has increased slightly.

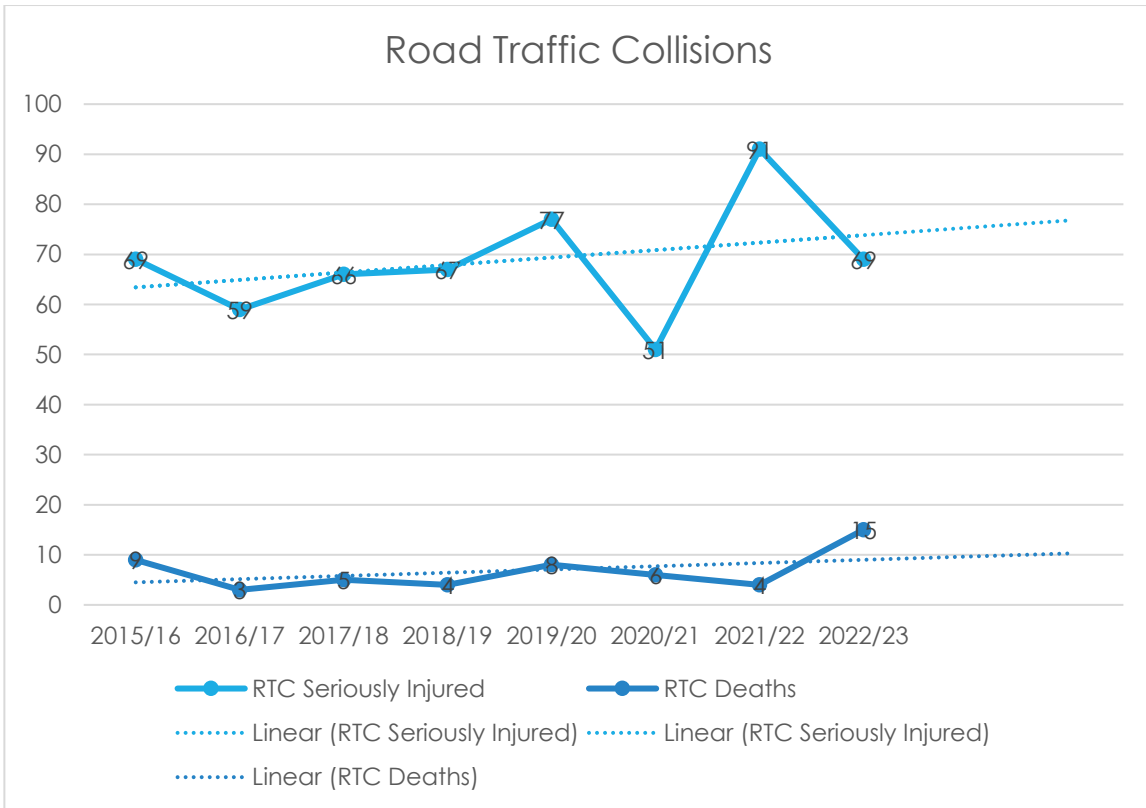


Recorded Hate Crime with a Racist motivation has varied from 2015/16. The current trend forecast is flat, overleaf.



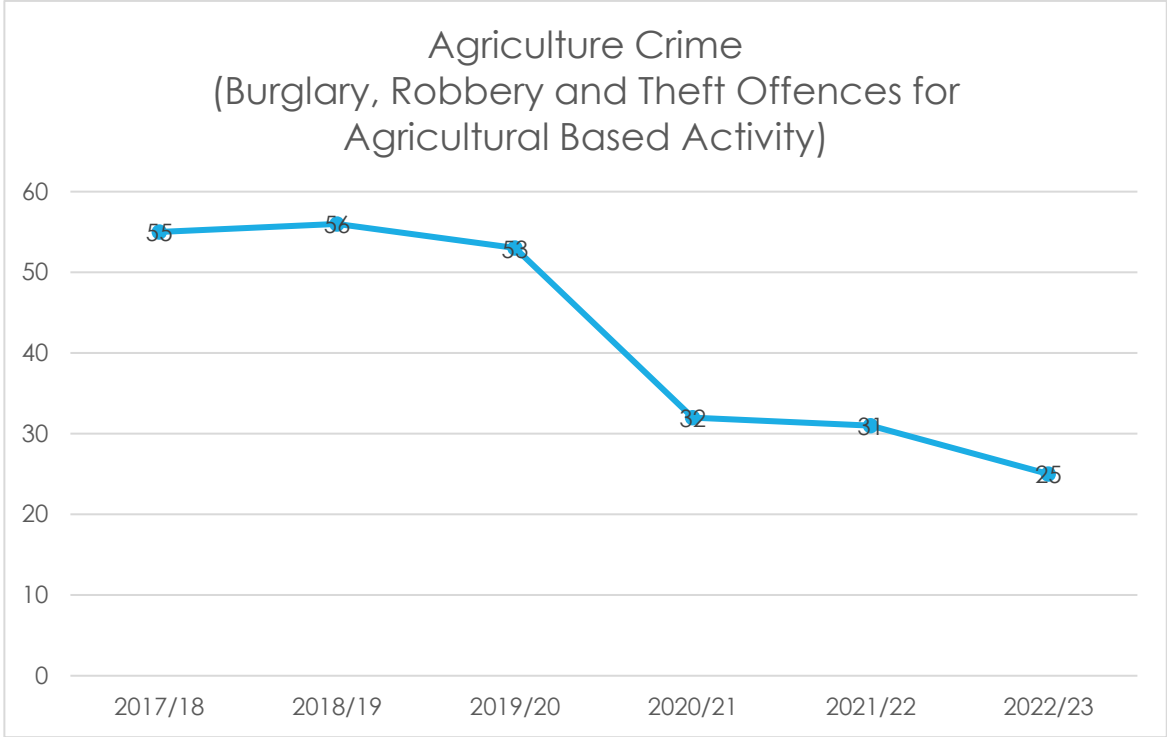
Road Traffic Collisions

Road traffic collisions has increased slightly in previous years, with a slightly upward trend line.



Agriculture Crime

Agriculture crime has decreased significantly in the past three years in the district.



Community Audit

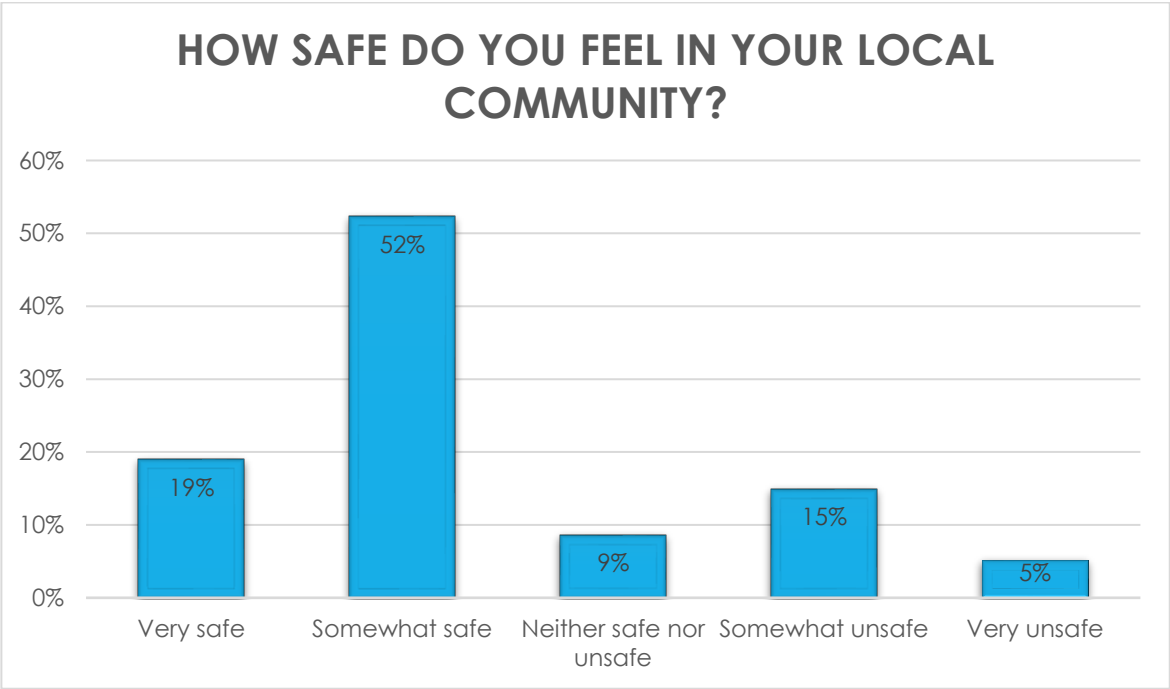
To assist PCSP members three specific community consultation surveys were undertaken in November and December 2021; a general community survey, youth survey, and an older persons survey.

Community Survey

This survey was promoted through social media utilising all PCSP members accounts and also the text alert system. 176 people responded to this survey.

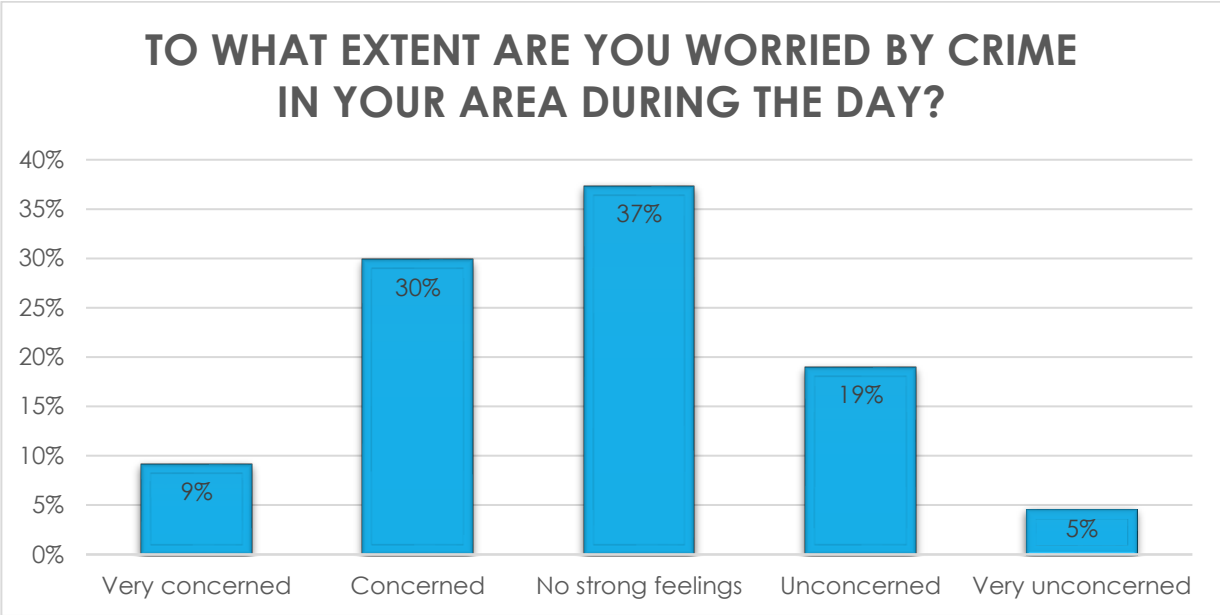
Safety

71% stated that they feel safe or very safe in their community. 20% stated that they felt unsafe or very unsafe

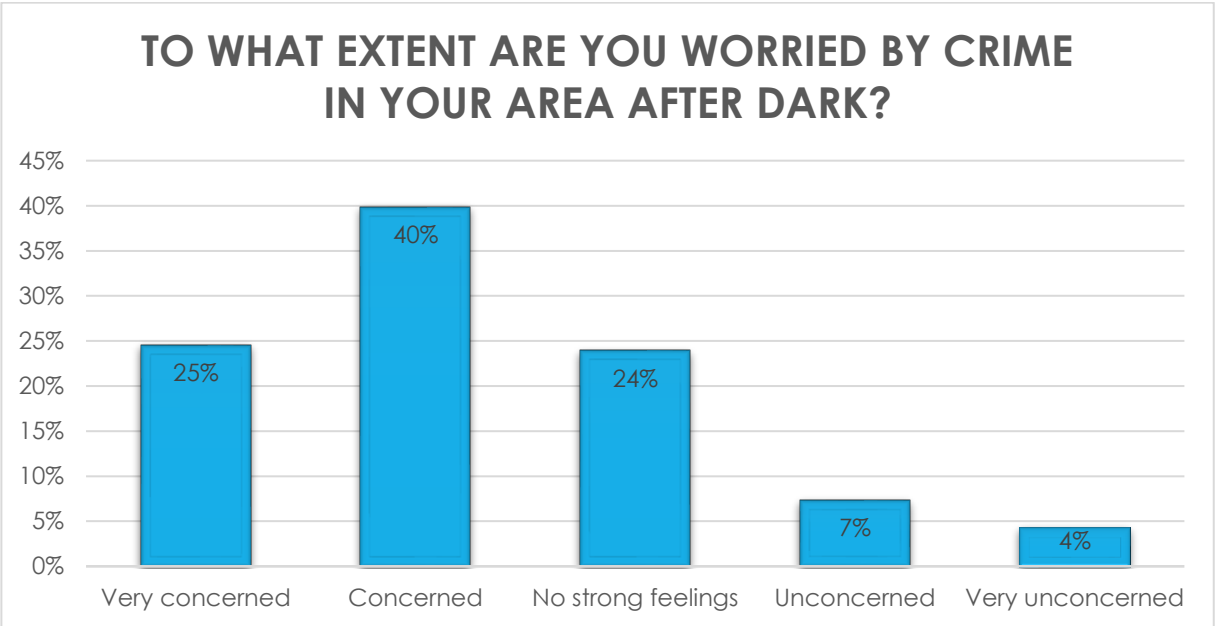


Fear of Crime

39% of respondents stated that they concerned or very concerned by crime in their area during the day



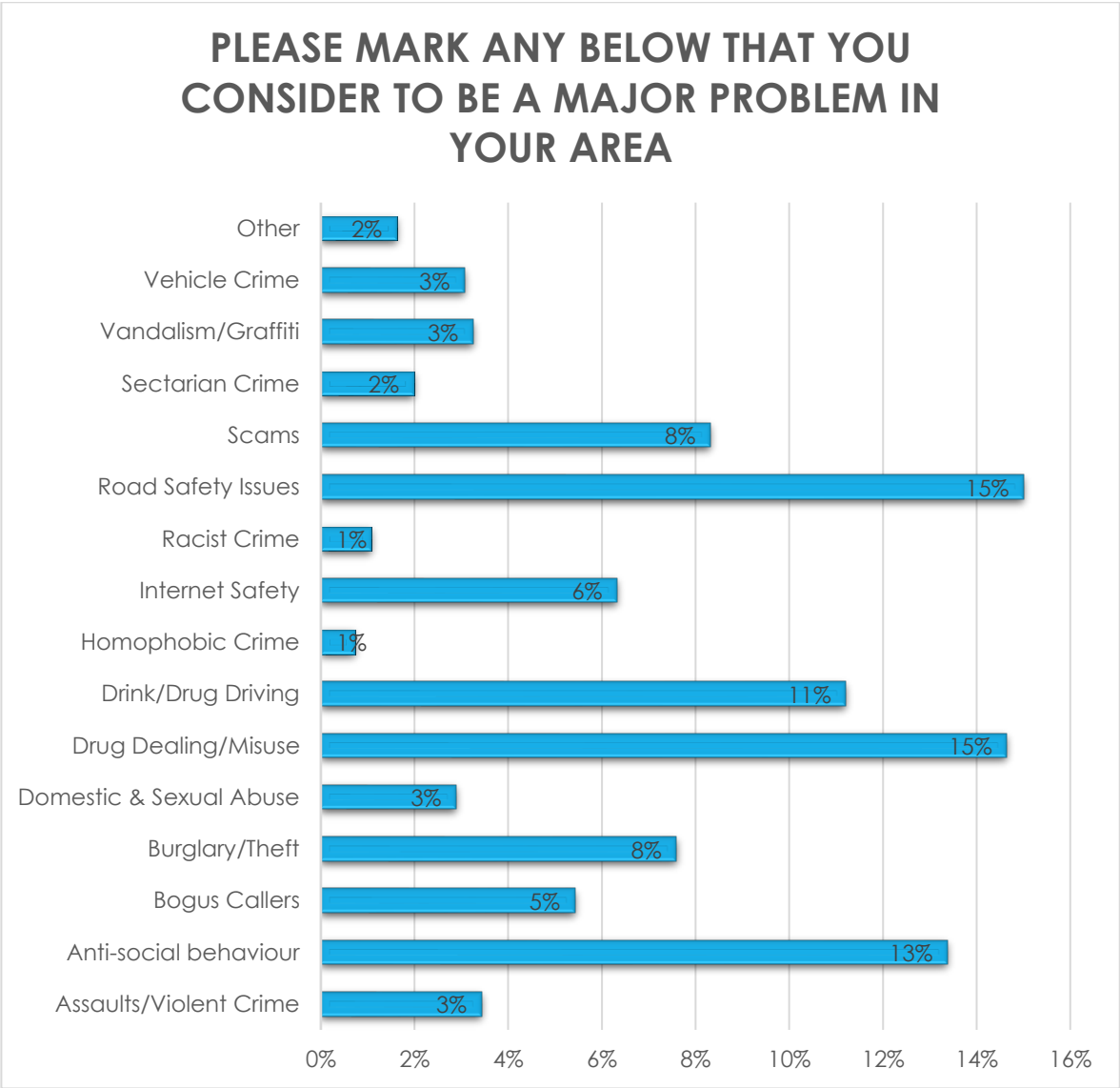
65% of respondents stated that they concerned or very concerned by crime in their area at night.



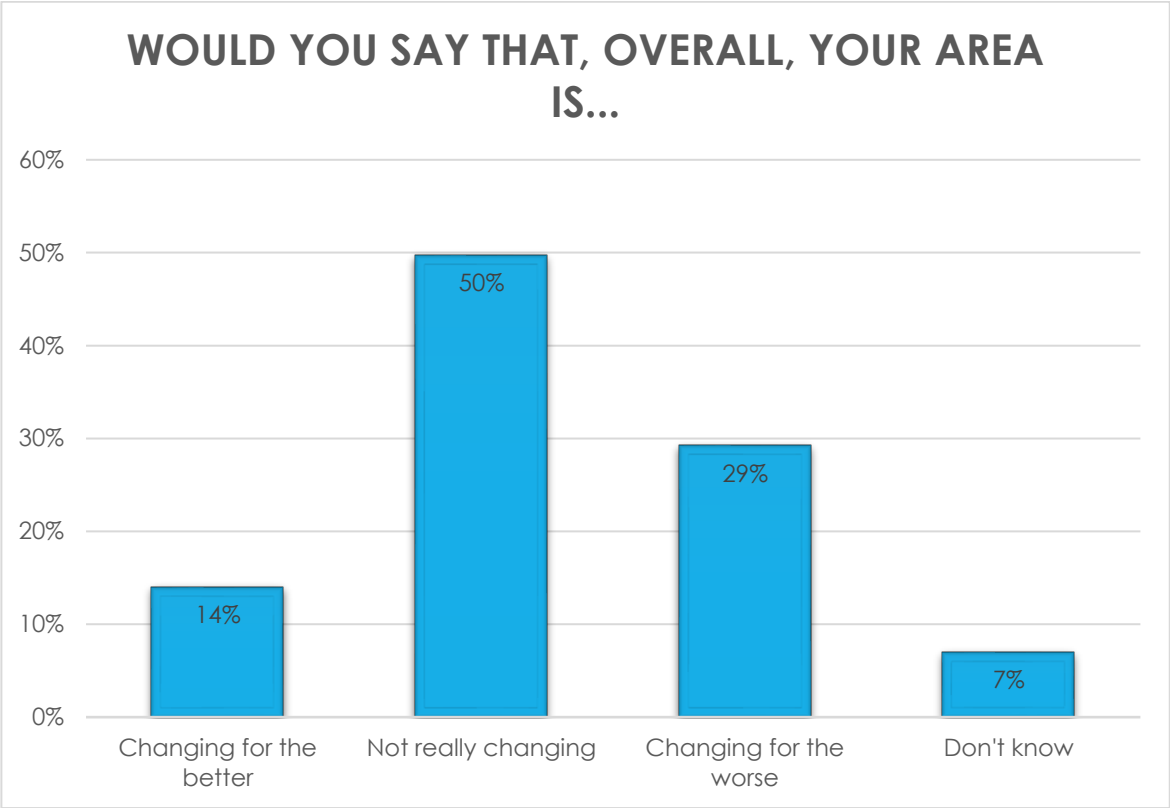
Perceptions of Crime

Respondents stated they considered the following to be major problems in their area.

- 1. Road Safety Issues 15%
- 2. Drug Dealing/Misuse 15%
- 2. Anti-social Behaviour 13%
- 4. Drink/Drug Driving 11%
- 5. Scams 8%
- 6. Burglary/Theft 8%



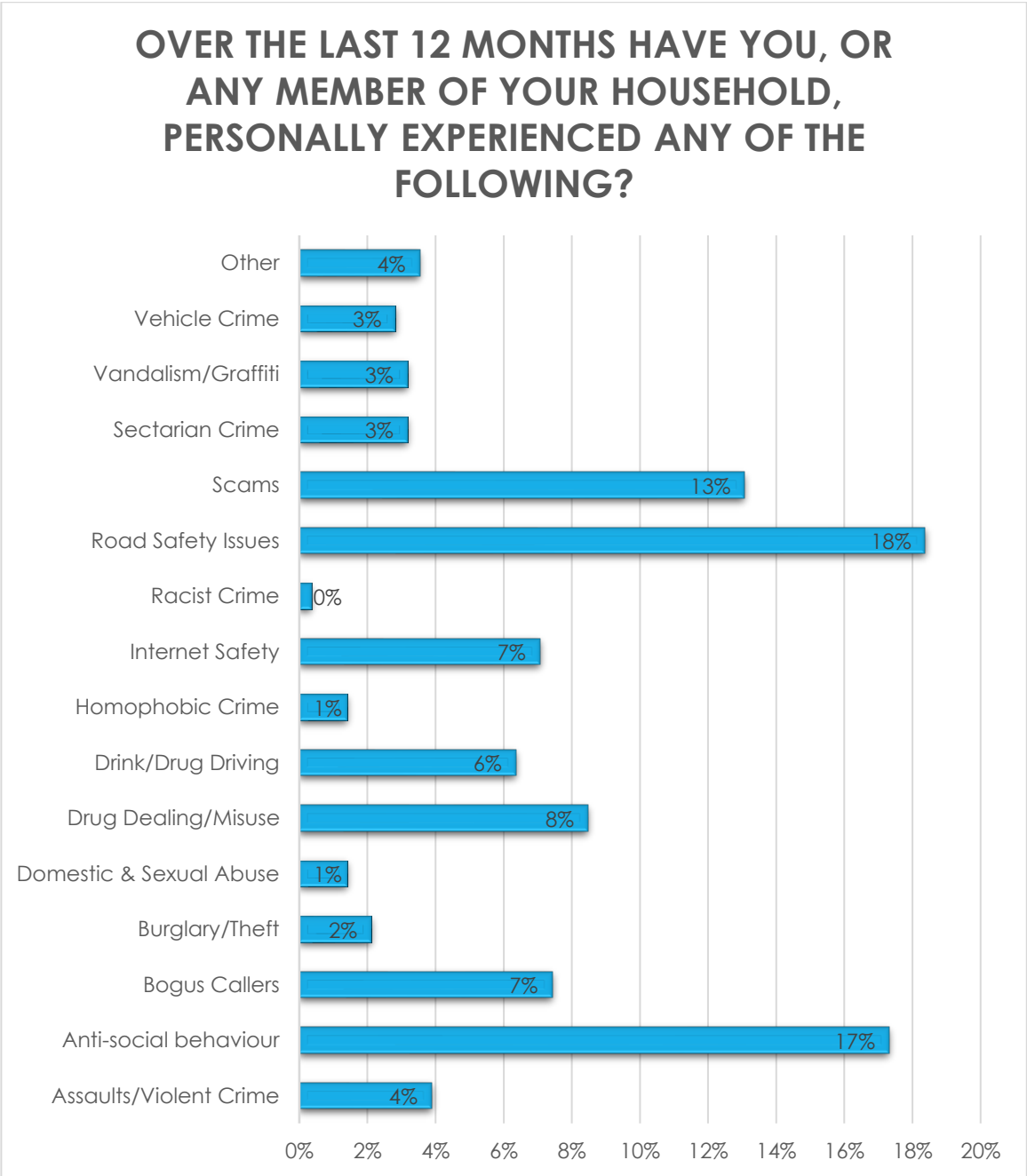
64% of respondents stated their area was changing for the better or not really changing. 29% stated that their area was changing for the worse



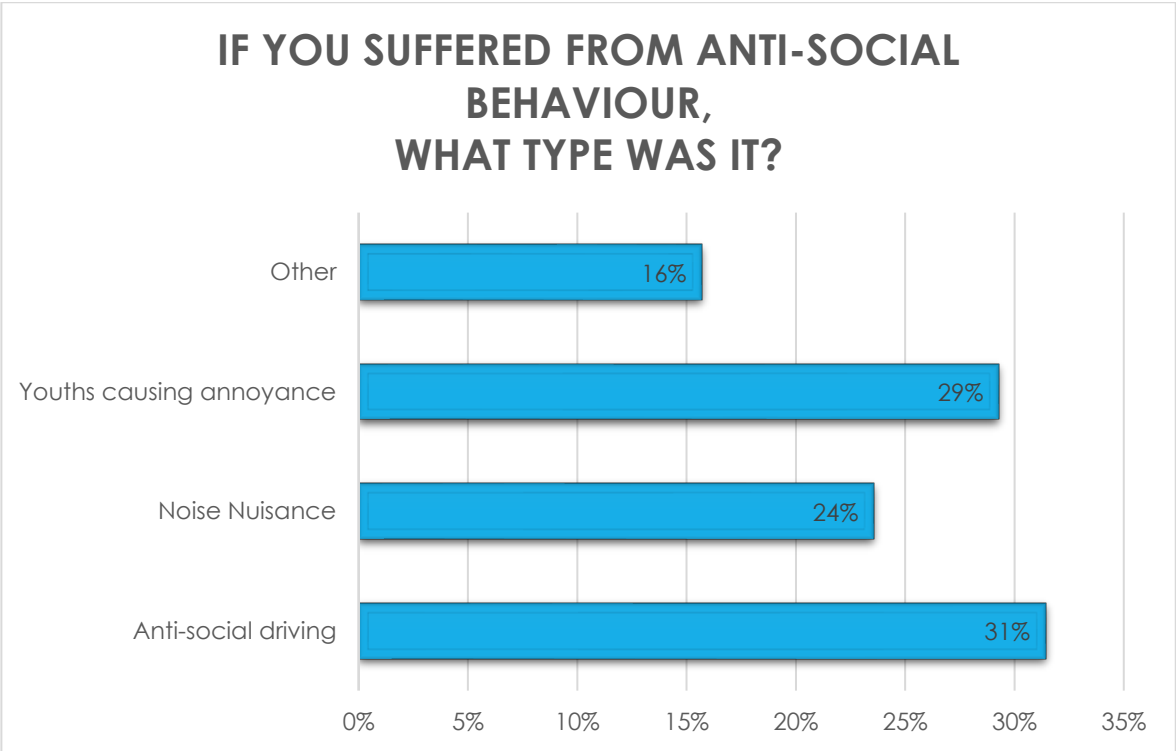
Experience of Crime

Respondents stated that, over the preceding 12 months, they or a member of their household personally experienced the following:

- 1. Road Safety Issues 18%
- 2. Anti-social Behaviour 17%
- 3. Scams 13%

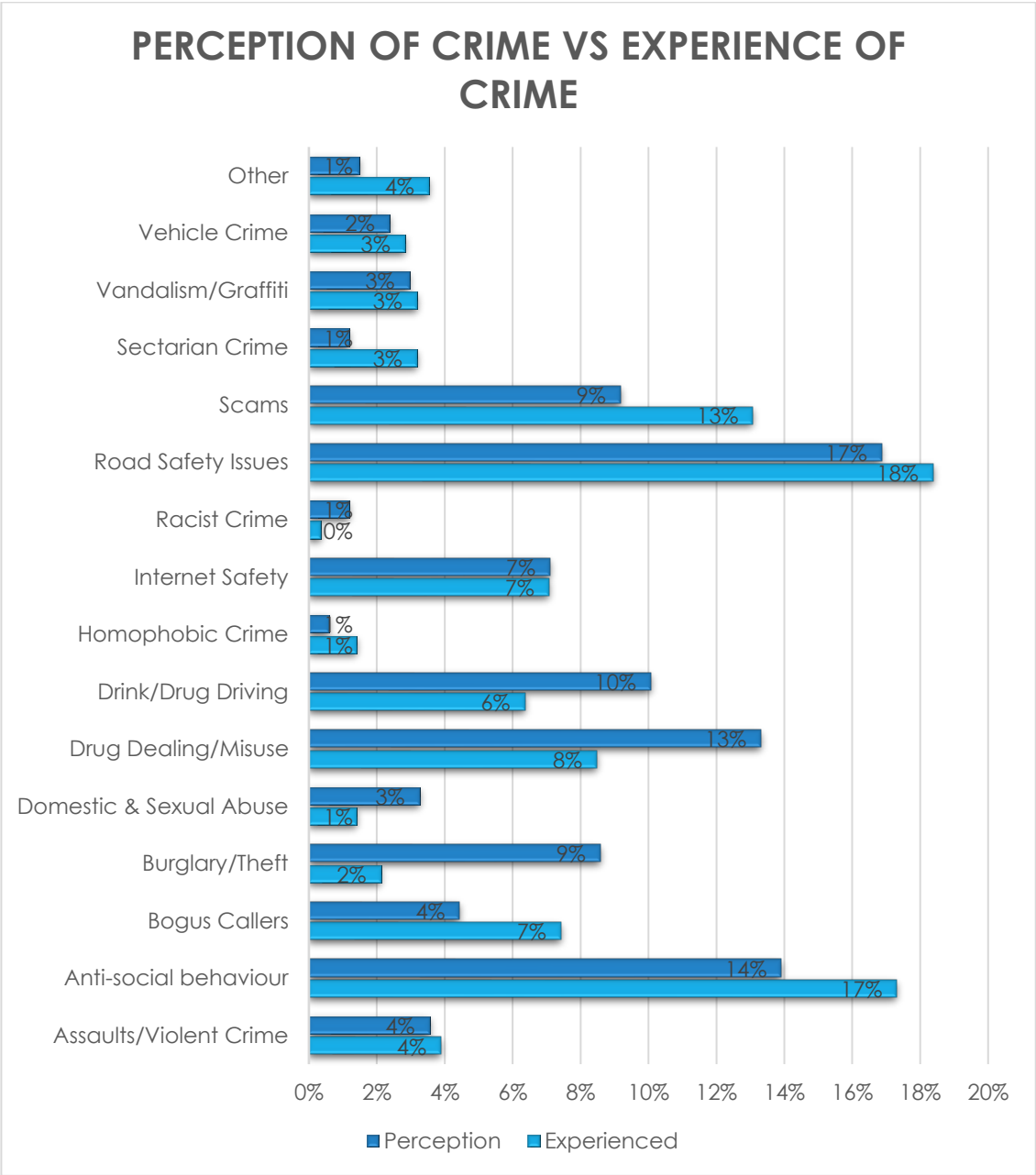


For those who suffered from anti-social behaviour:



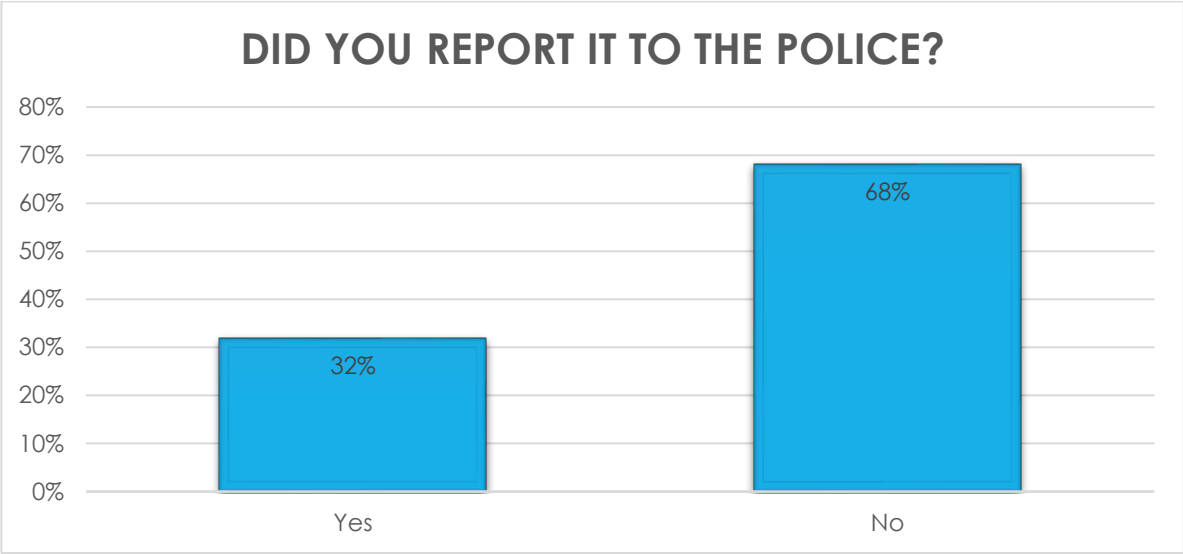
Comparing perception of crime and actual crime experienced we find the following:

- Perception of scams as a problem is low compared with actual experience.
- Drug related offences have a higher perception than experience.
- Burglary has a higher perception than experience.

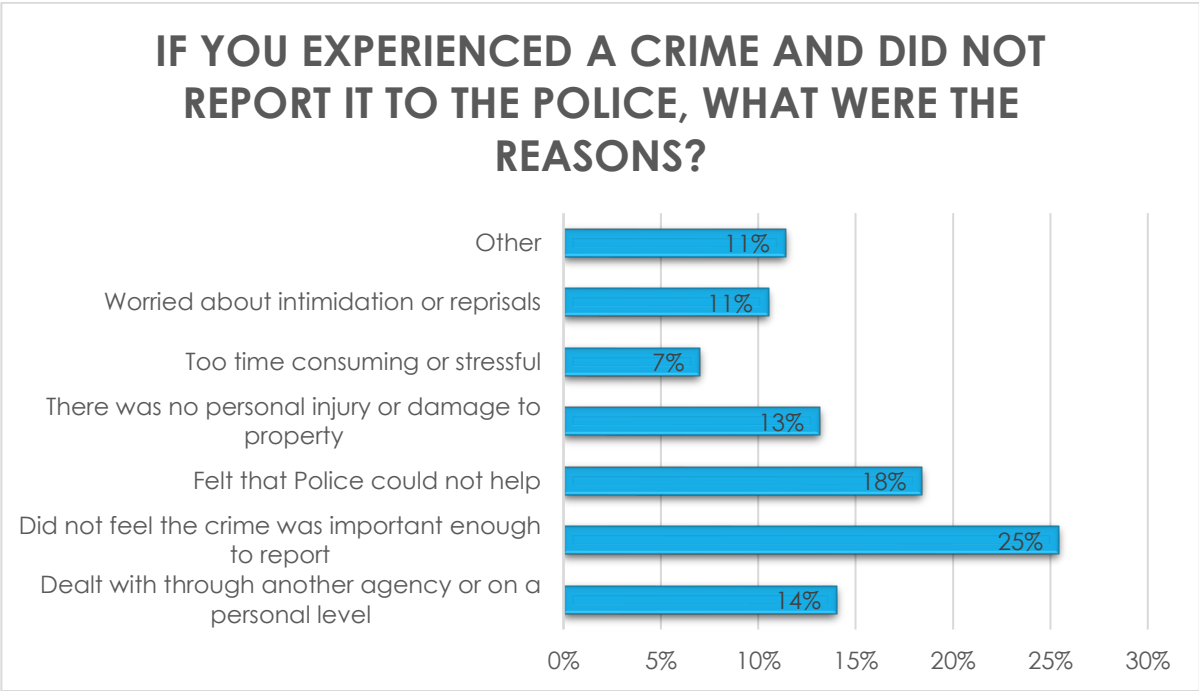


Reporting of Crime

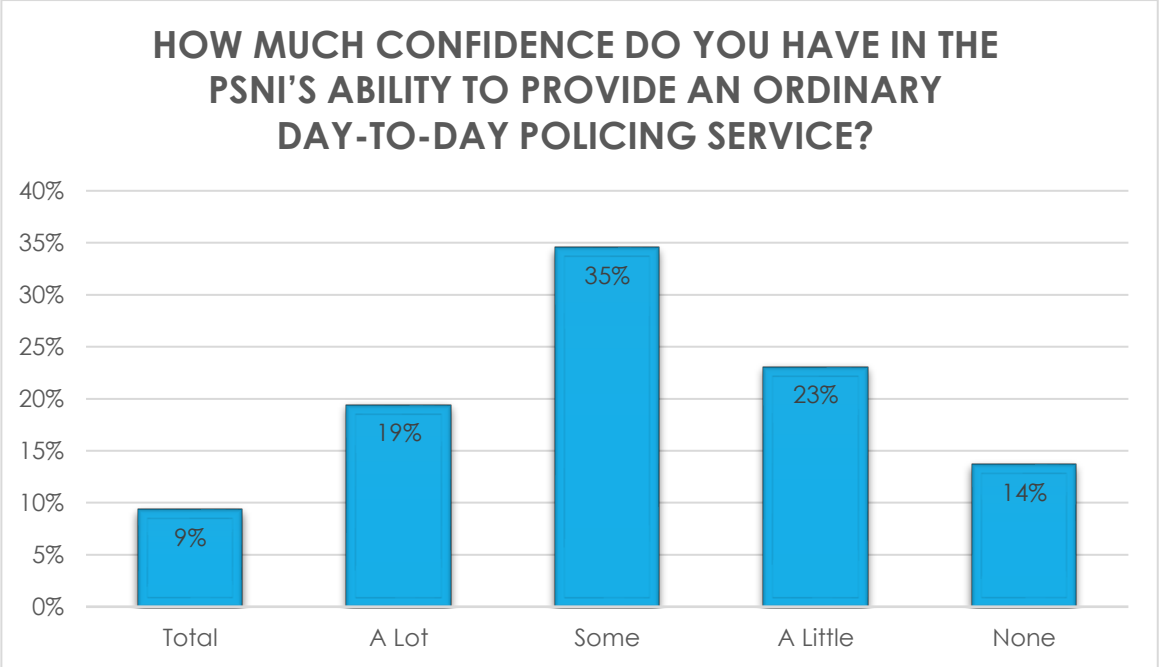
32% of those that experienced an incident/crime stated that they reported it to the PSNI.



For those that experienced an incident/crime and didn't report it, the two main reasons were that the respondent did not feel the incident/crime was important enough to report (25%), or that the respondent felt that the police could not help (18%).



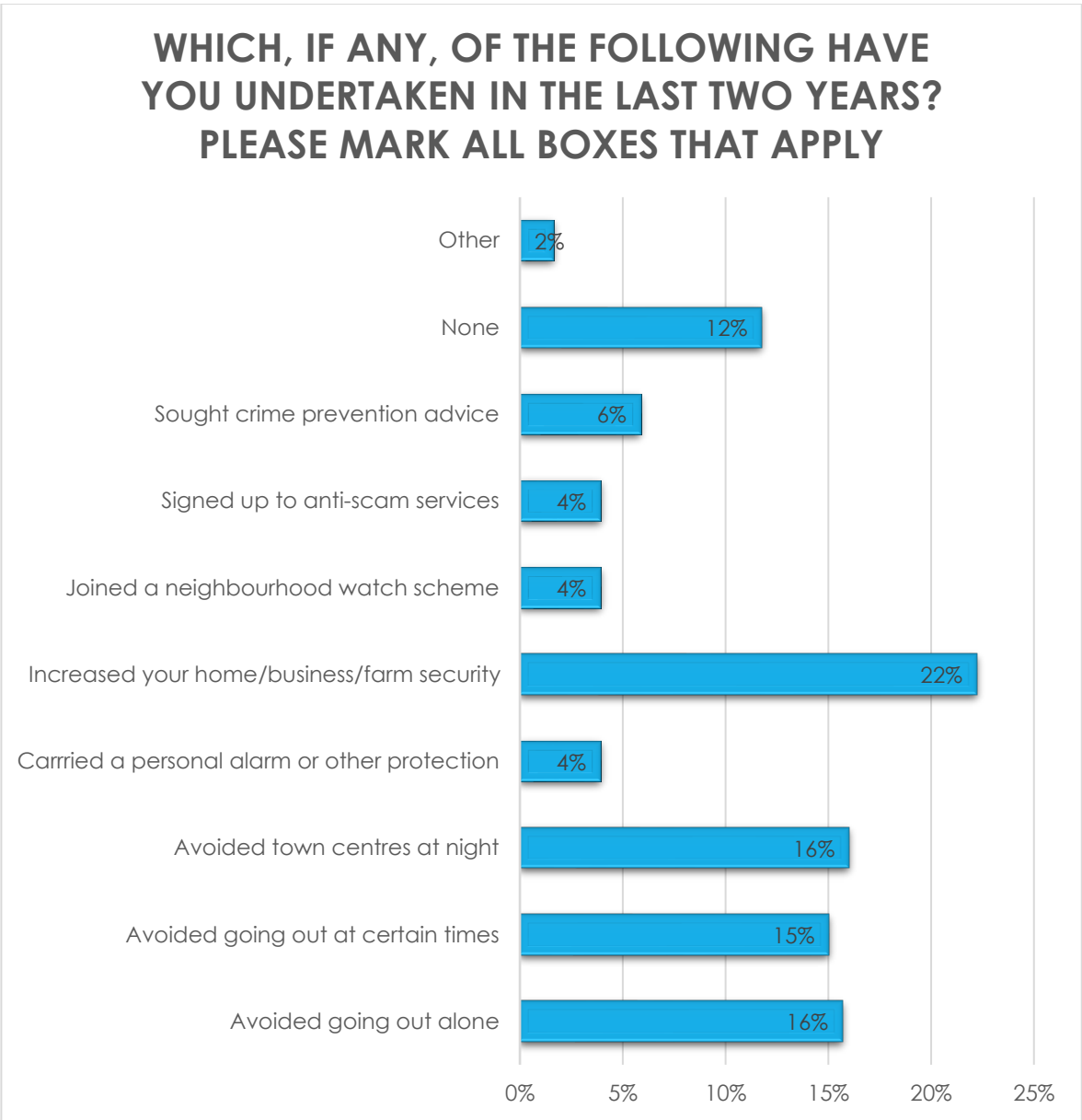
63% of respondents stated that they had some to total confidence in the PSNI's ability to provide an ordinary day to day policing service. 23% stated a little and 14% stated none.



Crime Prevention

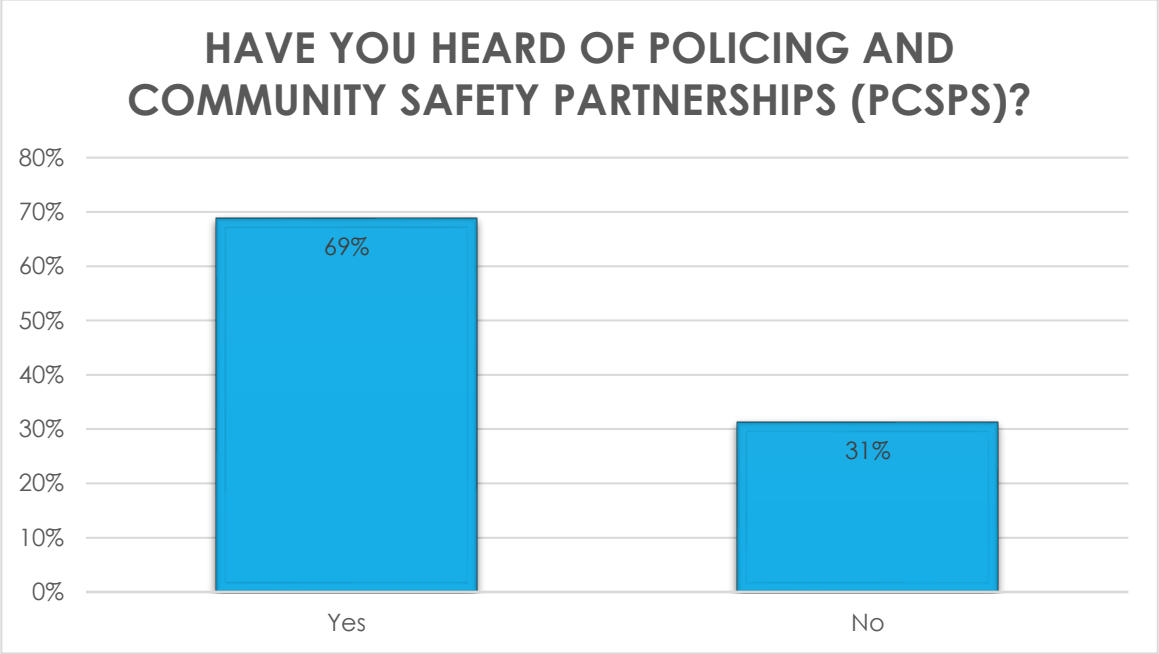
Respondents stated that they had taken the following crime prevention measures in the last 2 years

- 1. Increased home/farm/business security 22%
- 2. Avoided town centres at night 16%
- 3. Avoided going out alone 16%
- 4. Avoided going out at certain times 15%

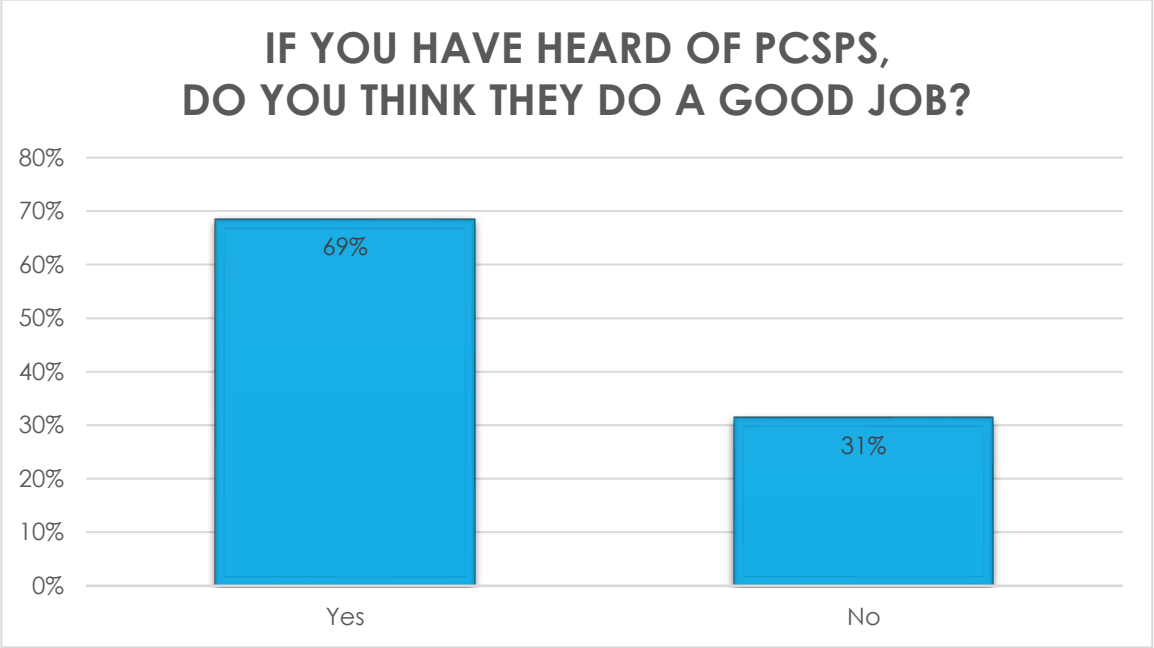


Awareness of PCSPs

69% of respondents stated they had heard of Policing & Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs).



69% of respondents, who had heard of PCSPs, stated that they think PCSPs do a good job.



What would have biggest impact on reducing crime?

Respondents were asked the following: “Apart from increasing police numbers, what single step would have the biggest impact on reducing crime, antisocial behaviour, and the fear of crime in your area?”

The responses are listed below, as originally submitted.

More patrolling
Seeing crime being dealt with and not ignored
Parental responsibility
More visual police patrols, more engagement with officers in the community
Treating people equal
Not enough being done to bring these people to court, even when you have evidence on camera you are let down every time and so the person continues to do it
Deal with those that commit crime rather than ignore it
Report to the police
Police patrolling on foot speaking to local residents
Funding for anti-crime campaigns
More mobile patrols in unmarked cars in all areas
Dealing with speeding daytime Road racing at night in Upperlands
Dealing with road racers at nighttime in and around Kilrea road
Cameras
Adults taking responsibility for themselves and their children
Visible police presence at certain times of evening, alternative activities for youth, more lighting in town...especially the car park at centra/home bargains
More interaction during daytime
Better lighting on streets
Get rid of 101 as I tried to use it to report a crime in progress once used it as was not sure if it was crime . So unimpressed. Someone tried to use to report car blocking my driveway, no help. Will never try again
Increased police numbers will be no use because they have to on the ground doing their job not driving around in cars .
More interaction with the people/groups involved
Better street lighting and routine visible police presence.
More speed cheking
Engagement with people
Speed humps
Visible patrolling on foot
Action taken when crime is reported
Improve Mental Health Awareness
Locals on the street
Tougher punishment

Having better lighting and cctv and zero tolerance for offenders
Clamp down on bad dry
Better Road lighting in rural areas
Get rid of Muslims and foriners
The police may b a lot more helpful if when violence is taking part as they watch if they actually took action instead of turning a blind eye constantly
More patrols in rural areas
Following up blatant anti social behaviour
Reporting it ,people being more security aware
speed checks in village (Castlecaulfield)
Road checks for speed and police on boat.
Be Vigilant at all times.
Direct action and stricter consequences
More police resources
Our area does not have any problems at the moment
Speed traps at weekends
Any one stealing caught on your land u should be aloud to cut there hands off
More interaction and support
Better laws to protect the innocent
Tougher sentences
Overt police patrolling
Awareness
Working in community
Been able to lift the phone and get through to your local station
A officer or 2 on the beat from time to time would help , its the answer , you can't police any area if you aren't in it ,
Big find
With reference to the drug abuse more. Plain. Clothing dealing is on the. Rise in. The area
Listening and responding appropriately
The polic not be so tolerant when youths cause damage by vandalism
Have an elected ombudsman and the power to immediately sack police and take them to court and have MI5 under the control of the ombudsman also
Education and information programmes to reduce hate crime
Speeding
More foot patrols !!
Equality of policing across different areas
Police actually dealing with it and young ones actually realising for every action theres a consequence no matter what race or religion they are
Slow signs/speed ramps
Agencies working together
Bigger penalties for law breakers.
People carrying Personal Alarms
Community police doing walkabouts and communicating with residents
Get the drugs out of my town
More patrols in area

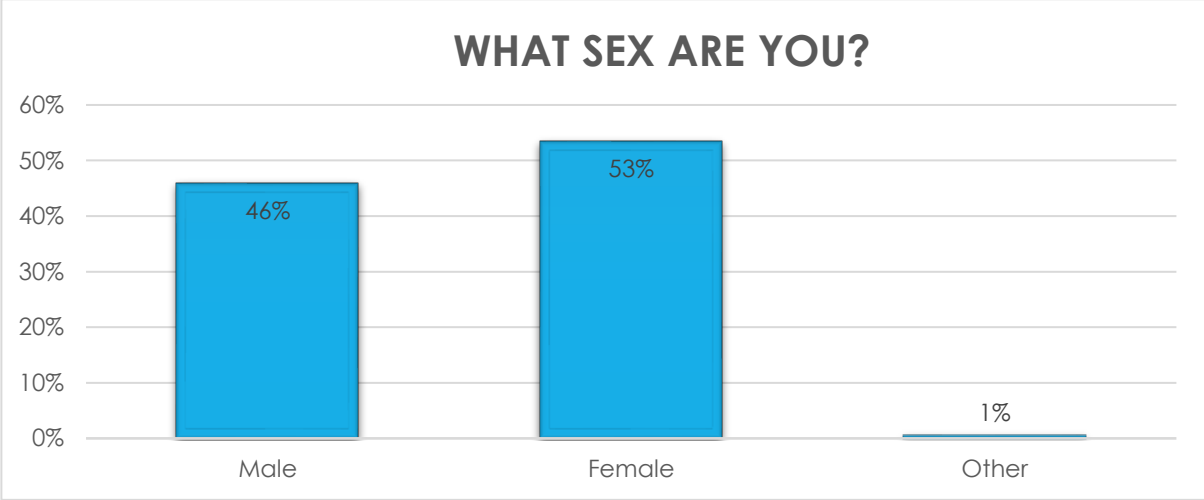
Clamp down on drug and alcohol misuse
More emphasis put on penalties and punishments
Neighbourhood watch
More interesting things for our youth.
If someone reports a crime then we would love police to check, most people are afraid to report
Better police engagement with the community. Psni have lost the faith of normal people during the pandemic for their heavy handed tactics.
POLICE CAR DRIVING AROUND
Beat officers including rural areas.
Arm citizens.
Arresting the drug dealers that the police already know about
Reopen local PSNI stations.my closest is approx 15 miles away
This question says it all you don't even want to know about increased police numbers. There also needs to be a broader view of crime to understand how we can address the causes of crime, eg how many young people in the care system are criminalised by the time they are 18 - what responsibilities are the state taking to address this. We need to address crime at its root.
More cameras
More time needs to be spent on drug dealing and drug dealers and drug misuse in the area
Accountability...proper punishment, real deterrents
I'm not sure what can be done, paramilitaries are still real in mid ulster and can seem to do what they want without fear
More of them being charged
Removing antisocial people from area and removing drug dealers
Drug dealers know to the police being halted
More visible beat patrols around estates
Visible policing
Consequences for drug dealing offences ie. Passport removal immediate
Removing people from housing developments that bring violent behaviour who leave their neighbours scared
More police on the ground
More stop checks on drivers and speed traps
Visible police presence
Camera on main streets
CCTV, spot patrols, regeneration of derelict buildings/ areas.
Increased CCTV
Adequate punishment for those that commit the crime
The drug dealing is an absolute nightmare! It's happening in front of the police's eyes!!! I even seen it myself happening in front of police and when challenged about it they just shrug the shoulders
Larger presence in the area
Speed cameras
Policing the buses as I have seen drugs coming into the magherafelt & maghera area from Belfast via Coleraine,
No other steps. Increasing police presence is the most needed action
Removing the drug den

More police patrolling around estates
Enforcement
Stop youths bloody speeding and doing powercircles on the bloody roads
More police presence & yes alot of this is to do with a lack of police numbers. Also more senior officers out on the streets meeting the public & seeing how hard foot officers r getting it. How can the police have such high numbers sitting at hospitals is there something more than can be done to free them up?
CCTV, speed boards in 30 zones
traffic calming measures.....speed cameras
Knowledge
Thankfully it's quiet on our street and have had no problems
Street lights
In addition to this, more speed patrols on the Clady Road
Education via community groups.
More community group activity
More police out and about, frequent vehicle checks, more presence everywhere!!!!
Would love to see police being nice and get Training in disabilities and mental health
Reaching out to the nationalist community and installing more trust
More action against drugs
More needs to be done to tackle drug dealing. No sooner are the dealers arrested then they're back selling. Start drug and alcohol addiction classes in school, that's where it should start. We as a collective neighbourhood have reported drug dealing in our area on so many occasions and it's great to see some action taken but then they're out and the drugees are banging at all hours for their fix or ones who have beef with another are hollering and banging at all hours, kicking cars. And yes the police are involved because either the drug dealer has called them or one of us but we know it'll happen again. If we can't stop the dealers then starve their customer base with education from a young age. You go to schools to talk about road safety well drug/alcohol abuse needs to be on the table.
People in the community being more vigilant and parents actually giving a shit about where their kids are.
Cctv, patrols at 10pm onwards
More interaction with public in rural areas
Walk around patrols, harsher punishment for offenders
Police presence in rural areas as well as towns
An odd patrol wouldn't hurt or arriving on time
Better lighting
Speed monitoring
Reporting crime
Well that's easy. If I need to report a crime, why would I report this when I've seen in past exactly who you listen to. Numerous reports made regarding homophobic hate crime and what happens? I'm the one treated like the criminal. So honestly no faith at all in the police so I'll happily just get in with it. More problems than it's worth.

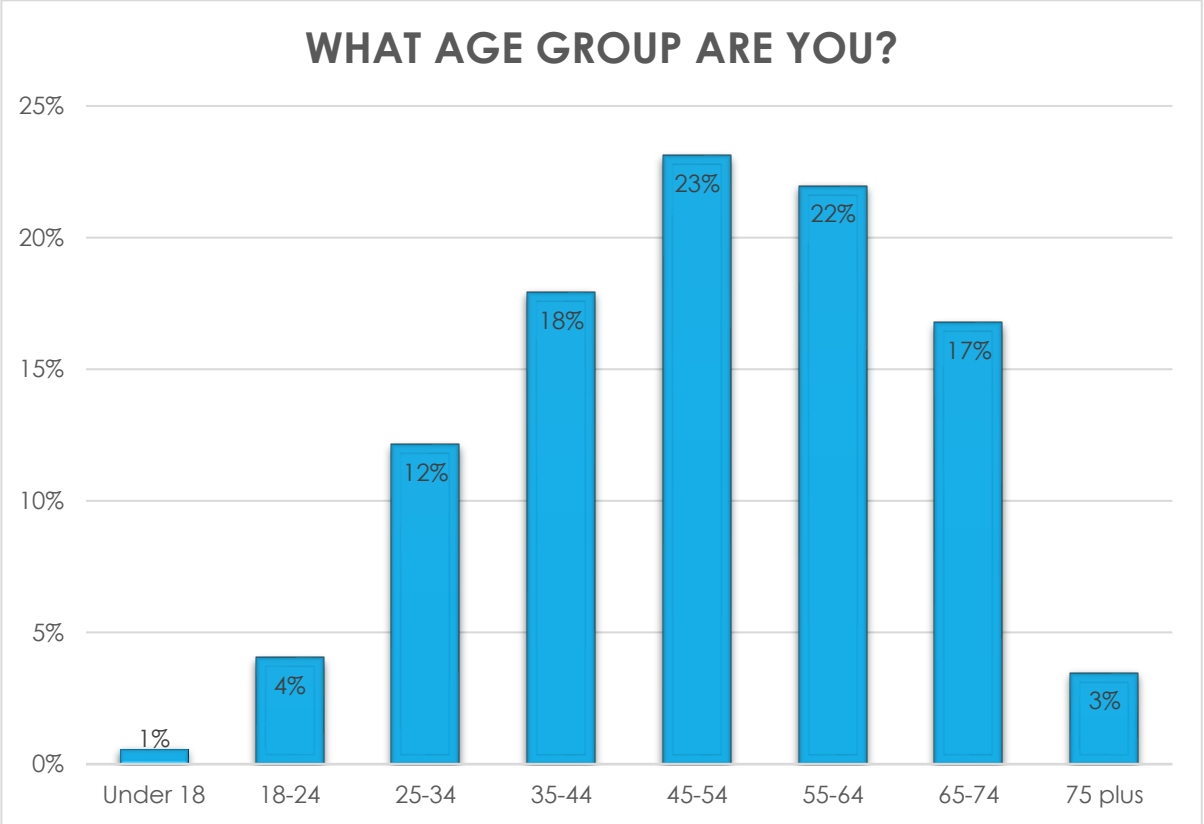
Demographics

Respondents to the PCSP survey stated the following

Sex



Age Group

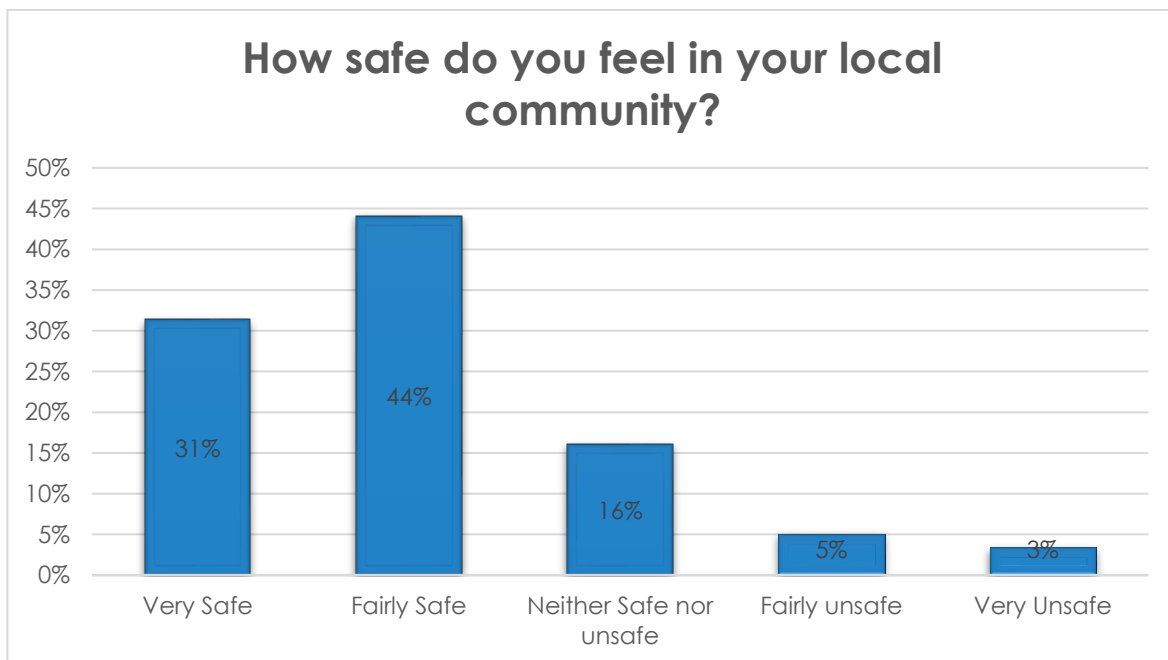


Youth Survey

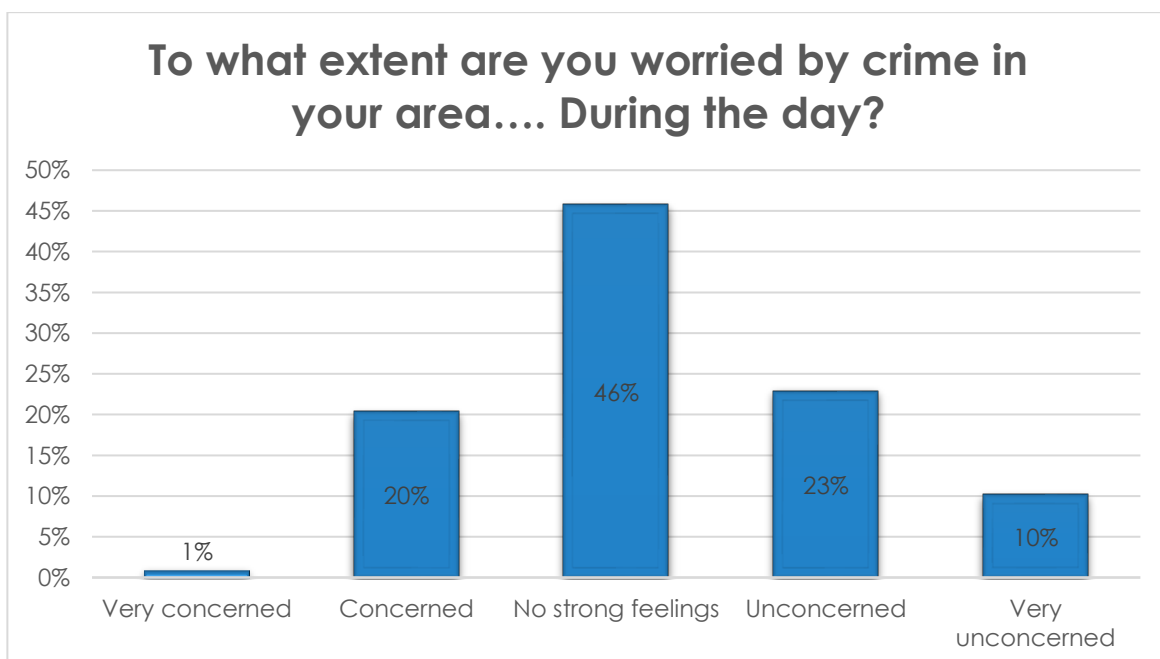
The EA Youth Service engaged with young people across the district to undertake a survey with 119 completing it.

Fear of Crime

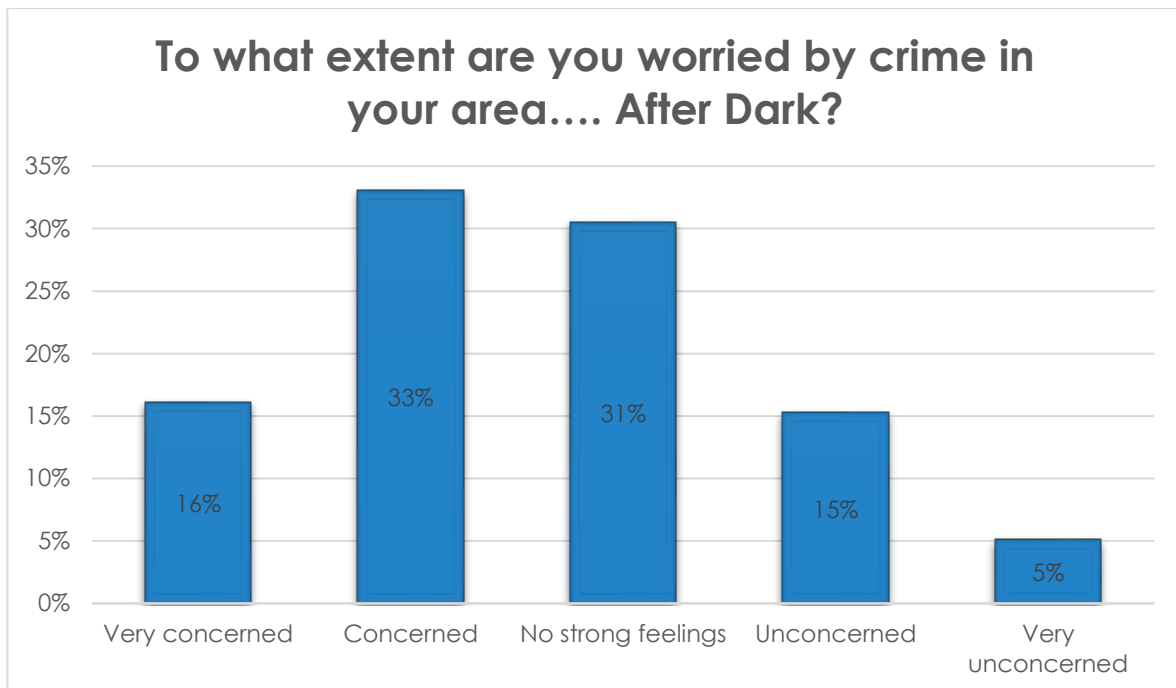
Only 8% of respondents stated that they felt unsafe in their local community.



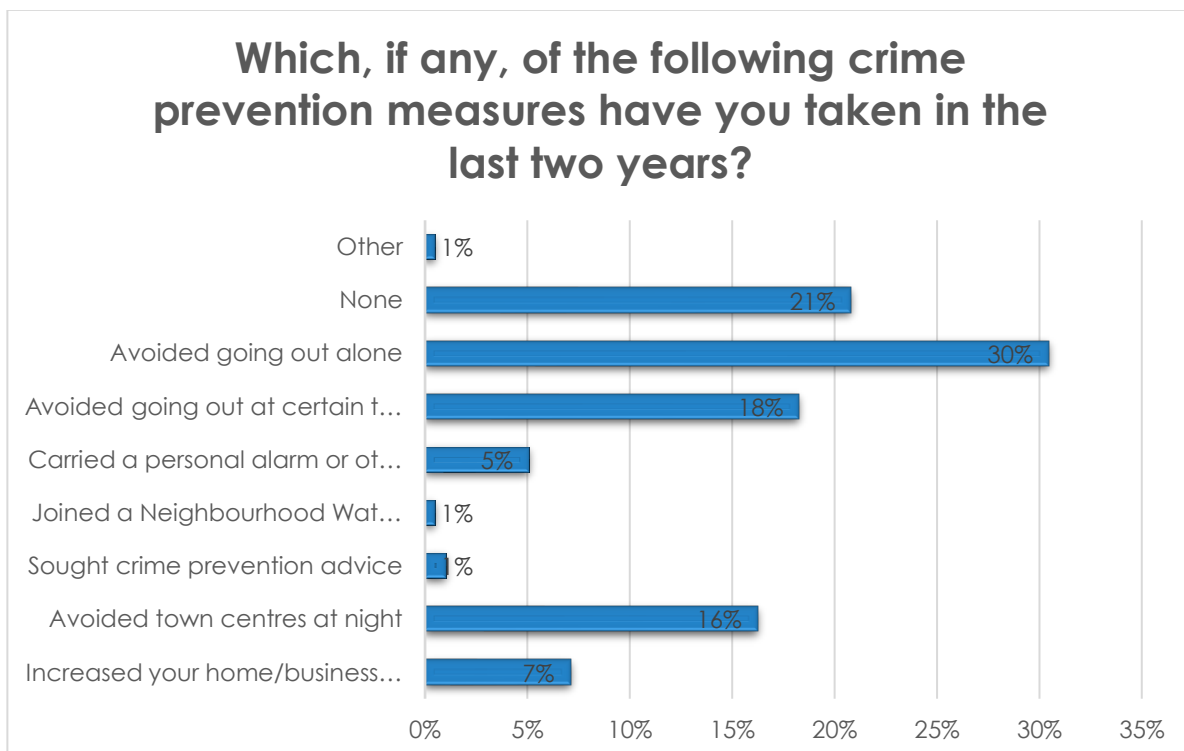
21% of respondents were concerned about crime in their area during the day



49% of respondents were concerned about crime in their area after dark



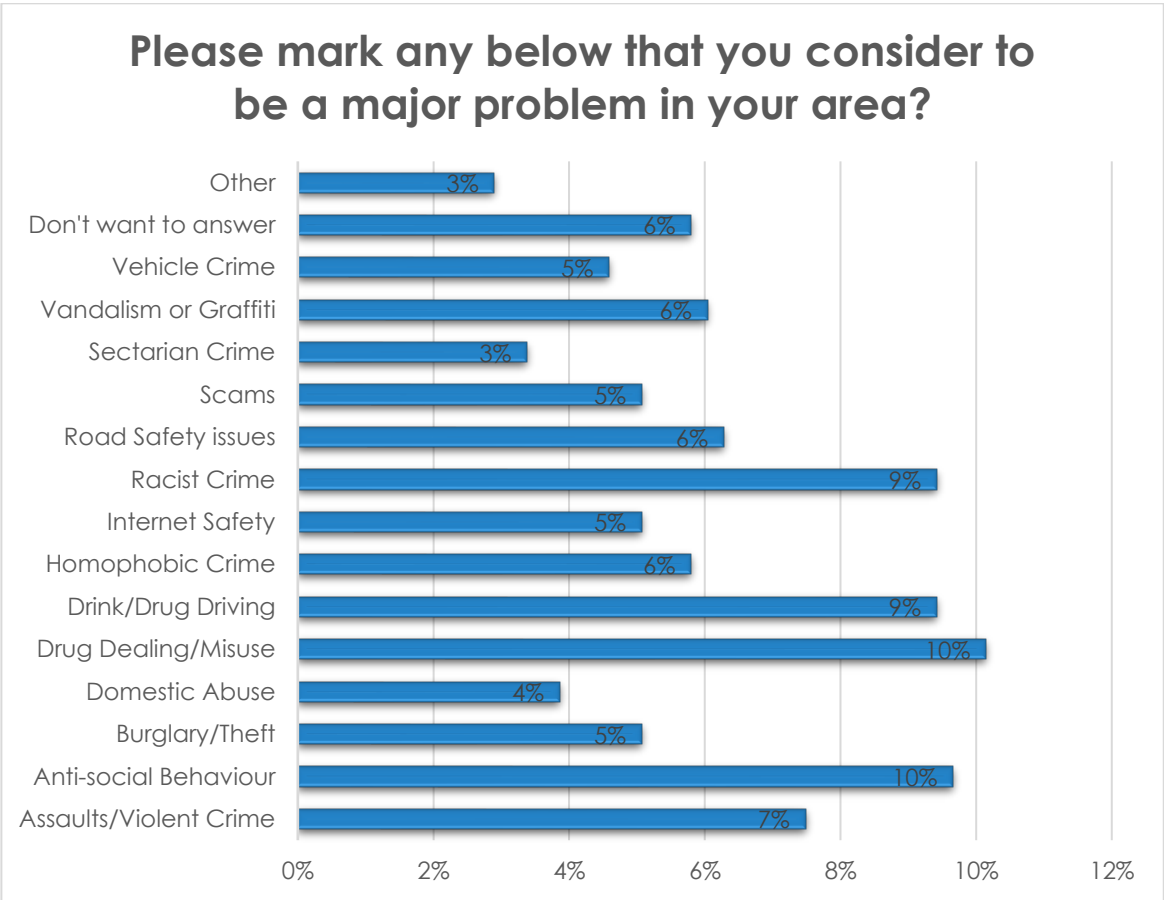
48% of respondents stated that they either avoid going out alone or going out at certain times



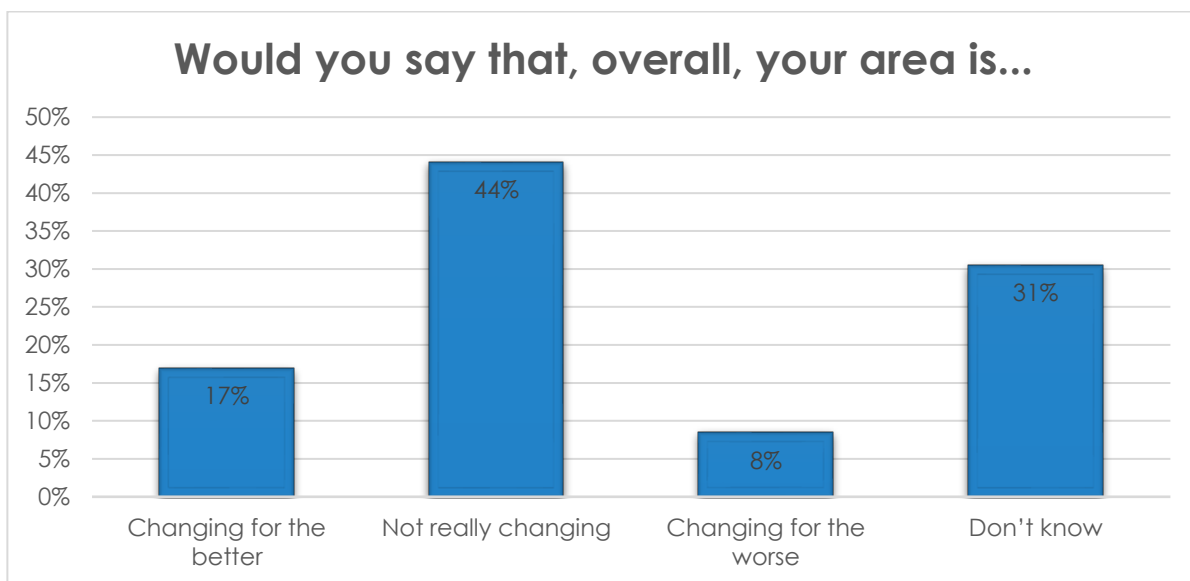
Experience of Crime

Respondents stated the following as the top 5 major problems in their area

- 1. Drug Dealing/Misuse
- 2. Anti-social Behaviour
- 3. Drink/Drug Driving
- 4. Racist Behaviour
- 5. Assaults/Violent Crime



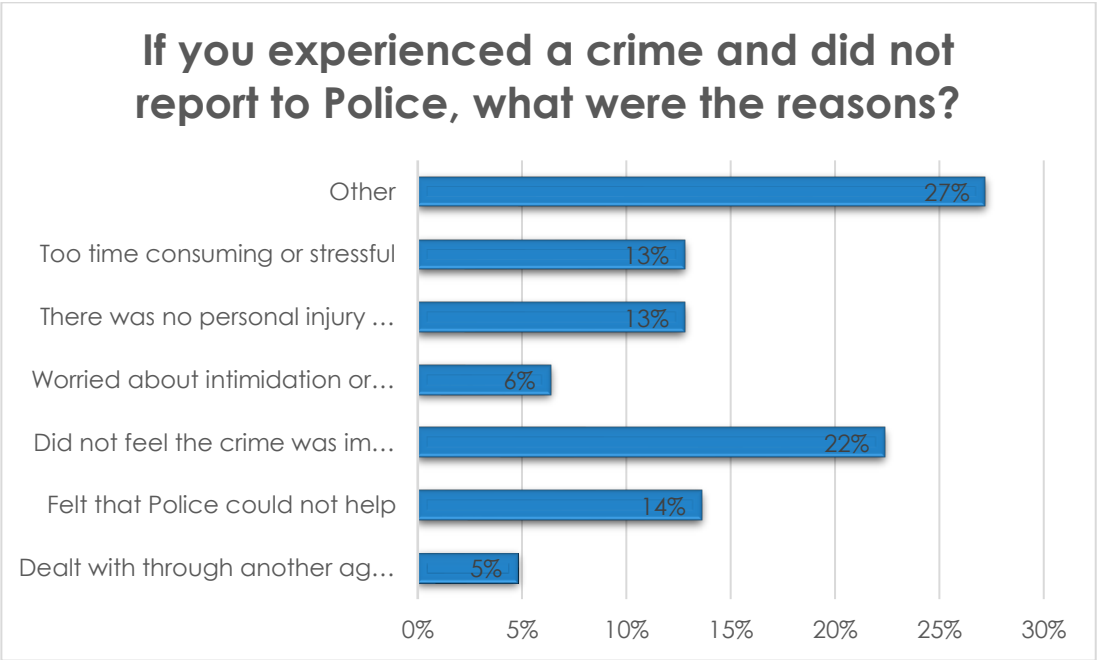
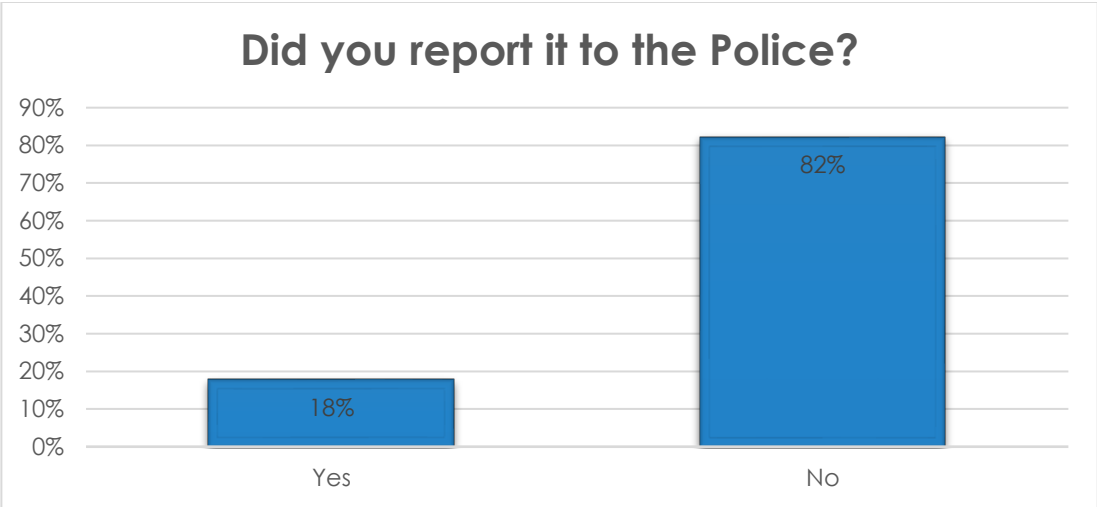
Only 8% stated that they thought that their local area was changing for the worse.



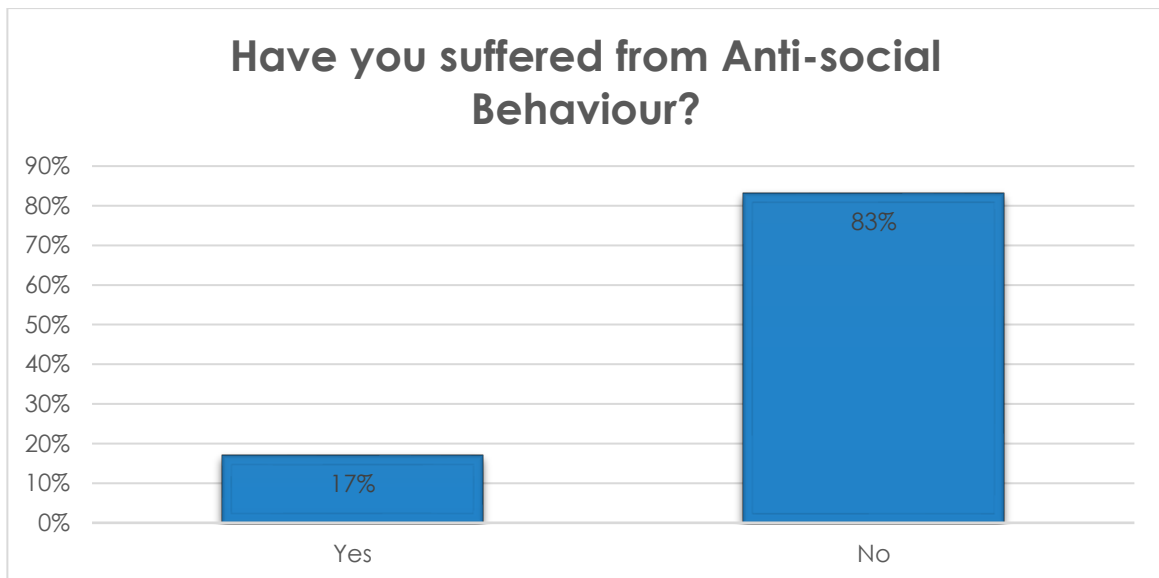
Nearly 50% of respondents stated that they never crime over the last 12 months.



Reporting of Crime

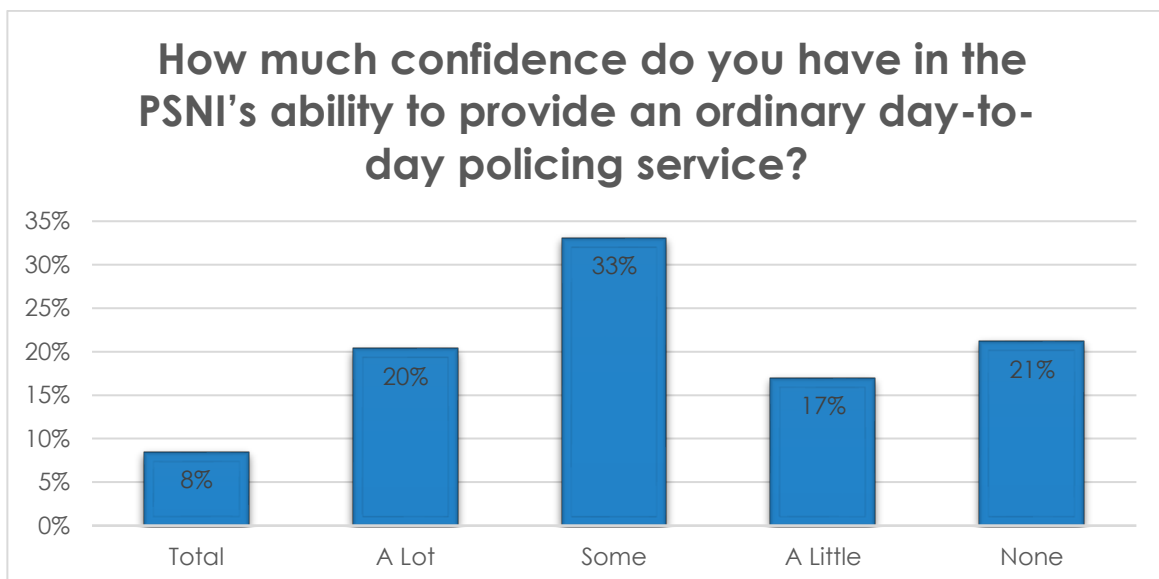


17% of respondents stated they had suffered from anti-social behaviour



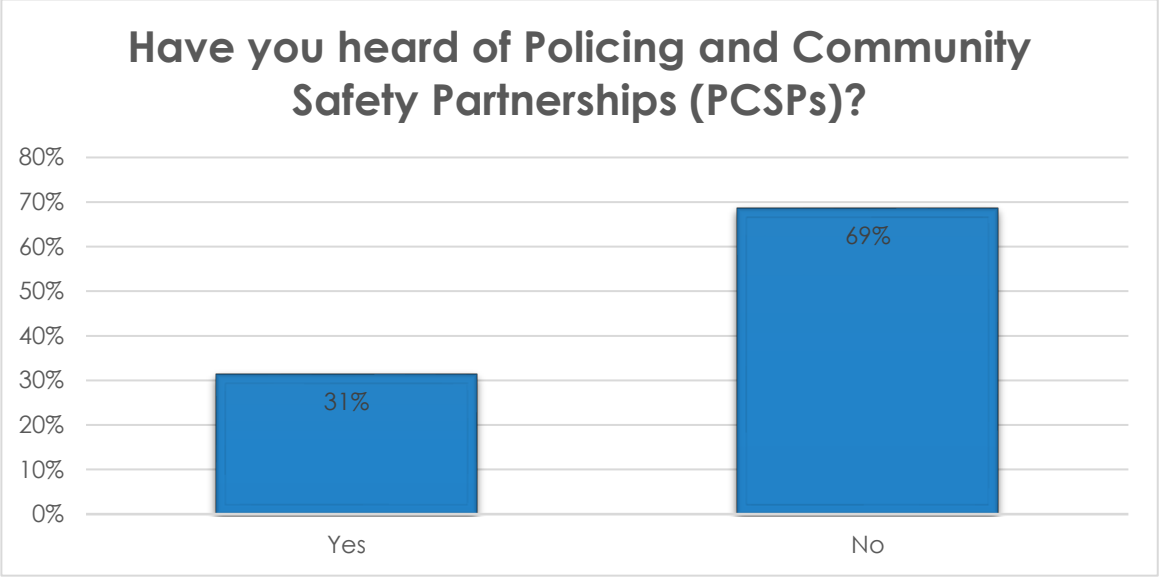
Confidence in Policing

78% of respondents stated they had total to a little confidence in the PSNI. 21% state they had none

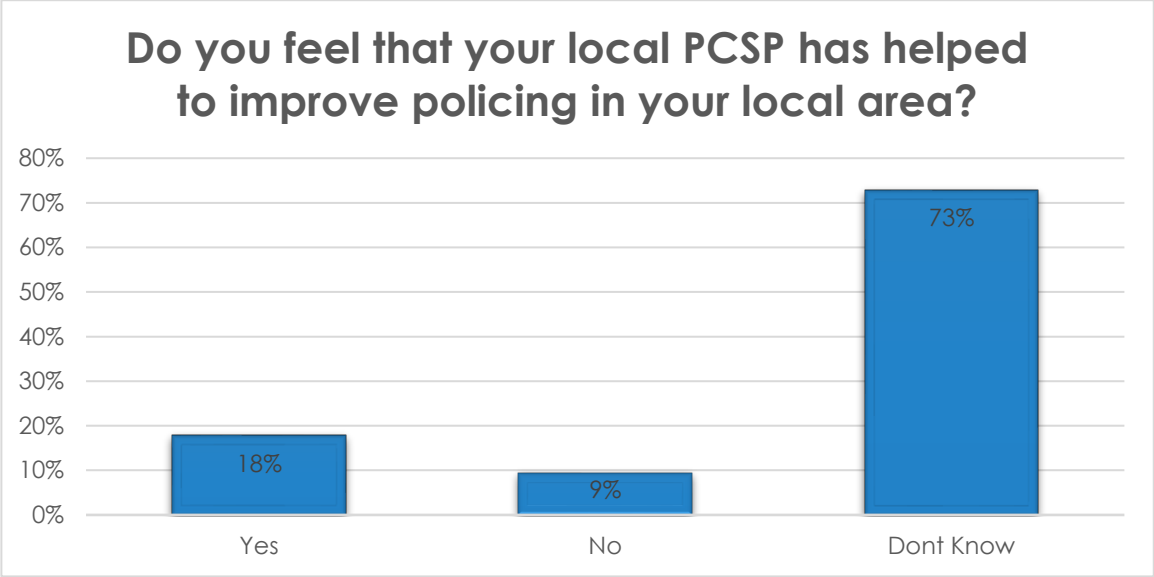


Awareness of PCSPs

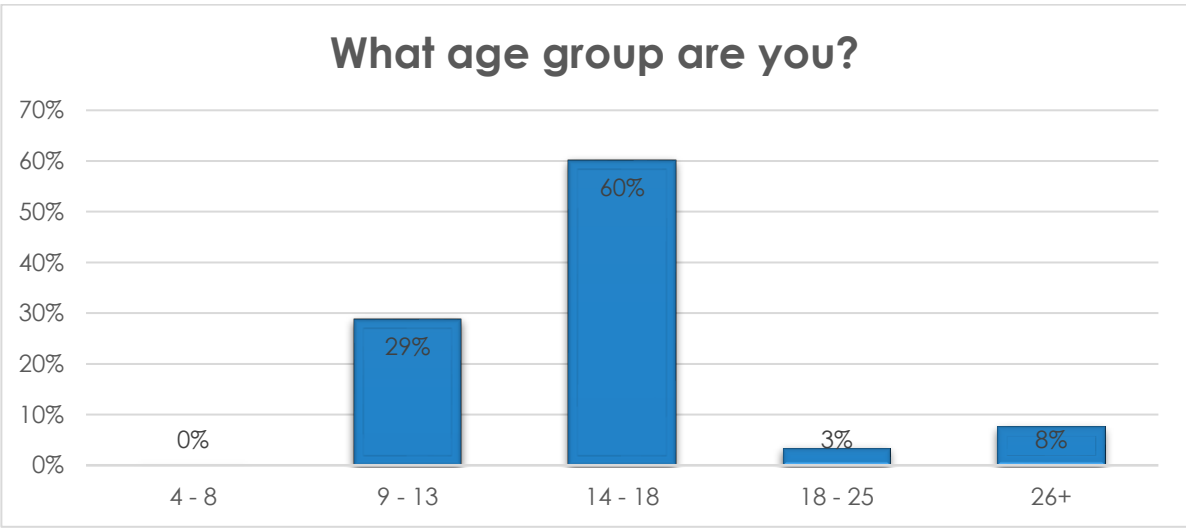
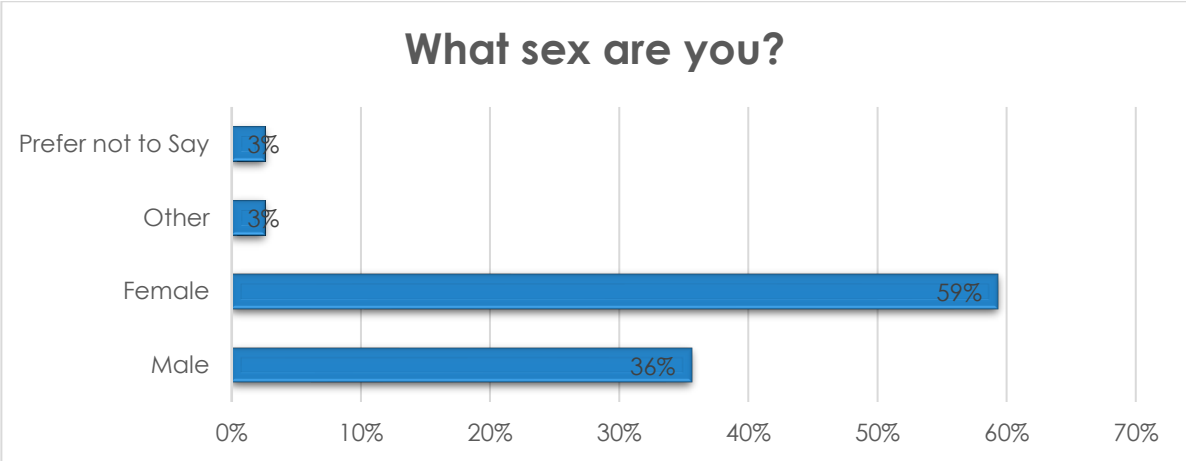
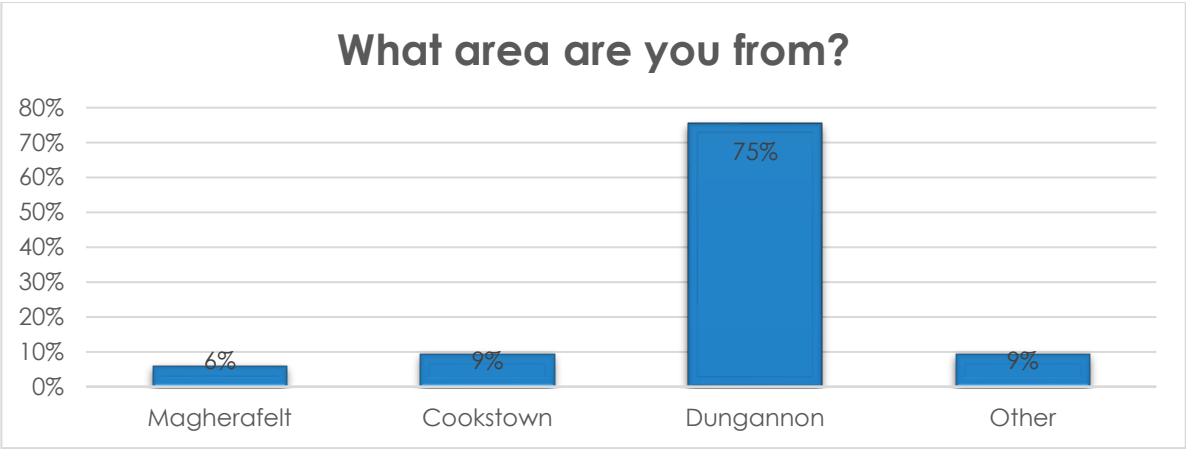
31% of respondents had heard of PCSPs



73% of respondents didn't know if their local PCSP had helped improved policing in the their local area.



Demographics



What would have biggest impact on reducing crime?

Respondents were asked the following: “Apart from increasing police numbers, what single step would have the biggest impact on reducing crime, antisocial behaviour, and the fear of crime in your area?”

The responses are listed below, as submitted.

Partnership work - pooling resources
More patrolling cars
Have more security
Educating young people about the consequences of their actions
Working with other agencies like schools
trying to help the young people doing the crimes
education people on what they are doing wrong
police more visable in areas
Education / awareness
police
Pollice
educating people
more inclusive youth programmes within the dungannon area (ie visiting schools)
more awareness/information about crimes happening
Encouraging CCTV for more businesses and homes
Education in schools - ensuring young people have choices apart from crime / gangs
More security in the area
Daily police car driving around Dungannon every hour
people stop being aggressive
Youth club
Awareness and checks
youthclub
more imformation
Somewhere for the young people to go
more police around
Cctv in operation to watch certain areas where anti social behaviour happens so they can be brought to justice
Stiffer jail sentences
youth club
Youth service
youth club
youth club
youth club
more police

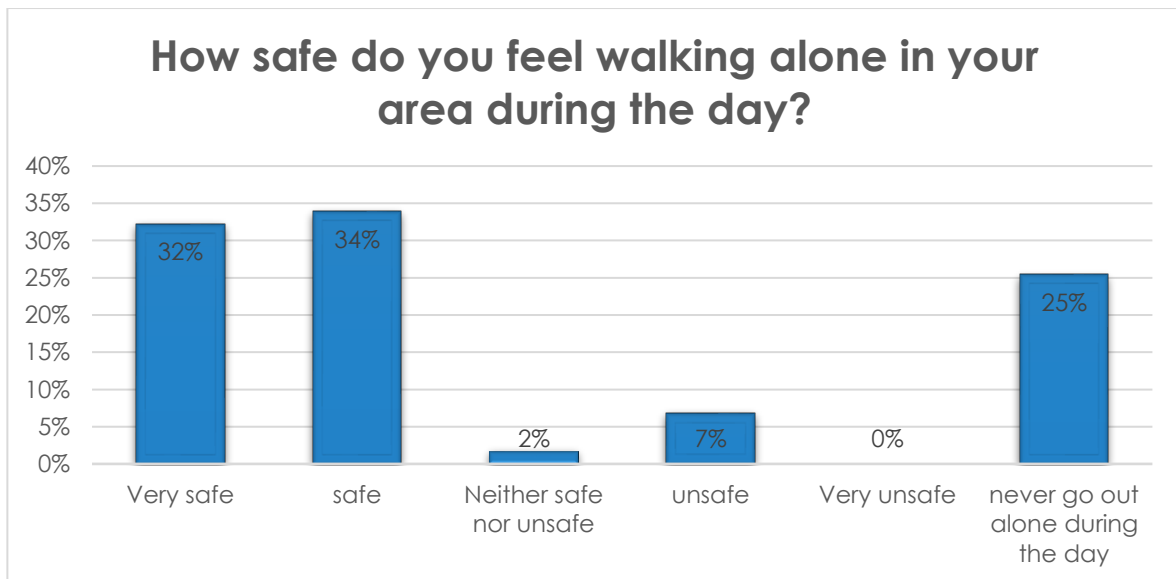
jail for all unwanted sexual interactions
Enforce safety measures
more police patrols
Nothing has really happened it's a fairly safe area
put cameras in our area
security cameras and alarms
Checking if people have weapons
more CCTV cameras
more police going on patrol
Awareness
A lot of things would cause my area is small
More CCTV cameras
More CCTV cameras
Having more cctvs
Youth centres
It be talked about more around schools and town
More cameras in places where crimes are more likely to happen
Camera ?
Community days such as people gathering for tea and for a chat
Make people more aware of local crime
Lights. Cameras. Neighbourhood support
More harsh punishments for serious crime and increasing drunk driving consequences

Agewell Survey

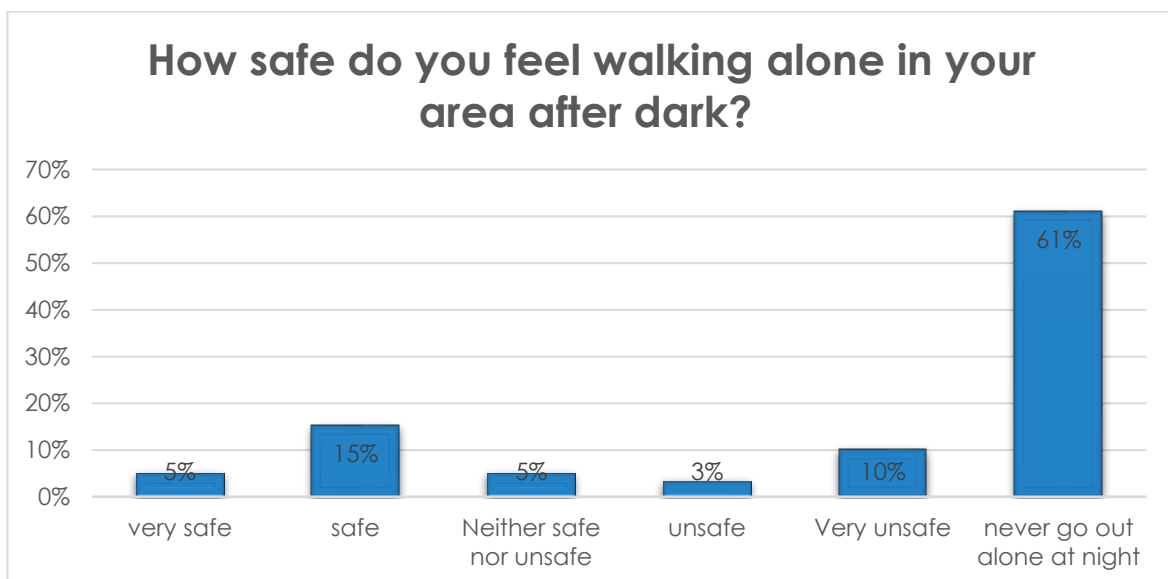
A Telephone Survey was undertaken by Agewell of it's members. 59 older people completed this survey.

Survey Results

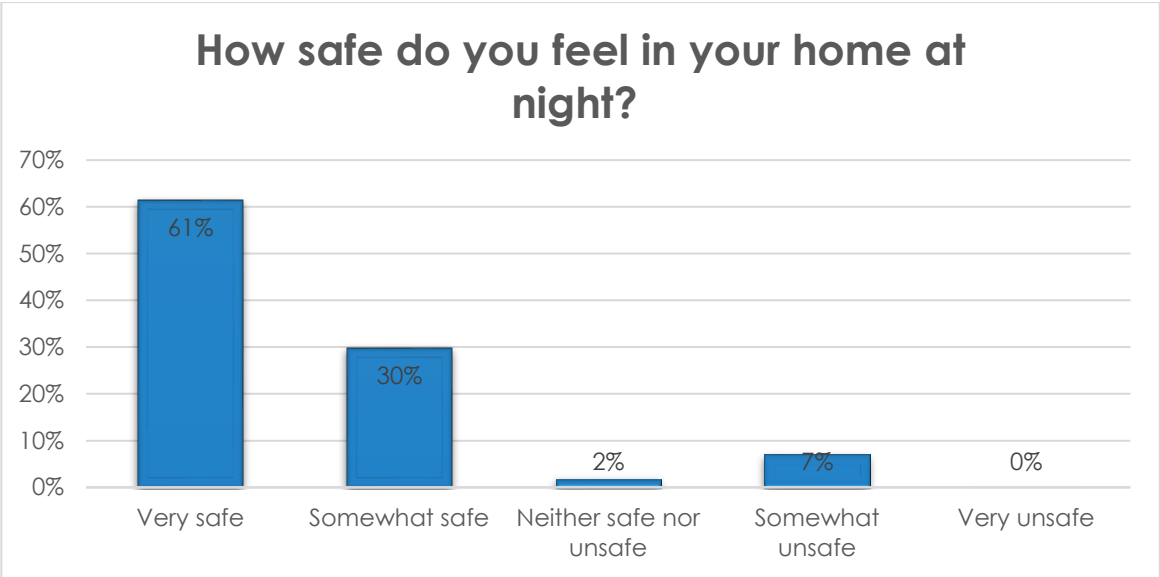
7% of respondents stated that they feel unsafe walking alone during the day.
25% never go out alone during the day



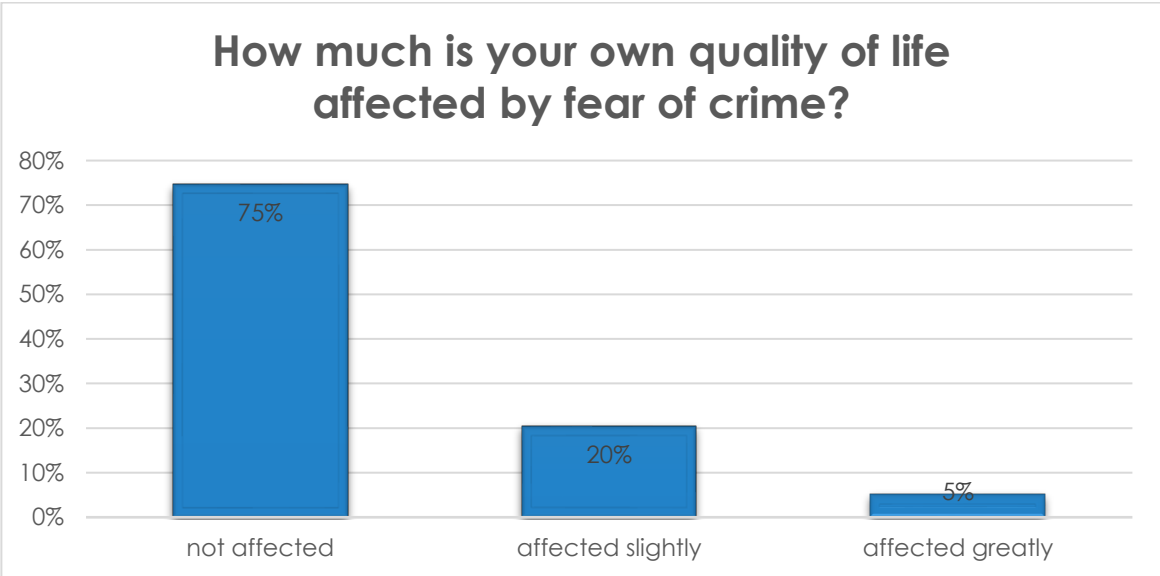
13% felt unsafe walking alone after dark. 61% never go out alone at night.



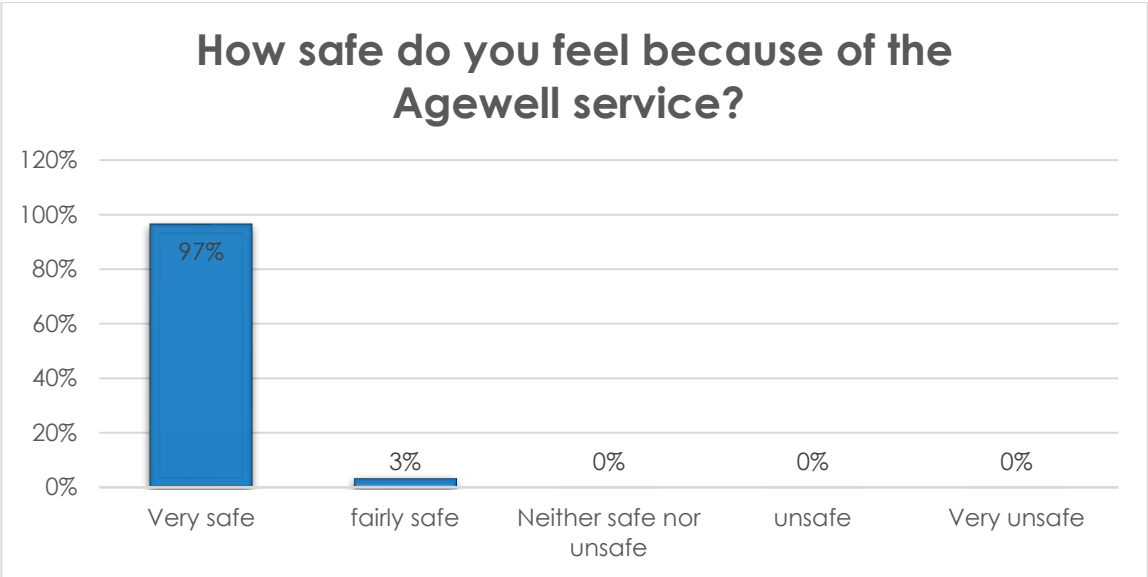
7% feel somewhat unsafe in their home at night.



25% stated their quality of life was affected by fear of crime.



100% stated that they felt very safe or fairly safe because of the Agewell service.



PCSP Strategic Plan 2022-25

The Joint Committee of the Dept of Justice and NI Policing Board agreed the strategic objectives for the PCSPs. These are listed below and will form the basis of the development of the PCSP Strategy and Action Plan.

The Joint Committee agreed three Strategic Priorities for PCSPs.

Strategic Priority 1 – To ensure effective delivery in response to local need, and improve the visibility and recognition of the work of the PCSP through effective consultation, communication and engagement

through:

- carrying out meaningful engagement in the district with the local community, relevant statutory partners / agencies, businesses and the community & voluntary sector in the development and implementation of PCSP Action Plans;
- ensuring ongoing two-way engagement in the district with the local community, relevant statutory partners / agencies, businesses and the community & voluntary sector to provide a problem-solving forum to identify effective solutions to local issues, ensuring sufficient flexibility to address issues as they emerge, and seeking relevant expertise from the designated organisations as appropriate;
- using a range of platforms, including multi-media, to communicate and promote the work of the PCSP; and
- increasing awareness of the work of the PCSP.

Strategic Priority 2 - To improve community safety by prioritising and addressing local community safety issues, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour

through

- utilising the partnership created by the statutory, elected and independent/ community membership of the PCSP to initiate and lead work to improve community safety and tackle ASB locally;
- working in partnership to develop outcome and locality focused interventions to address the most pressing crime types and behaviours impacting local community safety, as evidenced by local need, with appropriate targets and indicators so that impacts can be measured;
- drawing on best practice, promote early intervention and collaborating effectively to improve PCSP-supported projects and programmes that address the underlying causes of ASB, crime and the fear of crime in the community, including, where appropriate, a focus on changing behaviours;
- enhancing safety and feelings of safety, in particular for those who might be more vulnerable;
- engaging with partners in the district, to horizon scan in order to respond to and re-direct resources to respond to emerging local community safety issues;
- having cognisance of the Community Safety Framework in developing local plans, and providing a feedback loop to the Community Safety Board on local issues in order to inform community safety policy development – and vice versa; and
- providing comprehensive community input into decision making processes about tackling actual and perceived anti-social behaviour and giving feedback to the community on the effectiveness of interventions on meeting outcomes.

Strategic Priority 3 – To support confidence in policing, including through collaborative problem solving with communities

through

- ensuring local accountability through the Policing Committee’s role in monitoring police performance;
- identifying priorities from the PCSP Plan for consideration in the development of the local Policing Plan which are consistent with the Northern Ireland Policing Plan;
- providing views to the District Commander through the Policing Committee and supporting the PSNI to engage with the community to identify and address local problems;
- delivering initiatives that link to identified local problems that impact confidence in policing;
- carrying out meaningful local events aimed at increasing PSNI engagement with local communities to build and strengthen public confidence in policing;
- delivering PCSP initiatives in the hardest to reach communities;
- providing a platform for the PCSP and PSNI to engage with young people, including on the themes of upholding the rule of law, and of ways of increasing confidence in policing; and
- building community confidence in the rule of law by helping mitigate the harm caused to people and communities by paramilitarism, criminality and organised crime consistent with wider Programme for Government objectives and through use of co-design principles, where appropriate.

Turning the Curve

When developing the 2024-25 action plan, the PCSP reviewed current projects to determine if they were effective and should be continued in the new action plan

	Project Name	Short Impact Synopsis	
SP1 Awareness	Awareness raising	Profile on social media has increased year to year. 39,588 reach in Q1 and Q2. 539% increase compared to Q1 and Q2 in previous year. Engagement including crime prevention stands and Clogher Show, Youth Events, Older Events etc.	C o n t i n u e
	Emergency Services Road Traffic Collision Reconstructions	The Fatal Road Traffic Collision Reconstructions demonstrated good impact with increase in knowledge and awareness of 100% of those attending the initiatives. Feedback from partner agencies very positive. 100% stated that it had improved their attitude to the emergency services.	C o n t i n u e
	Crashed Car Simulator	The Crash Car Simulator demonstrated good impact with increase in awareness of 90% of those attending the initiative. The simulator will continue to be targeted at post primary schools	C o n t i n u e
	SIDs	SIDs have been previously deployed and demonstrated that they reduce speed and are popular with the local community.	
Youth Diversion	Youth Engagement and Diversionary programmes at hotspot areas and times	The Youth Engagement initiatives previously demonstrated positive increases in awareness of the educational topics and also demonstrated a behaviour change in the participants. Yeps are currently operational across the district.	C o n t i n u e

ASB Educational Programmes	Where is Your Child Tonight education programme and PR campaign	Operates at peak times such as Halloween and Christmas. Uses bus, adshels and social media advertising. Campaigns well received.	C o n t i n u e
NTE Training	Training includes: Defib and First Aid Training Responsible Alcohol Trading programmes Drugs/Alcohol training programmes for staff in night-time economy	Previously 100% of those participating on the training courses stated they were relevant and well delivered. 100% stated courses met their objectives and helped them to practice responsible retailing in licensed premises.	C o n t i n u e
Safe Night Out	Penalty Notice: Cost of Your Night Out	Campaign well received. Feedback from PSNI that there was reduction in penalty notices given during advertising period	C o n t i n u e
	NTE - groups that provide assistance to those in the night-time economy.	This has restarted and PCSP will provide support when needed. Previous feedback from PSNI state that Club Angels/Reaching Out Groups make a positive impact on the safety of the night time economy.	C o n t i n u e
Internet Safety	TeenSafe Programme	This programme is aimed at teenagers and involves them participating in topical workshops delivered by partners ranging from internet safety to road safety. When delivered in previous years, they were very successful and increased awareness in the various topics.	C o n t i n u e
	Internet Safety Programmes	The internet safety primary and post primary programmes are currently being rolled out. Previously 94% of participants found the programmes beneficial.	C o n t i n u e
Domestic Violence	Domestic Violence campaign	Behind Closed Doors campaign normally held at Christmas through bus/adshel and social media advertising.	C o n t i

			n u e
	Positive Relationships Schools programme	This is a post primary school programme currently that operates in Q3 and Q4. Previously there was an average increase in awareness of topics was 66%.	C o n t i n u e
	High risk victims security installations	This provides security equipment to enable high risk victims of domestic violence to remain in their homes and increase their feeling of safety. Feedback from PSNI very positive for this programme. They report that 100% of participants stated it had increased their feeling of safety.	C o n t i n u e
VP Initiatives	Hold community safety awareness raising events with the following target demographics, older people, people with disabilities. Also awareness raising events for rural crime and hate crime, and safety for females	Feedback from these events very positive and increases awareness.	C o n t i n u e
	Alcohol and Drugs Schools Project	Previous feedback from schools and pupils was very positive with over 65% of pupils increasing awareness.	R e s o u r c e s
	Agewell – Older Persons Security	This provides fitted security equipment to older people across the district. Crime prevention and awareness messages relevant to older people are distributed by Agewell directly to their members. 100% of older people who received this service stated that it had increased their feeling of safety	C o n t i n u e
Comm & Police	Police engagement with communities including children, youth,	On average over 90% of participants stated the engagement event increased their confidence in policing, with over 90% stating that their awareness had been increased of the relevant topic.	C o n t i n

	at risk and disadvantaged communities (activities such as, Bike Marking, Trailer Marking, PEPs, etc)		u e
	Promote and sustain Neighbourhood Watch Schemes	Currently there are 32 schemes in Mid Ulster.	C o n t i n u e
Policing Committee	Fresh Start initiatives and Programme for Government key messages and campaigns	PCSP to integrate the message of increasing lawfulness through the work and engagement with the community. Project with 30 youth facilitated by EA Youth and PSNI completed with positive feedback.	C o n t i n u e
Awareness Raising	Awareness raising campaigns and engagements – rural crime, cyber crime, scams/bogus callers, fear of crime, road safety, Text Alert, Safer U App, SIDs	PCSP to continue with awareness raising campaigns. Feedback from partners is positive and crime levels across all categories in the population has reduced.	C o n t i n u e

Action Plan

Mid Ulster PCSP undertook an Assessment of Policing and Community Safety in the Mid Ulster District Council Area.

This exercise was undertaken to ensure that the priorities identified continue to reflect priority policing and community safety issues in the area and was informed by analysis of information provided by statutory partners, as well as the results of ongoing borough wide engagement and consultation on policing and community safety across the council area.

Cognisance was also taken of:

- The Programme for Government
- The most recent CJINI Inspection Reports
- The Northern Ireland Policing Plan
- Local Policing Plan
- Together Building a United Community
- Council's GR Plan
- Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality, and Organised Crime Programme
- Community Planning

A Turning the Curve Exercise was undertaken in relation to the current PCSP Action Plan Indicators/themes to formulate the partnership's best thinking on projects and initiatives to contribute towards the overall outcome.

To deliver on the strategic objectives the PCSP has developed an action plan with three strands:

Strategic Priority 1 – To ensure effective delivery in response to local need, and improve the visibility and recognition of the work of the PCSP through effective consultation, communication and engagement

Strategic Priority 2 - To improve community safety by prioritising and addressing local community safety issues, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour

Strategic Priority 3 – To support confidence in policing, including through collaborative problem solving with communities

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – 1
To ensure effective delivery in response to local need, and improve the visibility and recognition of the work of the PCSP through effective consultation, communication and engagement
INDICATORS
% people who have heard of PCSPs

Theme	Aims and short description	Key Activities	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource/ cost required	Performance measures	Reporting Quarter
Form and Successfully Deliver the Functions of the PCSP							
PCSP Delivery	Support the PCSP to function effectively and deliver on the action plan aligned with the Community Plan and in line with OBA	PCSP private, public and thematic sub group meetings (ASB, Night Time Economy and Vulnerable Persons) Local and regional PCSP training and capacity building activities	Q1	Q4	£3870		
PCSP Awareness	Engage with local community, statutory groups and key stakeholders and	PCSP Communications Strategy in place including a social media presence	Q1	Q4	£3870	How much did we do # of social media posts # of PR campaigns/projects developed and launched # of PCSP posters/leaflets	Q2-4

	increasing PCSP awareness					distributed How well did we do it? #/% Increase in social media reach Is anyone better off #/% of people with an increased awareness of the PCSP and its work to address policing and community safety issues	Q4
PCSP Engagement	Engage with local community, statutory groups and key stakeholders and increasing PCSP awareness	Engagement events to provide opportunities for meaningful and two way engagement	Q1	Q4	£3870	How much did we do? # of public engagement & consultation events held How well did we do it? # of attendees/stakeholders at PCSP engagement and consultation events # and % of members of the public satisfied with PCSP engagement and consultation events Is anyone better off? % increase of attendees at PCSP engagement events #/% of attendees at consultation/engagement events with an increased	Q2-Q4

						knowledge of the work of the PCSP	
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STRATEGIC PRIORITY – 2
To improve community safety by prioritising and addressing local community safety issues, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
INDICATOR –
Recorded incidents of ASB
Recorded incidents of crime related to NTE
Recorded crime against vulnerable groups

Theme	Aims and short description	Key Activities	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource/ cost required	Performance measures	Reporting Quarter
Anti-Social Behaviour							
Anti-Social Driving	Engage target groups to divert, deter and raise awareness re anti-social driving and road safety	Emergency Services Road Traffic Collision Reconstructions	Q3	Q4	£14411	How much did we do? Number of events Number of SIDs deployed Number of participants in events	Q1-4
		Crashed Car Simulator	Q1	Q4		How well did we do it? #/% of participants assessed their participation as positive	Q1-4
		Speed Indicator Devices	Q1	Q4		# of weeks SIDs were deployed	Q1-4
						Is anyone better off? #/% of participants with increased knowledge and	Q3-4

						<p>awareness of the impact of anti social driving (Reconstructions)</p> <p>#/% of participants with improved attitude towards policing (Reconstructions)</p> <p>% participants more likely to engage with PSNI following reconstructions</p> <p>% reduction in speed recorded by SIDs</p>	<p>Q3-4</p> <p>Q3-4</p> <p>Q1-4</p>
Youth Diversionary/Engagement Programmes	Engage with, divert and deter young people from ASB in hotspot and target areas/times	Youth Engagement Initiatives - Youth Engagement and Diversionary programmes at hotspot areas and times	Q3	Q4	£22,411	<p>How much did we do? Number of initiatives Number of participants in each initiative</p> <p>How well did we do it? #/% of participants completing each initiative #/% of participants assessed their participation as positive</p> <p>Is anyone better off? #/% of participants with increased knowledge and awareness of the impact of ASB #/% of participants initiative</p>	Q3-4

						with improved attitude towards policing (when PSNI involved)	
Anti-Social Behaviour Educational Programmes	Raise awareness and educate re impact and consequences of ASB	<p>“Where is Your Child” education programme and PR campaign – District wide video campaign</p> <p>ASB ‘Who Do I Call’ initiative- District wide campaign</p>	Q3	Q4	£14411	<p>How much did we do? No of advertising sites No of posts/adverts No of leaflets distributed</p> <p>How well did we do it? Number of social media reach No of advertising sites within areas with high ASB</p> <p>Is anyone better off? ASB reduction in population during initiative</p>	Q3-4

Theme	Aims and short description	Key Activities	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource/cost required	Performance measures	Reporting Quarter
Night Time Economy							
NTE Training	Deliver training to support Night Time Economy stakeholders and increase knowledge and understanding re trading responsibilities & NTE issues	Training includes: Defib and First Aid Training Responsible Alcohol Trading programmes Drugs/Alcohol training programmes for staff in night-time economy	Q3	Q4	£12,911	How much did we do? No of events No of participants at each event How well did we do it? #/% of participants completing each initiative #/% of participants in each initiative assessed their participation as positive Is anyone better off? #/% of participants in each initiative with increased awareness and knowledge .	Q4
Safe Night Out	Improve NTE experience for all through education and multi-agency initiatives	Penalty Notice: Cost of Your Night Out campaign	Q3	Q4	£16,411	How much did we do? No of advertising sites How well did we do it? No of advertising sites within NTE areas Is anyone better off? ASB reduction during initiative	Q3-4

Theme Vulnerable Persons	Aims and short description	Key Activities	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource/ cost required	Performance measures	Reporti ng Quarter
Internet Safety	Engage with and increase target audience's awareness and knowledge of how to stay safe online	Teen Safe programme Internet Safety Programmes	Q3	Q4	£14,411	How much did we do? Number of events Number of schools Number of participants in each initiative How well did we do it? #/% of participants in each initiative assessed their participation as positive Is anyone better off? #/% of participants in each initiative with increased awareness and knowledge of internet safety #/% of participants in initiative more confident in accessing support services (Internet Safety only)	Q4
Domestic Violence	Increase awareness and knowledge of domestic violence	Domestic Violence campaign	Q3	Q4	£27,411	How much did we do? No of advertising sites How well did we do it? No of advertising sites within high population areas	Q4

		Positive Relationships DV Schools programme	Q3	Q4	<p>Is anyone better off? Increase in reports in DV incidents/crimes during campaign</p> <p>How much did we do? Number of participants in each initiative Number of schools delivered in</p> <p>How well did we do it? #/% of participants in each initiative assessed their participation as positive</p> <p>Is anyone better off? #/% of participants in each initiative with increased awareness and knowledge #/% of participants in initiative more confident in accessing support services</p>	Q4
		High risk DV victims security installations	Q1	Q4	<p>How much did we do? # of referrals # of home visits # of homes in receipt of equipment</p>	Q2-4

						<p># items of home security measures provided</p> <p>How well did we do it? # and % of referrals satisfied with the service # and % of referrals feel that the service is useful # and % of equipment provided within 2 weeks of referral</p> <p>Is anyone better off? # and % of referrals who feel safer in their homes as a result</p>	
Vulnerable Persons Initiatives	Increase awareness and knowledge of community safety issues affecting vulnerable people and provide support as identified	Hold community safety awareness raising events with the following target demographics, older people, people with disabilities. Also awareness raising events for rural crime and hate crime. As well as safety for females.	Q1	Q4	£27,411	<p>How much did we do? No of events Number of participants in each initiative</p> <p>How well did we do it? #/% of participants completing each initiative #/% of participants in each initiative assessed their participation as positive</p> <p>Is anyone better off? #/% of participants in each initiative with increased</p>	Q2-4

		Ageing Well – Older Persons Security	Q2	Q4	<p>awareness and knowledge #/% of participants in each initiative with improved attitudes towards policing (where relevant) #/% of participants in initiative more confident in accessing support services</p> <p>How much did we do? # of referrals # of home visits # of homes in receipt of equipment # items of home security measures provided</p> <p>How well did we do it? # and % of referrals satisfied with the service # and % of referrals feel that the service is useful</p> <p>Is anyone better off? #/% of participants with increased feeling of safety</p>	Q2-4
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		Rapid Bins	Q1	Q4		<p>How much did we do? # of Rapid Bins # of campaigns promoting Rapid Bins</p> <p>How well did we do it? #/% of partners reporting satisfaction with Rapid Bins initiative</p> <p>Is anyone better off? # of drugs deposited in Rapid Bins</p>	Q2-4
Crime Prevention Awareness Raising	Increase community knowledge of PCSP and awareness of activities and preventative measures	Awareness raising campaigns and engagements – rural crime, cybercrime, scams/bogus callers, fear of crime, road safety, Text Alert, Safer U App,	Q1	Q4	£25,411	<p>How much did we do? Number of awareness raising campaigns No of events held No of members of the public attending Number of text alert messages issued</p> <p>How well did we do it? #/% of participants who report their participation as positive/beneficial</p> <p>Is anyone better off? #/% participants improved</p>	Q2-4

						<p>their level of awareness of information, resources or support available in relation to topic</p> <p>#/% of participants with increased confidence in police</p>	
Support Hub	Support Hub	Facilitate Support Hub	Q1	Q4		<p>How much did we do?</p> <p># of Support Hub meetings</p> <p># of referrals</p> <p># referrals not accepted</p> <p># of partners organisations on Hub</p> <p># of support hub actions</p> <p>How well did we do it?</p> <p>% of partners attending meetings</p> <p>#/% of support hub actions completed</p> <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <p>#/% people helped by Hub who are discharged because their needs are met</p> <p>#/% of individuals who leave the Hub of their own volition</p>	Q2-Q4

						or are removed due to lack of engagement	
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STRATEGIC PRIORITY – 3
To support confidence in policing, including through collaborative problem solving with communities
INDICATOR
% increase in community confidence in policing
% increase in the level of reporting to the police (NI Crime Survey)
% increase in the level of community and police engagement
% increase in people who felt that the local PCSP has helped to improve policing in their local area

Policing Committee and Confidence Building	Aims and short description	Key Activities	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource/ cost required	Performance measures	Reporting Quarter
Policing Committee Monitoring	<p>Ensure Local accountability through monitoring police performance</p> <p>Ensure that policing delivery reflects the involvement, views and</p>	Facilitate and hold Policing Committee private meetings, themed public meetings, and Local Policing Plan meetings	Q1	Q4	£10,411	<p>How much did we do? Number of Policing Committee meetings No of members of public attending public meetings How well did we do it? #/% PCSP Members attending all meetings. #/% of members of public satisfied with public meetings Is anyone better off? #/% public attendees with improved awareness of local policing delivery.</p>	<p>Q2-4</p> <p>Q4</p>

	priorities of local communities						
Community and Police Engagement	<p>Support effective engagement with the police and local community</p> <p>Improve police service delivery in partnership with local communities</p>	<p>Police engagement with communities including children, youth, at risk and disadvantaged communities (activities such as, PEPS, Bike Marking, Trailer Marking, etc)</p> <p>Themed public meetings, consultative forums and local meetings</p> <p>Neighbourhood Watch</p>	Q2	Q4	£17,394	<p>How much did we do? Number of local meetings. Number of public engagement/themed events held Number of NH Watch Schemes</p> <p>How well did we do it? Number of members of the public attending engagement/themed events #/% of members of the public satisfied with engagement/themed events #/% of members of the NH Watch satisfied with meetings/events</p> <p>Is anyone better off? #/% of participants with increased confidence in police #/% participants more likely to engage with PSNI following event #/% participants more likely to report crime following event.</p>	<p>Q2-4</p> <p>Q2-4</p> <p>Q4</p> <p>Q2-4</p> <p>Q4</p>

						#/% of members of the NH Watch who feel their area feels safer because of the scheme.	Q4
Policing Committee Communication	Building community confidence in the rule of law by helping mitigate the harm caused to people and communities by paramilitarism, criminality and organised crime consistent with wider Programme for Government objectives and through use of co-design principles, where appropriate	Engage with high risk youths to deter repeat behaviour and reoffending. EA Youth and PSNI are partners.	Q2	Q4	£12,917	<p>How much did we do? Number of participants in the initiative</p> <p>How well did we do it? #/% of participants in each initiative assessed their participation as positive</p> <p>Is anyone better off? #/% participants with increased awareness #/% participants with improved levels of awareness of support services #/% of participants with increased confidence in police</p>	Q4

Acronyms

DoJ	Department of Justice
NIBP	Northern Ireland Policing Board
FYTD	Financial Year to Date
PFYTD	Previous Financial Year to Date
NPT	Neighbourhood Policing Team
LPT	Local Policing Team
CPO	Crime Prevention Officer
DST	District Support Team
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
NTE	Night Time Economy
VVC	Vulnerable Victims of Crime
NIFRS	Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service
RAPID Bins	Remove All Prescription and Illegal Drugs
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
TAIS	Timorese Association Inclusive Support
CRN	Community Resolution Notice
YDO	Youth Development Officer
PPU	Public Protection Unit
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
STEP	South Tyrone Empowerment Project
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs
DVA	Driver Vehicle Agency
DFI	Department for Infrastructure

Report on	Tender to Supply Willow to Cookstown Leisure Centre
Date of Meeting	13 th June 2024
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Sean Cavlin, Leisure Services Development Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	For Council to approve the awarding of delegated powers to the July 2024 Development Committee (and/or Chief Executive if required depending on dates/timelines) for the award of contract to supply Willow Tender for Cookstown Leisure Centre.
2.0	Background
2.1	Cookstown Leisure Centre currently uses a Biomass Boiler (500kw) as its main energy source, with the current contract expiring on the 30 th June 2024.
2.2	Following collaboration between officers within the Procurement and Health, Leisure & Wellbeing services, a specification was developed, and the procurement process was undertaken via a public advertisement on the e-tender portal. The tender opportunity was released initially on E-Tenders NI on 3 rd April 2024 with a closing date of 7 th May 2024 at 3pm.
2.3	The tender assessment panel met on the 13 th May to evaluate the submissions; with only one submission being received on/before the stipulated closing date/time. After deliberation, the panel agreed that the submission didn't meet all aspects of the e-tender requirements and therefore in line with councils procurement policy, the submission failed.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>The tender document was subsequently reviewed and re-released on the "E-Tenders NI" portal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract award term: Initial 12 months with option to extend for a further 2 x 12 month periods subject to satisfactory performance and at discretion of council. • The tender was placed on 'E Tenders NI': 21st May 2024 • Tender closing Date: 24th June @ 3.00pm • Tender Evaluation: 24th June 2024 <p>Therefore, it's intended to bring a tender evaluation report direct to the Council meeting on 27th June 2024. However, this is a challenging timeframe on the basis</p>

3.2	<p>that the tender closes on the 24th June 2024 and it is difficult to pre-empt the evaluation process and should there need to be any further due diligence undertaken.</p> <p>Therefore, should this report not be ready for the Council meeting on the 27th June 2024, due to the current contract expiring at the end of June 2024, delegated powers are requested for the July 2024 Development Committee (and/or Chief Executive if required depending on dates/timelines) for the immediate award of contract to supply Willow Tender for Cookstown Leisure Centre.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Budget has been allocated as part of the 24/25 rates estimates processes. As this service is required to aid the smooth and efficient running of Cookstown Leisure Centre, should this procurement process not be successful and/or timelines extend beyond the current contract expiry of 30th June 2024, Council may be liable to out of contract price increases in order to maintain service provision. This will be mitigated so far as reasonably practicable.</p> <p>Human: Officer time to manage the contract and to monitor compliance and effectiveness of the contract.</p> <p>Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant policies and procedures.</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>To note the contents of this report and in the event it is not possible to bring a tender report for the contract appointment to the Council meeting on 27th June 2024, that Members approval is sought pursuant to Section 7(1)(b) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, that authority is delegated to the July 2024 Development Committee (and/or Chief Executive if required depending on dates/timelines) for the award of contract to supply Willow Tender for Cookstown Leisure Centre subject to normal satisfactory due diligence processes for an initial contract award of 12 months with option to extend for a further 2 x 12 month periods subject to satisfactory performance and at discretion of council.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A

Report on	Choose To Live Better Funding
Date of Meeting	13th June 2024
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officers	Steven Mc Elhatton, Lead Health & Wellbeing Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update Council on successful application to the Choose To Live Better Fund and to seek Members approval of the acceptance of the letter of offer from The Northern Healthy Lifestyle Partnership (NHLP).
2.0	Background
2.1	The Northern Healthy Lifestyles Partnership supports outcomes of the regional “A Fitter Future for All Framework 2012-2022.” Obesity prevention - framework and reports Department of Health (health-ni.gov.uk) . Two overarching objectives of this framework are to: increase the percentage of people eating a healthy, nutritionally balanced diet; and to increase the percentage of the population meeting the CMO guidelines on physical activity Physical activity guidelines - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) .
3.0	Main Report

<p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p>	<p>The Northern Healthy Lifestyle Partnership (NHLP) sought proposals for projects/activities that promote opportunities for; increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, tackling obesity, supports breastfeeding, enhances food sustainability and promotes healthy lifestyles across the Northern Trust Area.</p> <p>The requirement is for projects to be delivered between June 2024 and March 2025 up to a maximum of £4,000 per project. Projects have to contain one or more of the following to support the prevention and reduction of obesity within the Northern Trust area;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Breastfeeding ➤ Food/Nutrition promotion/education ➤ Physical activity ➤ Food sustainability promotion/education ➤ Healthy lifestyle promotion/education <p>Only Northern Healthy Lifestyle Partnership (NHLP) partners and their organisation could apply for Choose to Live better funding and Partners could apply for more than one project.</p> <p>3 Project Proposals were submitted with 2 out of the 3 Project Proposals being successfully evaluated with a letters of offer being issued to Council for a total of £5,800.</p> <p>A breakdown of the 3 Project Proposals are listed below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="231 1137 1217 1659"> <thead> <tr> <th>PROJECT TITLE</th> <th>AMOUNT REQUESTED</th> <th>AMOUNT OFFERED</th> <th>REASON FOR DECLINE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Living Well in Mid Ulster</td> <td>£4,000</td> <td>£4,000</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mid Ulster Active and Healthy</td> <td>£4,000</td> <td>£0</td> <td>Evaluation panel ruled that this application was a duplication of service</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summer Neurodiversity Camps</td> <td>£1,800</td> <td>£1,800</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>On the 30th May, the NHLP informed Council with the outcome of their assessment of the applications and a letter of funding offer. It has been requested that Council sign and return the declaration and acceptance by Friday 7th June 2024 with delivery of projects and completion of project evaluation and OBA Report card no later than 31st March 2025 unless an extension has been granted by the partnership.</p>	PROJECT TITLE	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT OFFERED	REASON FOR DECLINE	Living Well in Mid Ulster	£4,000	£4,000	N/A	Mid Ulster Active and Healthy	£4,000	£0	Evaluation panel ruled that this application was a duplication of service	Summer Neurodiversity Camps	£1,800	£1,800	N/A
PROJECT TITLE	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT OFFERED	REASON FOR DECLINE														
Living Well in Mid Ulster	£4,000	£4,000	N/A														
Mid Ulster Active and Healthy	£4,000	£0	Evaluation panel ruled that this application was a duplication of service														
Summer Neurodiversity Camps	£1,800	£1,800	N/A														
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Other Considerations</p>																

4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Offer of £5,800 in grant funding to Council to support delivery of 2 identified projects.
	Human: There are no additional Council human resources implications associated with this project.
	Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant policies and procedures
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: Considered in line with Council's policies and procedures.
	Rural Needs Implications: Considered in line with Council's policies and procedures.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of the report and due to the deadline for return, give retrospective approval for the signing of the letter of offer from The Northern Healthy Lifestyle Partnership (NHLP).
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A

Report on	Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three-Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027)
Date of Meeting	13 June 2024
Reporting Officer	Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027)</p> <p>To provide Members with an update on key activities carried out by Sperrins Partnership for 2023/24 and seek agreement to enter into a new three year Sperrins Partnership Agreement for 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.</p>
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027)</p> <p>The Sperrins Future Search Conference entitled 'The Sperrins – Reaching New Heights, Realising Our Potential' was held in the Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown on 27 – 29 September 2017.</p> <p>The event brought together a group of key stakeholders to draft and agree an action plan for the future development of the Sperrins and in particular the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). (Action Plan available on Schedule 1).</p> <p>The Sperrins Partnership Project (previously Sperrins Future Search) is a joint collaboration between 4 councils; Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council, who back in 2018 committed to equal financial contribution towards its delivery and have also funded the Sperrins Future Search initiative.</p>
3.0	Main Report

<p>3.1</p> <p>3.1.1</p>	<p>Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027)</p> <p>The Partnership has developed and been leading on a number of initiatives including the following:</p> <p><u>The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) - Sperrins Outdoor Activity Development Officer</u></p> <p>The Sperrins Partnership in collaboration and with support from Sport NI and Partner Councils, secured funding through to The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) to appoint an Outdoor Activity Development Officer for the Sperrins. The post commenced in February 2023 and funding has been confirmed up to September 2026.</p> <p>The Outdoor Partnership is an organisation based in Wales who work to support people across the UK to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit. Their vision is: <i>“Enhancing people’s lives through outdoor activity.”</i> This means enhancing people’s physical and mental health, and wellbeing while improving the economic return and the social value of outdoor activity such as walking, cycling and adventure sports.</p> <p>The Outdoor Activity Development Officer role is to build capacity, identify training and education needs within outdoor sports and recreation across Sperrins Communities.</p> <p>The Outdoor Partnership is the main employer and manage the project with support from Partner Councils. Other aims of the project include enabling communities through promoting sustainable use of the environment, enhancing partnership working through local delivery and improving coach and education and opportunities for volunteering.</p> <p>Agreement has previously been sought through the 4 partner Council to commit to contributing £4,000 per year for a 2-year period, up to September 2026, to support the Outdoor Activity Development Officer in their role. This contribution has been agreed with all partner Councils.</p> <p>An overview of projects delivered or being progressed include:</p> <p>(a) <u>Two Power of the Outdoors Workshops delivered.</u> <u>Theme: EDI & Health and Wellbeing</u></p> <p>Two Power of the Outdoors Workshops were delivered in November 2023 & January 2024 in partnership with Sperrins Partnership & Sport NI.</p> <p><u>Workshop 1 - Power of the Outdoors for mental well-being</u> This workshop invited participants to listen to experts in areas of Mental Health and Adventure Therapy by exploring key findings from research and projects. Participants had time to share learning from those who provide activities, to those who work in the community and the health sector. The</p>
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aim of the workshops was to make positive changes using outdoor activities to promote better mental health and wellbeing.

Workshop 2 - Power of the Outdoors for All:

This workshop provided insights and innovative solutions that can encourage clubs and organisations to be more effective in making the outdoors accessible to all. The workshop involved practical workshops on current inclusion activities and projects.

Both events were fully attended with over 100 participants in total.

(b) Trail Maintenance Program: Theme- Community Development & Volunteering

This programme involved consultations with Fermangah and Omagh District Council & Mid Ulster District Council on maintenance and upkeep of two trail centre's at Gortin and Davagh. A specialist trail contractor was appointed through The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) and site visits were delivered between the months of January and March 2024. The contractor is now due to conduct surveys of both trail centres to develop snag lists which will give a clear indication of the level of maintenance required at these sites. A volunteer programme will be developed to conduct this work at the trail centres and the survey that was conducted will include a clear indication of the work the volunteers can do.

(c) Field Studies Training: Theme- Community Development & Health and Well-being

In partnership with Field Studies Ireland, The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) have developed and organised 2 wellbeing training workshops called 'Taking Notice', designed to support a connection to local nature through place-based learning. Two training sessions have been organised catering for over 20 members of Council staff which are due to be delivered in June.

(d) Coach Education: Theme- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Inclusive Adventure/Club Development

Money raised through an abseil fund raiser organised by The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) to the value of £5000 will be used to deliver inclusive adventure programmes aimed at increasing participation within EDI groups. The funding will support arrangements to organise a Climbing For All course which is due to be delivered at the Foyle Arena in April. Four members of Foyle Arena, wall climbing staff will benefit from this training along with The Hanging Rockers Climbing Club who have an additional four members on the course. The hope is to then develop further inclusive climbing programmes.

(e) Youth Ambassador Program- Community Development

A youth ambassador Project has been developed in partnership with Sperrins Partnership.

Project Vision:

“Provide young people with the opportunity to develop their outdoor skills and knowledge through sustainable recreational pathways and environmental, nature topics that are specific to the local rural communities based around the Sperrins AONB”.

The National Lottery, Awards for All is currently being explored as a method of funding this project.

(f) Rural Area Partnership In Derry (RAPID) Survey DEAs- All Themes

A consultation with RAPID has been carried out to look at the development of outdoor activity hubs in the rural DEAs of Derry City and Strabane District Council which would also act as methods of community development and social prescribing through outdoor activities. An online community consultation is currently being circulated with the intention to deliver further focus groups to identify the project scope. Peace Plus funding is currently being explored to fund this initiative.

(g) Inclusion Steering Group set up: Theme- Inclusion

A Northern Ireland Inclusive Adventure Steering Group has been established since the Power of the Outdoors Workshop was held. It was agreed that the group would remain informal and to be used as a method of sharing information around inclusion projects, offering participants the opportunity to share ideas and build relationships to develop future projects in collaboration with other group participants.

Members will be kept updated the outlined projects developments. Further information on the project can be found here [Northern Ireland-The Sperrins - The Outdoor Partnership](#).

Sperrins AONB Management

3.1.2

Members may recall receiving an update on 5-year funding secured through the DAERA Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023 - 2028 to enable the Sperrins Partnership to develop a Management Plan for Sperrin Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is a long-standing matter which the Sperrins Partnership Board had supported as a key issue facing the region.

(a) Sperrins AONB Officer

An AONB Project Officer has been recruited and commenced their post on 20th November 2023. The post is fully funded through the DAERA Environment Fund. The AONB Officer will assist with developing the Management Plan and Action Plan. An AONB Officer steering group has

been identified and meet quarterly to progress with developing the management plan in collaboration with key stakeholders. An AONB consultant has been appointed to undertake the consultation process with all key stakeholders and the public. This is a critical element of the plan development. The deadline for plan development is November 2025.

(b) Sperrins AONB Consultation

An external agency (S3 Solutions) has been appointed to undertake the consultation process with key stakeholders and the public. The consultation process will commence beginning of April through to mid-June 2024. The consultation responses will inform the management plan and it is vital to the plan development, that the process is successful. Elected Members and key government departments and agencies will be engaged to consult with before going out to consult with community and voluntary sectors. A number of in person events are planned throughout the four Council areas in May/ June 2024.

The Sperrins Partnership team will work closely with S3 Solutions to ensure engagement is far reaching and in an attempt to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to provide input into this important part of the management plan's development. Elected Members in each of the 4 Partner Council areas will be afforded the opportunity to join a meeting to take part in the consultation and provide input. Members are encouraged to take part and have their say in the consultation. The suggested engagement timelines are as follows:

(c) Sperrins AONB Consultation Project Management Process & Timeframe

Stage 1: Early Planning and Research (February 19th – March 18th, 2024)

Step 1 focuses on planning and the co-production of the approach to contract delivery.

Stage 2: Consultation Preparation (March 18th – April 15th, 2024)

The second phase of the engagement process focuses on preparations for consultation.

Stage 3: Engagement (April 15th – June 14th, 2024)

The third phase of this contract focuses on the engagement of key stakeholders. Broken down as follows:

- ❖ Stage 1 Stakeholder Group Engagement will commence 15th April – 2nd May 2024
 - Elected Members
 - Sperrins Partnership Board
 - Government Agencies and Departments
 - Landscape Partnerships

Following Stage 1 Stakeholder engagement, the draft themes and findings will be collated and once approved, will be shared with the Stage 2 Stakeholder group as an informed guide for further engagement.

❖ Stage 2 Stakeholder Group Engagement will commence 20th May to 14th June 2024

- Community and Voluntary Groups
- All Representative bodies
- 8 x in person Public Consultation Events (2 per council area, one during the day and one in the evening) as follows:

Council Area	Location	Date and Time
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	Glór Dhún Geimhin	Tuesday 21st May 12noon – 2pm
	Glenshane Community Development	Thursday 23 rd May 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Derry City and Strabane District Council	Glenelly House	Tuesday 28 th May 12noon – 2pm
	Learmount Resource Centre	Thursday 30 th May 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	An Creagan	Tuesday 4 th June 12noon – 2pm
	Gortin Community Centre	Thursday 6 th June 6.30pm to 8.30pm
Mid Ulster District Council	Broughderg Community Hall	Tuesday 11th June from 12noon – 2pm
	An Carn, Maghera	Thursday 13th June 6.30pm – 8.30pm

(d) Other projects currently being progressed and delivered through the DAERA Environment Fund include:

- Fixed Point Photography (FPP)

Fixed Point Photography is an effective method of recording and monitoring visual changes within the landscape. It involves taking a photograph, from the same point, at intervals over a period of time. Eight locations have been identified and agreed across the Sperrins and the project will commence in Spring 2024.

- Establishment of Sperrin AONB Wildfire Group

Research has commenced to understand the role remit, resource and responsibilities of establishing a Wildfire Group for the Sperrins. Once this is known then members will be established with a view to forming a functioning Wildfire Group for the AONB.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Review and Update of Sperrin Outdoor Recreation Action Plan</u> <p>The original Sperrins Outdoor Recreation Action Plan was produced in 2013 by Sport NI through the then operational Sperrins Outdoor Recreation Forum. The plan is outdated and requires a detailed review of the action identified within. This review will be facilitated through the Sperrins Stakeholder Group which is part of The Outdoor Partnership Sperrins Outdoor Activity Development Officers project.</p> <p><u>Sperrins Walking Programme</u></p> <p>3.1.3 Members may recall receiving an update on the Sperrins Walking Programme 2023/2024. The programme was a huge success with a high majority of walks selling out and feedback from Partner Councils and those who took part was extremely positive. Due to the success and in an attempt to build on the event, the 4 Partner Councils are working in collaboration to deliver the programme again commencing in Autumn 2024 with one element taking place in Spring 2025. The programme will offer a range of walks and will include individual Council specifications.</p> <p>3.1.4 <u>New Three Year Sperrins Partnership Agreement (for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027)</u></p> <p>The Sperrins Partnership Agreement was drafted and agreed by the 4 Sperrins Councils when the project was initiated in October 2020. The initial Partnership Agreement ended on 31 March 2024.</p> <p>A new Partnership Agreement was prepared by Officers from the 4 Sperrins Partner Councils, with input from the respective legal teams, to provide an accurate reflection of the current position of the Sperrins Partnership model. A new Sperrins Partnership Agreement was subsequently drafted and this is enclosed for Members attention on Appendix 1. It is recommended that Members approve the Partnership Agreement.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial:</p> <p>Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027)</p> <p>The Sperrins Partnership Project is presently funded by 4 Partner Councils at a total annual cost of £88,000. Officers are continuously looking at options to secure additional funding from external sources for relevant projects. External funding has been secured through the DAERA Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023 – 2028 to develop a Management Plan for the Sperrins AONB. The</p>

Sperrins Partnership provides the delivery model to ensure the Management Plan can be achieved.

Councils currently contribute £22,000 annually to the Sperrins Partnership and have done so since October 2020. To date there has not been any further additional financial requests to Council to support project activities. The funding provided, £88,000, mostly covers salary costs allowing for a small amount of programming costs.

A recent review of Sperrins Partnership project activities and projected salary costs over the next 3 years indicates that contributions may require to be incrementally increased in line with inflation and projected increases to salary costs. Building in these costs would assist Sperrins Partnership to manage the project more effectively and allow for forward planning. .

Sperrins Partnership Funding Sought:

2024 - 2025	£22,000 per Council <i>(no increase required)</i>	Total contributions sought £88,000. Salaries £78,000 and Programming costs £10,000
2025 - 2026	£25,000 per Council	Total contributions sought £100,000. Salaries £82,000 and Programming costs £18,000
2026 - 2027	£28,000 per Council	Total contributions sought £112,000. Salaries £86,000 and Programming costs £16,000

Sperrins Partnership has advised these proposed increases are essential to allow them to continue to deliver on its vision as outlined at the Sperrins Future Search Conference and to provide the mechanism to allow development of the AONB Management Plan for which external funding has been secured up to March 2028.

Sperrins Partnership will be increasing activity moving forward on the Sperrins AONB with a focus on developing the first ever Management Plan for the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposed increase in funding for years 2025-2026 to 2026-2027 will support this activity. Each Partner Council is requested to make a match funding contribution.

Members are asked to approve a Council funding contribution to Sperrins Partnership for the 2024/2025 financial year totalling £22,000. Additionally, Members are asked to approve in principle that Council continues to support Sperrins Partnership for a further 2 years (2025/26 and 2026/27), however, at this juncture, Council cannot agree the amount of funding for future years, until the budget setting process is finalised on an annual basis.

	Human: Officer Time
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027)</p> <p>The initial Partnership Agreement ended on 31 March 2024. A new Partnership Agreement has been developed between the four partner Councils. Decision making powers rests with each Council. All key decisions concerning the annual funding to be provided to Sperrins Partnership will be agreed annually at the rate setting process in Mid Ulster District Council. A governance structure exists (Schedule 2A) which consists of a Project Board and a variety of working groups who report to the Board. The Human Resource / Administration Lead Council is Derry City & Strabane District Council. The staff employed by Sperrins Partnership are detailed on Schedule 2B, and the role and responsibilities of each member of staff are contained in Schedules 3, 4 and 5.</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Rural Needs Implications:
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:-</p> <p>Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027)</p> <p>(a) Note update on Sperrins Partnership Project activities for 2023/2024.</p> <p>(b) Approve the new Sperrins Partnership Agreement (Appendix 1) between the four partner Councils for the next three financial years (2024/2025, 2025/2026 and 2026/2027) and authorise Council's Chief Executive to sign and return the Agreement on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council.</p> <p>(c) Agree in principle that Council fund Sperrins Partnership for a three year term, as highlighted at 5.1 (b) above. Approve a Council funding contribution of £22,000 to Sperrins Partnership Project for the 2024/2025 financial year and note that Mid Ulster District Council's financial contributions in years 2025/2026 and 2026/2027, will be determined annually, when budgets are finalised.</p> <p>(d) Note that Sperrins AONB Management Plan consultations will be delivered by external consultants, S3 Solutions, on behalf of the Sperrins</p>

	<p>Partnership. Members attention is drawn to two dates when public consultations will be held in Mid Ulster;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broughderg Community Centre - Tuesday 11 June 2024 (12noon - 2pm) • An Carn, Maghera - Thursday 13 June 2024 (6.30pm – 8.30pm).
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix 1 - Sperrins Partnership Agreement which contains the following Schedules;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule 1 – Sperrins Future Search Report • Schedule 2A – Sperrins Partnership Governance Structure • Schedule 2B - Sperrins Partnership Organisational Structure • Schedule 3 – Sperrins Partnership - Lead Project Officer - Role and Responsibilities • Schedule 4 – Sperrins Partnership - Project Administration Officer - Role and Responsibilities • Schedule 5 - Sperrin AONB Project Officer - Role and Responsibilities



SPERRINS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT PROJECT COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT



Version Number	2 nd Edition
Author	Project Officer
Dates adopted	DCSDC FODC MUDC CCGBC
Date Reviewed	

Sperrins Partnership Project Partnership Agreement

This agreement is entered into by and between 4 Council Partners:

Derry City & Strabane District Council (“hereinafter referred to as DCSDC”) of

Derry Civic Offices,
98 Strand Road,
Derry
BT48 7NN

And

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council (“hereinafter referred to as CCGBC”) of

Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
Coleraine,
BT52 1EY

And

Fermanagh & Omagh District Council (“hereinafter referred to as “FODC”) of

The Omagh Office,
The Grange,
Mountjoy Road,
Omagh,
BT79 9BL

And

Mid Ulster District Council (“hereinafter referred to as “MUDC”) of

The Magherafelt Office,
Ballyronan Road,
Magherafelt,
BT45 6EN

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Hereinafter together referred to as “the Partners”/ “the Partnership” and relating to the Sperrins Partnership Project first entitled the Sperrins Future Search Project (Also referred to The Sperrins: Reaching New Heights - Realising Our Potential). Funded by way of resource contributions (of equal value) by all 4 Partner Councils; And any other additional funding as may be deemed appropriate and as agreed by the 4 Partner Councils. The initial agreed core contribution towards delivery from the Partner Councils is £22,000 per annum. The contributions will be assessed each year to ensure the allocation covers annual increases to salaries and inflation costs. Any necessary increase to contributions will be evidence based and brought to the four Partners.
- 1.2 The Purpose of this partnership agreement is to state the intentions and to clarify and document key areas of collaboration and agreement of the partners to enable the successful delivery of the Sperrins Partnership Project. The intention of this document is to provide ground rules for cooperation and a framework for successfully creating mutual benefit for all the partners as a result of participating in the Sperrins Partnership Project.
- 1.3 Ultimate responsibility for decision making lies with the four partner Councils. However the Chief Directors within each Partner Council will be responsible for ensuring that the projects obligations are met and are responsible for overall management and oversight of the project.
- 1.4 The Partners/Partnership wish to define their rights and obligations with respect to the financing of and supporting the delivery of the Sperrins Partnership Project (hereinafter ‘the Project’).

The Partners have hereby agreed as follows:

2. PURPOSE AND DURATION

- 2.1 Each project partner shares equal responsibility for all aspects relating to successful delivery of the project. However, for the purpose of Human Resources and administration of the partnership DCSDC will be the lead Council. Agreement will be sought from Partners, where necessary to manage various elements of the project.
- 2.2 The Partners have agreed to collaborate on supporting the implementation of the Sperrins Partnership Project initially entitled the Sperrins Future Search Project which is currently described in the Future Search Conference Report (The Sperrins: Reaching New Heights, Realising Our Potential) appended to this agreement as **Schedule 1**. Additionally, the partners agree to support the implementation of any subsequent updates or variants of the original Future Search Conference Report subject to partner approval of the said update or variants.

2.3 The first edition of the Partnership agreement was effective from 12th October 2020 to 31st March 2024. This Partnership Agreement (second edition) will be effective from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2027 and shall be reviewed as and when deemed necessary by Partner Councils.

3 DEFINITIONS

3.1 *Project outputs/results* mean all the outputs/results arising out of the Project, including but not limited to reports, inventions, software, information, ideas, methods, solutions, devices, drawings, calculations, presentations, imagery, publications, materials etc. generated in the Project, irrespective of whether they are or can be protected by intellectual property rights such as copyright, patent or confidentiality.

3.2 *Background* means all information generated outside the Project (regardless of the form or medium in which they are disclosed or stored), including but not limited to reports, inventions, software, information, ideas, methods and solutions, devices, drawings, calculations, presentations, imagery and, publications, materials etc. irrespective of whether they are or can be protected by intellectual property rights such as copyright, patent or confidentiality. Background shall not be considered to constitute the Project outputs of the Project.

3.3 *User Right for Research Purposes* refers to a non-exclusive right to use the Project outputs in internal research and development purposes as well as teaching or scientific research purposes. User Right for Research Purposes does not include a right to license the Project outputs or otherwise assign the Project outputs to third parties as a whole or in part, or to sell services conducted by utilizing the Project outputs or otherwise commercially exploit the Project outputs.

3.4 *Intellectual Property Rights* means all protection forms of intellectual property rights including but not limited to patents, utility models, trademarks, branding, copyright, database rights, and copyright of design, confidential information, and the applications of the protection forms of intellectual property rights.

3.5 *Confidential Information* means either oral or written information concerning technical, commercial, or other matters related to a Partner's plans, products, know-how or other activities and which information is clearly marked as confidential or otherwise obviously of confidential nature.

4 PROJECT ORGANISATION

4.1 To achieve the successful delivery of this project in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and value for money, the project should be organised in such a way that everyone involved is committed and empowered and that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. This is necessary to ensure that there is a short and effective line of communication to senior management so that they can take prompt action when needed.

4.2 Project management is assured by a Project Board, the Director Coordinating Group, the Operational Delivery Group and supported by 4 Thematic Action Groups, input from the Statutory Partners Sub – group ensures a cohesive cross government approach to delivery. The project is supported by Derry City & Strabane District Council, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Mid Ulster District Council. The governance and management structure of the project as well as detail on the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the project’s delivery is contained in **Schedule 2A (Governance Structure) and Schedule 2B (Organisation Structure).**

4.3 **The Project Board** will provide strategic direction ensuring that the project meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits. The Board will not exceed 20 members to consist of the following:

- Two Elected Members from each partner Council (8 in total);
- Chairpersons of each of the Thematic Action Groups (4 in total);
- Key strategic regional stakeholders.

Providing support to the Project Board will be:

- The Lead Project Officer;
- The Project Administrative Assistant;
- Officers (observer’s role only) from each of the Partner Councils.

4.4 **The Thematic Action Groups** have been set up to articulate the needs of stakeholders and to facilitate the work detailed in the 4 thematic action plans developed during the Sperrins Future Search Exercise. The membership of the thematic actions groups has been drawn from delegate attendance at the Sperrin Future Search Conference.

Each Partner Councils will facilitate the hosting of one of Thematic Action Group - See Table 1.

Table 1	
CC&GBC	Tourism & Branding
DCSDC	Community
FODC	Infrastructure
MUDC	Environment & Heritage

4.5 **The Lead Project Officer** is responsible for the day-to-day detailed project management, including management of resources (financial and staff) of the project and acts as the interface between the Project Board, the Director Coordinating Group, the Operational Delivery Group, the Statutory Partners Sub-group and the 4 Thematic Action Groups. The Lead Project Officer is supported in their duties by the Sperrin AONB Officer and a Project Administrative Assistant.

The Sperrin AONB Project Officer post commenced on 20th November 2023. This post is fully funded through the DAERA Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023 – 2028. The AONB officer is responsible for developing a 10-year Management Plan and 5 year Action Plan with support from the Lead Project Officer and the Administrative Assistant and the Sperrins Partnership. The Partners agree to support the AONB Project Officer in her role throughout its duration. The Partners agree to provide a hot desk where necessary to enable the AONB Project Officer to fulfil the obligations of their role.

As the Human Resource / Administration lead for the project's duration, Derry City & Strabane District Council- the Lead Project Officer, the AONB Project Officer and The Project Administrative Assistant sit within that Councils' Business & Council Directorate.

The Lead Project Officer is an essential position and has a clearly defined role and responsibilities.

The Lead Project Officer will be required to develop and prepare an annual action plan, aligned to available budgets, for discussion and agreement initially with the Director Coordinating Group and thereafter the Partnership Board.

The specific roles and responsibilities for each member of Sperrins Partnership staff are appended as follows;

- Lead Project Officer – **Schedule 3**
- Project Administrative Assistant – **Schedule 4**
- Sperrins AONB Officer – **Schedule 5**

4.6 The Human Resource / Administration Lead Partner

As well as adhering to its responsibilities as a Project Partner (Outlined within the agreement), as Human Resource Lead Partner, Derry City and Strabane District Council will be responsible for the appointment of appropriate personnel to undertake the roles of Lead Project Officer, Administrative Support and AONB Project Officer. As Human Resource Lead Partner, Derry City and Strabane District Council will be responsible for overall financial administration/ accounting of the project.

All Partners agree to equally:

- Support the activities of Sperrins Partnership as defined within the Governance Structure on **Schedule 2A**.
- Enable effective communication between all stakeholders;
- Timely submission of reports and application of payments;
- Adhere to its organisational role and responsibilities for the delivery, spend, and the reclaim of any funding.

5 FINANCIAL PROVISIONS, PROJECT COSTS & INCOME, ACCOUNTING

5.3 All partners will adhere to their respective organisational roles and responsibilities for the delivery and spend.

5.4 The Lead Project Officer, shall:

- Be responsible for ensuring the timely financial administration of the Project and shall maintain separate budget cost codes for the Project and the Partners;
- Follow the financial guidelines provided by the Funder(s);
- Provide a Global Cost Plan at the beginning of the Project period with updates incorporating actual expenditure incurred/income received to be made available for review at Board meetings and at the end of the Project period stated in the Grant Letter(s) of Offer;
- Compile, verify and share with the partners all necessary financial information for the purpose of enabling applications for payments to the Funder(s) according to Grant Letter of Offer (s) and guidance.

5.5 The Partners shall:

- The Human Resources / Administration Lead Council will hold responsibility for the statutory aspects of the employment contract, including liability for the statutory costs and requirements arising from potential redundancy should the Partnership dissolve. In such circumstances the other Partners will assist collectively work with the Human Resources / Administration Lead Council and to seek to secure suitable alternative employment or redeployment for the affected staff within any of the four Councils and will agree to share any costs such as redundancy associated with the dissolution of the Partnership.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to enable successful delivery of the Project, its long-term operation, maintenance and promotion;
- Accept the Project's eligible budget and commit themselves to providing their individual contributions to the budget and to the terms of these contributions;
- Commit themselves to the provision of long-term annual revenue budgets to enable the operation, maintenance and promotion of the completed project;
- Guide the Project costs under the planned budget. Project costs are only those costs which have been included and budgeted in Grant Letter(s) of Offer. No other costs may be charged to the Project unless specifically recommended by the Project Board and agreed through Partner Councils and without written acceptance prior to expenditure from the Funder that such charges are allowable;

- Follow the financial guidelines;
- Where applicable be responsible for financial administration of the Project keeping separate cost codes of their Project expenditure according to the rules;
- Where applicable supply all the necessary information for the preparation of activity and financial reports and provide validated financial documentation and statements to the Human Resource Lead Partner. Where applicable the Human Resource Lead Partner shall receive copies of all supporting documents relating to supporting partners accounts and expenditure, including copies of invoices, payment records, receipts and bookkeeping vouchers. Expenditure must be defrayed against the budget headings;
- Where applicable provide support to the Human Resource Lead Partner in the application process for payments to any Funder(s) according to Grant Letter of Offer (s) and guidance;
- Be responsible for any separate Grant Letter(s) of Offer relating to the project entered into with any Funder(s) and reclaim of funding relating to eligible spend;
- Post project completion, where necessary provide support to the Human Resource Lead Partner and supply all information necessary to facilitate post project queries by the funder and deliver on any post project commitments as required by the funder;
- Where applicable In case of deficiency the Funder (s) must be informed immediately.

6. REPORTING

6.1 Activity reports

Unless otherwise defined each Partner shall deliver to the Human Resources / Administration Lead Council, monitoring data (Partner activity reports) to be used in reporting within 1 month following the end of each agreed reporting period.

The Lead Project Officer shall compile and sign the monitoring report (main project activity report) on behalf of the Partners.

Where applicable the Human Resources / Administration Lead Council shall include the Partner activity reports delivered by the Partners in connection with the payment as a part of the Partner activity reporting of the Project, and deliver these to any Funder on behalf of the Partners.

6.2 Reporting to Partner Councils

The Human Resources / Administration Lead Council will provide Partner Councils with a minimum of one progress report per annum to present to Council Committees to outline key activities that have taken place throughout the year.

7. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

This Agreement does not affect the ownership of any Intellectual Property in any Background or in any other technology, design, work, invention, software, data, technique, drawings, calculations, models, maquettes, artwork, know-how or materials, which do not constitute Project outputs.

The Partners may grant each other access rights to the Background they own or otherwise have in their possession, for the term of the Agreement, in order to carry out the tasks related to the Project. The Partners do not have commercial use for the Background provided by another Partner. In case another Partner's Background is needed for the use of the Project outputs, the Partners involved shall together agree on the terms on which the Background material can be used.

The disclosure of the Background and access rights thereto shall be in the sole discretion of the Partner owning the Background or otherwise having the Background in its possession. The Partner receiving the access rights to the disclosing Partner's Background shall not be entitled to assign the Background further to a third party.

The ownership of the Project outputs shall rest exclusively and automatically with the Partner, whose employee/researcher created, invented or generated the Project outputs. If Project outputs are generated jointly by the Partners, the ownership shall belong to the Partners jointly in the proportion of their contribution to creating such Project outputs. The Partners involved shall agree between them on Intellectual Property Rights upholding and defending of rights and the distribution of any costs incurred thereby. The Partners shall agree separately on detailed conditions for the exploitation of their joint ownership.

The Partners grant each other a royalty-free User Right for Research Purposes to Project outputs generated by the other Partners, excluding applied for or granted Intellectual Property Rights, which shall be agreed upon separately with the owner and a reasonable compensation shall be paid to that party.

8. DOCUMENTS

All the official documents submitted to the Funder(s) or other Project related organisations shall bear the name of all Partners.

Each Partner shall have access to work carried out by the other partners in connection to the Project and copies of all final documents submitted to the Funder(s) shall be made available to each Partner.

9. PUBLICITY

The Partners shall adhere to agreed publicity requirements or publicity requirements outlined within any Grant Letter(s) of Offer ensuring appropriate recognition of support is assigned to the Funder(s) among Project participants and the general public.

10. PUBLICATIONS

The outputs of the Project shall be public, unless otherwise provided by an Act, the terms of funding, or this Agreement. No Confidential Information may be disclosed upon the publication of the Project outputs, and the publication may not risk the protection of the Project outputs by Intellectual Property rights.

The material which is intended to be published shall be delivered to the Partners in a written form and with a written request to publish the material in which request the forum of the publication (e.g. name of the scientific publication) and the timing of the publication shall be defined. The permission is considered given if the Partners have not objected the publication within fifteen (15) days after having received the request. The permission is not to be denied without a well-founded ground which may only be the protection of Confidential Information or protecting of Intellectual Property Rights. If the Partners do not answer at all a permission shall be considered given. The publishing Party shall be entitled to publish previous to the fifteen days defined herein in case an authorized permission from the other Parties has been gained.

11. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The Partners undertake not to disclose the other Partner's Confidential Information to third parties, without written consent, and to obey diligence in order to safeguard the confidentiality of the said information. The Partners are not entitled to use Confidential Information for purposes other than to fulfil their obligations set forth in the Agreement.

The confidentiality obligations shall not apply to Confidential Information, which:

- is already in the recipient Partner's possession at the time of disclosure through no fault or negligence of the recipient Partner;
- is or later becomes part of the public domain through no fault or negligence of the recipient Partner;
- is received from a third Partner in circumstances where the recipient Partner has no reason to believe that there has been a breach of an obligation of confidentiality, other breach of contract or illegal act;

- is independently developed by the recipient Partner; or
- is required to be disclosed by law, decree, governmental order or decree or other similar provisions.

The Partners are obliged to obey the confidentiality obligations during the term of this Agreement and additionally five years after the term or termination of this Agreement.

12. LOCATION AND FACILITIES

The official address for the Project shall be:

Derry City & Strabane District Council of
Derry Civic Offices,
98 Strand Road,
Derry
BT48 7NN

Each Partner shall provide such office accommodation within its own organisation, as may be deemed necessary for the execution of the Project.

13. ASSIGNABILITY

No Partner shall sell, assign, mortgage, pledge, encumber or in any way transfer or dispose of its rights or duties under this Agreement, and any Grant Letter(s) of offer without the written consent of the other Partners.

14. LIABILITY

The Partners undertake to comply with this Agreement in so far as they are practicably able to do so with due care and using competent personnel.

In submitting any Project outputs to any of the other Partners under the Agreement, each Partner undertakes to use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the accuracy thereof. The submitting Partner shall be under no further obligation or liability in respect of the same and no warranty, condition or representation of any kind is made, given or to be implied in any case as to the sufficiency, accuracy or fitness for purpose of such Project outputs, or the absence of any infringement of statutory intellectual property rights of third Partners by the use of such Project outputs. The recipient Partner shall in all cases be solely responsible for the use to which it puts such Project outputs including transfer of Intellectual Property Rights relating thereto.

Each Partner shall indemnify each of the other Partners, in respect of acts and omissions of itself and of its employees and agents provided always that such indemnity shall not extend to claims for indirect or consequential loss or damage such as but not limited to loss of profit, revenue, contacts or the like.

In no event shall the liability of each Partner exceed its share of financing, unless it is agreed by the Partners that the damage has been caused by willful act or gross negligence.

Any claim against a Partner shall be presented no later than one (1) year as of the date the damage incurred or the date the affected Partner was informed of the damage. All claims for damages shall, however, be submitted no later than one (1) year as of the expiry date of this Agreement.

The Partners shall not be held liable for damage caused by the other Partners.

Further, each or any one of the Partners shall not be held liable for damage resulting from force majeure.

15. LIABILITY TO ANY FUNDER(S)

Each Partner shall be solely liable for performing its share of work according to any Grant Letter(s) and its annexes. Each Partner shall also bear the liability for demonstrating its own costs. Should the Funder(s) claim for recovery of the funds partially or entirely, paid to a Partner, the Partner in question shall bear the liability thereof.

16. DEFAULT AND REMEDIES

In the event of a failure of a Partner (“the defaulting Partner”) in fulfilling of its obligations in whole or in part under this Agreement) which is irremediable or which is not remedied within thirty (30) days of written notice from the Human Resources / Administration Lead Council on behalf of the other Partners (a separate agreement is not required for this action to be approved), the Partners/Partnership may jointly terminate the Agreement with the defaulting Partner by one months prior notice. The terminations will have the following consequences:

- a) Upon termination the access rights granted to the defaulting Partner by the other Partners shall cease immediately. The access rights granted by the Defaulting Partner to the other Partners shall remain in full force and effect;
- b) The scope of the tasks of the Defaulting Partner as specified in the Project Description, Grant Letters of Offer and Work Plans shall be assigned to one or several legal entities which are chosen by the Project Board and are acceptable to Funder(s) administration and which agree to be bound by the terms of the Agreement with preference to one or more of the remaining Partners;
- c) The Defaulting Partner shall assume all direct cost increase resulting from the assignment referred to in (b).

17. STATE AID

Where indirect State Aid such as trainings, business support etc. is provided by the Project to end beneficiaries, the Partners have the responsibility to ensure that State Aid rules are complied with and Partners are asked to verify that the conditions have been met. In principle, indirect aid is viewed as “de minimis” aid.

18. INSOLVENCY

In the event of insolvency of any Partner, the other Partners are entitled to terminate this Agreement in respect of the insolvent Partner according to the procedure set forth in article 15.0 Default and Remedies.

19. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

The contract Partners sign this agreement with the intention to work together amicably. The Partners will negotiate disputes arising from this contract in order to obtain mutual acceptable settlements. Any disputes, on which no amicable settlement is possible, in spite of all efforts being made in this respect, shall be dealt with the Default and Remedies Section of this Agreement.

Nothing in this Agreement shall limit a Partners right to seek injunctive or interlocutory relief at any time from any court of competent jurisdiction.

This Agreement shall be governed in accordance with the laws of Northern Ireland.

20. INTEGRATED AGREEMENT

This Agreement represents and constitutes the entire agreement between the Partners and shall not be explained, modified or contradicted by any prior or contemporaneous negotiations, representations or agreements, either written or oral. Any amendments to this Agreement must be agreed by each Partner Council in writing and appended to this Partnership Agreement.

The undersigned Partners hereby agree to carry out the above-mentioned tasks as described. This Agreement is made in as many counterparts as there are Partners. The Partners warrant that the persons undersigning this Agreement are authorised to sign for the organisation they here represent.

21. SCHEDULES / APPENDICES

- **Schedule 1** - Future Search Conference Report (The Sperrins: Reaching New Heights, Realising Our Potential)
- **Schedule 2A** - Sperrins Partnership Governance Structure
- **Schedule 2B** - Sperrins Partnership Organisation Structure
- **Schedule 3** - Lead Project Officer – Roles & Responsibilities
- **Schedule 4** – Project Administrative Assistant – Roles & Responsibilities
- **Schedule 5** – Sperrin AONB Officer – Roles & Responsibilities

Signatories to the Agreement from each Partner Council

On behalf of the Partner organisation: Derry City & Strabane District Council (DCSDC)

Signature Full name Date

On behalf of the Partner organisation: Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council (CCGBC)

Signature Full name Date

On behalf of the Partner organisation: Fermanagh & Omagh District Council (FODC)

Signature Full name Date

On behalf of the Partner organisation: Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC)

Signature Full name Date



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27th October 2017

The Sperrins: Reaching New Heights, Realising Our Potential



Future Search Conference Report



Contents

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary	5
Key messages	7
Next steps	8

CONFERENCE NARRATIVE

Introduction	
1. Background	8
2. What is Future Search?	9
3. Opening and introductions	11
Focus on the past	
4. The story of who we are	12
Focus on the present	
5. Trends affecting the Sperrins	14
6. How trends affect what we do	16
7. 'Prouds' and 'Sorries'	20
Focus on the Future	
8. Desired Future Scenarios	22
9. Discovering Common Ground	25
10. Creating Common Ground Statements	26
11. Action Planning	28

ANNEXES

A. Facilitators' biographies	43
B. Map of the Sperrins	44
C. The Sperrins 2030 - Poem	46
D. Glossary	47





SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The Sperrins Future Search conference brought together a group of key stakeholders to create an action plan for the future of the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) summed up in the words 'reaching new heights, realising our potential'.

The event was initiated by the four local councils responsible for the area with a view to enabling participants to agree a common mission, to take responsibility for action and to develop commitment to implementation. It took place over three days and involved 60 participants drawn from a wide range of stakeholder groups: community, land owners/farmers, government departments and

statutory agencies, tourism, heritage and environment, outdoor recreation, business and industry, elected representatives and young people.

The conference embarked upon a collective journey that developed over five sessions labelled Past, Present, Future, Common Ground, and Action. Each involved gathering information, sharing understandings in small groups, reports to the whole, and large group dialogues. Each session built on the previous one and the product was a number of common ground statements and an action plan.



Five Common Ground Statements

Example Actions

(Full action plans are in section 11)

1. Environment and Heritage:

The spirit, environment and heritage of the Sperrins is conserved, enhanced and responsibly managed so that those who live, work and visit can enjoy, celebrate and respect.

Review and feedback to Community Plan, Local Development Plan and other statutory plans.

Audit of existing Heritage and Environment resource.

Sperrins Day/Weekend: 'Spring in the Sperrins'. Annual event.

2. Infrastructure:

We provide safe and interesting networks for recreation that complement the environment. We are linked into the wider tourism offering in Ireland. We provide modern communications for the Sperrins.

Audit of infrastructure to establish baseline.

Define potential: greenways, routeways, access to transport.

Implement full marketing plan.

3. Brand and Tourism:

The Sperrins, spurs of rock, is a great natural, undiscovered and unspoilt destination that is recognised and cherished by others as it is by those who live and work here, and is steeped in history, rich in culture and with majestic views.

Definition: the area, essence, product.

Research: Essence of the Sperrins: - What is it? - Where is it? - What is the USP? - Why would people visit?

4. Community:

We are a community of people of varying needs and aspirations, fuelled by our passion to ensure a strong, vibrant, happy community with equal access to social, health, educational, cultural, economic and creative opportunities. We are the custodians who have lived, loved and worked the land for generations, past, present and future. The beauty of the Sperrins is reflected in the beauty of its people.

Four councils community planning and community services teams to meet and coordinate.

Gather community development groups together to enable networking, to discuss the way forward and to further develop.

5. Management Structures:

We are creating a management structure fit for purpose with the necessary resources, authority and expertise, taking forward our shared vision for the Sperrins to enhance an area of beauty we can live and work in.

Examine models of best practice of delivery/ structural mechanisms based on what works elsewhere.

Key messages

Emerging from the three days of discussion that crafted these five Common Ground Statements and the associated Action Plans are a number of key messages that help inform what the next steps should be.

Definition: There is uncertainty as to what is meant by 'the Sperrins' in terms of geographical area and therefore the scope of the conference. The discussions that took place suggest that there is a probable consensus around treating the AONB as the core while embracing the critical relationships between communities in the AONB and neighbouring larger settlements.

Place: Participants feel a very strong sense of 'place', of being connected to where they live and extending to a great love of that place. Their sense of identity is not necessarily embodied in the Sperrins as a whole but rather in their particular part of it. At the same time there is pride and enthusiasm for the past, present and future of the Sperrins.

Strategy: Critical to achieving the aspirations of this conference is a strategic approach to the Sperrins. Past efforts at managing the AONB have been piecemeal and often short lived. This conference is an important first step in the right direction.

Structure: A successful strategic approach requires the right partnership for the Sperrins comprising the necessary authority, resources, legitimacy and expertise. There is agreement that this must be an inclusive structure specifically designed for the task and should learn from best practice and other governance models elsewhere.

Leadership: Initially the four councils are expected to provide the necessary commitment and leadership to achieve the aspirations of the conference. Leadership must come from all sectors, however, in a collective effort to work in a connected way towards common goals. This is especially true given the lack of political direction from Stormont – a major theme throughout the conference.

Participation: There is an expectation that the participants in the Future Search event will be involved in developments that flow from it and that there will also be wider stakeholder and community participation.

Joined up: The importance of links with Community Plans, Local Development Plans and the draft Programme for Government, as well as existing policies and programmes was emphasised.

Audit: Participants want a clear picture of existing physical infrastructure and resources, community infrastructure, programmes, policy and governance.

Research: Most of the working groups identified the need for research ahead of implementing actions.

Connection: Sperrin communities have much in common with each other and there is a desire to strengthen connections within the AONB. Connection and relationships within communities is also important.

Conflict: While the Future Search process is predicated on consensus building it also recognises the need to make space for those things that are 'not agreed'. Although participants did not record a list of 'not agrees' it is clear that conflict and division are live issues: mining, quarrying and wind turbines were all mentioned. The passion behind such issues was also evident outside the conference on the first day.

More Than Tourism: It is clear that while participants see tourism as a critical and under-developed part of the local economy with great potential, their perception of the Sperrins is a more holistic one encompassing a range of economic and social opportunities. There is a strong focus on what supports the health and wellbeing of the local population and the environment they inhabit.

Appetite For Action: There is real enthusiasm from all participants, whether locally based or from external agencies, for following up on the conference and putting words into action.

Next steps

Suggested next steps are:

1. Each of the conference's five action planning groups (Environment & Heritage, Infrastructure, Brand & Tourism, Community and Management Structures) meets before the end of November 2017 to:

- a.** clarify the actions suggested in each action plan to ensure they are easily understood,
- b.** confirm what participants are ready and willing to do now within existing resources,
- c.** consider if any additional participants should be part of that action planning group.

2. Each of the four councils will take the lead on a common ground statement and host the

meeting in their area of the Sperrins. The councils' Future Search Planning Group (Chief Executives or nominated Director) will meet collectively with the Management Structures group.

3. Reconvene the Future Search Conference (including new members of the action planning groups) early in the New Year to launch the conference report, report back on thematic group action plans and learn from best practice elsewhere.

Conference narrative

Introduction

1. Background

The Sperrin Mountains are in Counties Tyrone and Derry/Londonderry within an area bounded by the towns of Strabane, Dungiven, Maghera, Magherafelt, Cookstown and Omagh. The Sperrins are the largest and least explored mountain range in Northern Ireland.

Originally designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1968, the Sperrins encompasses a largely mountainous area of great geological complexity with an abundance of natural tourism resources, such as lakes, rivers, valleys and forests. It provides an attractive destination for a wide range of outdoor activities and the area is rich in historic and archaeological heritage and folklore.

The Sperrins AONB occupies a total area of 1181km² broken down across the four

respective Councils (the boundary of the Sperrins AONB is shown at Annex A):

- * Derry City & Strabane District Council – 447km² (38%)
- * Fermanagh & Omagh District Council – 301km² (25%)
- * Mid Ulster District Council – 256km² (22%)
- * Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council – 177km² (15%)

The recent reform of local government has presented an opportunity for the new councils to lead and co-ordinate discussions with the various stakeholders with a view to realising the potential of the Sperrins while protecting and enhancing the natural heritage of the region. To this end the four councils decided to organise a Future Search Conference of Sperrins' stakeholders and this took place in Cookstown from the 27th to the 29th of September 2017.

Future Search Principles

- "Whole System" in the room
- "Whole elephant" as context for local action
- Focus on future and common ground - not past problems and conflicts
- Self-management and responsibility for action

2. What is Future Search?

Future Search is a unique planning method used world-wide by hundreds of communities and organizations. The method enables large diverse groups to validate a common mission to take responsibility for action and to develop commitment to implementation.

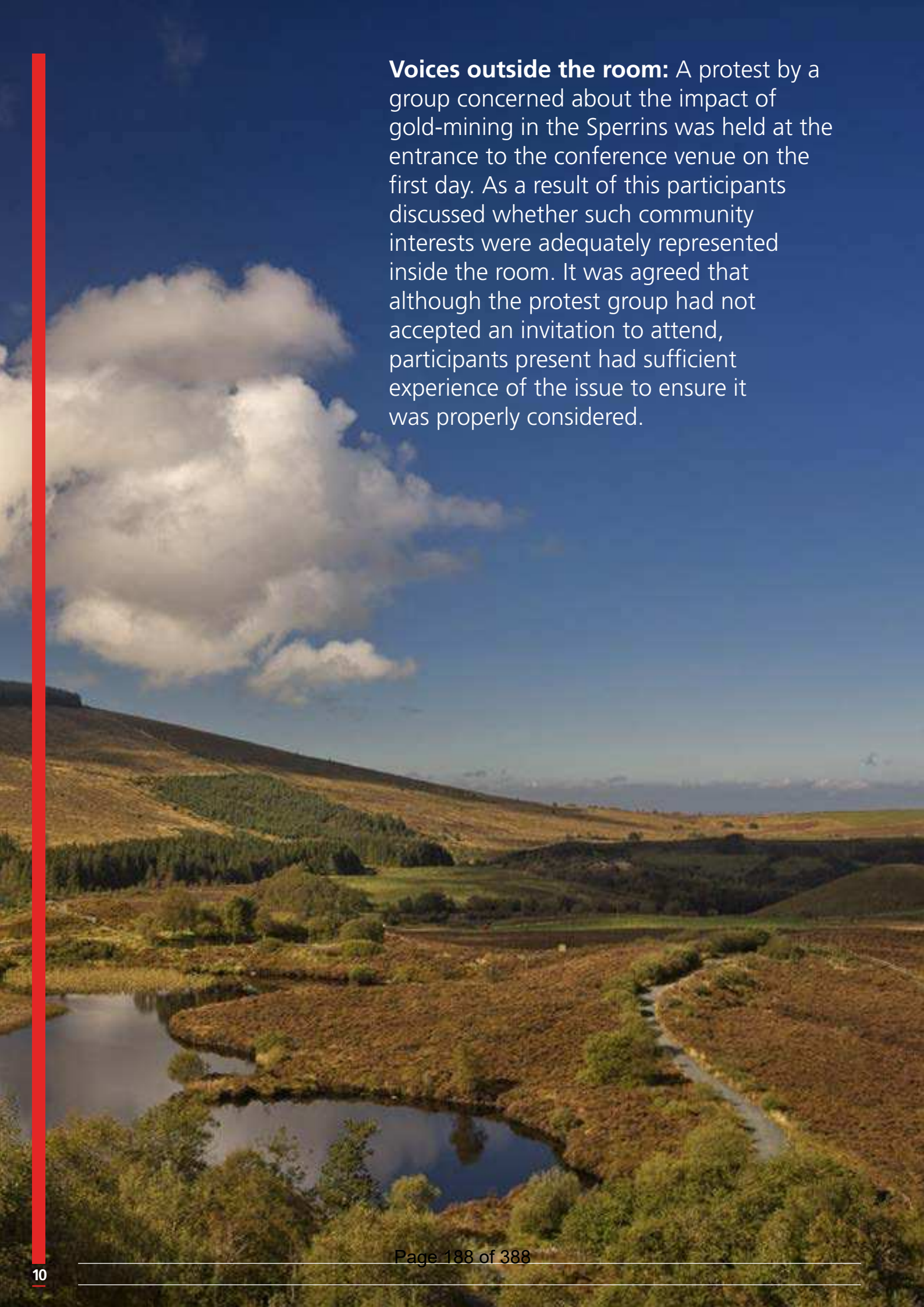
Typically Future Search involves 60 to 80 people meeting over three days and working in small groups as 'stakeholders' (shared perspectives), and in mixed groups that are a cross-section of the whole. Every person has a chance to speak and listen. This makes possible a shared picture based on the experience of all those present.

The meeting is also managed so that the entire group can be in dialogue when necessary. Future Search follows tested principles based on what it takes to enable people to act cooperatively without having to defend or sell

their own agendas or give up cherished values.

The first principle involves 'getting the whole system in the room' - meaning people with authority, resources, expertise, information and need. The second involves putting the focal issue in global perspective, helping each person to see a bigger picture than usual. The third requires seeking common ground and desirable futures, while treating problems and conflicts as information, not action items. The fourth asks people to manage their own small groups and take responsibility for acting on what they learn.⁽¹⁾

There are five sessions labelled Past, Present, Future, Common Ground, and Action. Each involves gathering information, sharing understandings in small groups, reports to the whole, and large group dialogues. Each session builds on the previous one and the product is an action plan and follow-up structure.



Voices outside the room: A protest by a group concerned about the impact of gold-mining in the Sperrins was held at the entrance to the conference venue on the first day. As a result of this participants discussed whether such community interests were adequately represented inside the room. It was agreed that although the protest group had not accepted an invitation to attend, participants present had sufficient experience of the issue to ensure it was properly considered.

Conference narrative

Introduction



3. Opening and introductions

The Sperrins Future Search Conference was opened by the Mayor of Derry City & Strabane District Council and Chair of Mid Ulster District Council who then handed over to the conference facilitators, Sandra Janoff and Aiden McGinley (see Annex B for biographies), who explained the process, principles and task ahead. They emphasised that this event is about all aspects of life in the Sperrins, that all voices will be heard and that the list of participants had been drawn up with this in mind. Participants in the event fell into nine stakeholder groups:

- * Community
- * Land Owners/Farmers
- * Govt Departments & Statutory Agencies
- * Tourism
- * Heritage & Environment
- * Outdoor Recreation
- * Business & Industry
- * Elected Representatives
- * Young People

After participants had introduced themselves, the question 'Are we the right people to do this work?' was asked. It was noted that the Young People group had no members and it was explained that given the timing of the conference it had proved very difficult to secure participation from this group.⁽²⁾ A one-day conference focused on young people was suggested. It was noted that 'health and wellbeing' was not directly represented but a number of participants felt they were actively involved in that area. It was also noted that a substantial proportion of those present were people who live and work in the Sperrins.

Further explanation of the process included the task, agenda and conditions for success. The facilitators explained that although this is very much an action-orientated event, we need to exercise a little patience so that "action is based on an informed understanding of the reality." To that end, the conference split into groups and spent a bit of time exploring 'what the Sperrins means to me'.

Focus on the past

4. The story of who we are

The first exercise of the conference aimed to enable participants to understand the Sperrins in the broadest possible context and so they were asked to think about the past from four perspectives.

- a. Personal: Key experiences that have shaped your life.
- b. World: Events that have shaped our global society.
- c. Northern Ireland: Milestones and events in Northern Ireland.
- d. The Sperrins: Critical events and milestones in the Sperrins' history.

Participants thought these things through as individuals and then transferred their thoughts to timeline charts on the walls of the conference room. There was a timeline for each of the four perspectives and it was divided into four timeframes: pre 1987, 1987-97, 1998-2007 and 2008-now.

After a time the walls were covered with a mass of personal and public events at which point the conference divided into seven mixed groups to use the data to establish a framework for discussion.

Personal: The first group was asked to use the 'personal' time line to 'tell a story of who we are in this room' and examine the implications of this story for the work of the conference. They described themselves as individuals from diverse backgrounds in terms of age, religion and place, a resourceful people with a strong sense of community and open to sharing with each other and with others. A sense of place and pride in the area and its artistic and cultural heritage is an important part of that identity.

The implications are wide ranging and sometimes conflicting. They include constraints on development; the lifecycle, scale and spirit of the area; and a strong sense of identity

alongside rivalry between councils. A champion is needed and something to hook visitors in.

World events: The second group was asked to use the 'world events' time line to tell a story about how our global society has changed in the past decades and the implications of this for the work of the conference. This started with the ice-age and its impact on the landscape and then moving swiftly forward to the industrial revolution, emigration, world wars, the Common Market, peace building, the financial and economic crashes, immigration, Brexit and the Trump effect with the latter events having an as yet unknown impact. Alongside these historical events was the rapid development of technology and the emergence of the digital era.

Northern Ireland: Two further groups were asked to use the Northern Ireland time line to tell a story about the changes in the past decades and the implications of this for the work of the conference. Both groups took the Flight of the Earls as their starting point moving on through the Plantation of Ulster, the partition of Ireland, the civil rights movement (in its global context), and the troubles. They highlighted the impact of the EU, mechanisation and intensification in farming and forestry and depopulation of the area. Since 1987 there has been the peace process and the Good Friday Agreement, devolution, the ability to legislate and the possibility of focusing on more 'normal' issues. There are now opportunities to think and act locally in a sustainable way that celebrates our environment. Investment is needed in tourism and in settlements and there is a need for stable government.

The Sperrins: Two groups were asked to use the Sperrins time line to tell a story of what has happened locally over the years and the implications of this for the work of the

conference. The time line began with the formation of the landscape we know today 600 million years ago, through evidence of early civilisation such as stone circles and the rich archaeological heritage of the area. This was followed by the emergence of agriculture, quarrying, small and medium industries, experience of flooding and erosion, the establishment of the AONB, the Folk Park and other links built with the USA, the start of tourism, depopulation, and the Rural College came and went. Conflict emerged between economic, social and environmental priorities e.g. gold mining, wind turbines and mineral abstraction. In the absence of a strategic approach to tourism or the AONB, development through community initiatives has had an important impact. All this implies the need for a more joined up and strategic approach.

All four time lines: The final group was asked to use all four time lines to tell a story of what has happened over the years and the implications of this for the work of the conference. This group painted a picture of rural diversity and of changing demographics. They detected that people want change based on new ideas, beliefs and structures. The digital community is stronger but connectivity is poor – both digitally and physically. There is great power to be found in community groups and in building community from the bottom up. We could start by connecting up all 55 development officers in the area. We should have confidence in what we have.

Plenary Discussion

We are not sure what exists in the Sperrins - what assets we actually have. We need to know more about what exists.

Is there a Sperrins identity? What are we selling to the outside world? There isn't much of a Sperrins identity. We are peripheral to different councils. Should we create an identity that doesn't exist? Should we follow the example of the Burren? What are we doing here today? Is it a tourism plan? Is it a community plan?

What is the common bond for the Sperrins? Where is the plan, where is the continuity? There is an elephant in the room somewhere.

We are here because the four councils sensed a need to react to concerns about what is going on in the Sperrins. This is the start of a conversation. We want to leave the Sperrins in good shape for the next generation. Part of the problem is that there has been no funding from government for the AONB because there is no management body. We need to harness the passion in this room and beyond – including the passion of the demonstrators here this morning.

Is the size part of the problem? Or is it an opportunity? We have a culture, landscape, and communities who have a strong identity but it is not necessarily a Sperrins identity. A good portion of the Sperrins was, and often is, known as Muintir Luinigh/Munterloney. The remoteness and quietness is special but we could share it with many others.

We agree that we have the right people in the room.



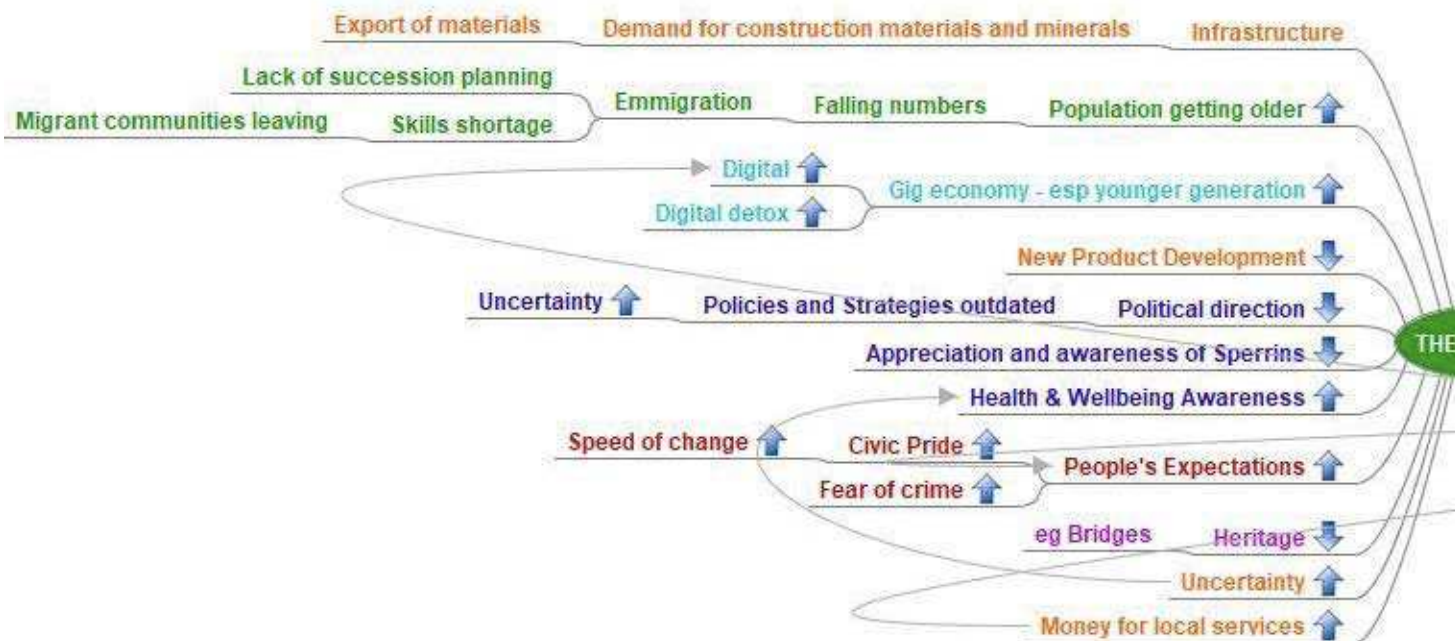
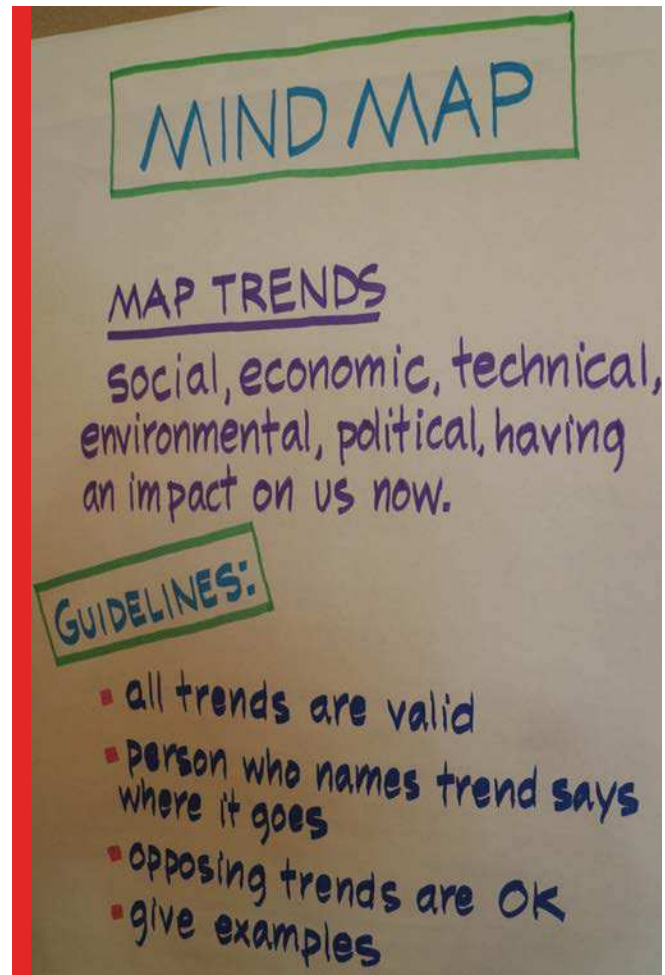
Focus on the present

5. Trends affecting the Sperrins

The focus of the conference then shifted to the present day with an examination of the external trends affecting the Sperrins. The aim was to create a social, economic and technological context for dialogue that included everybody's perceptions of key trends.

A trend implies a direction of change: from more to less, less to more, greater to smaller, smaller to greater, and so on. The idea was to observe what is happening and defer judgment and analysis. This task was done as a single large group collectively creating a wall-sized mind map. A representation of the finished map is shown below.

Once the map was finished and after time to reflect, participants were each given a number of dots (different colours for each stakeholder group) and were asked to place the dots against the trends that they felt were the most important.





6. How trends affect what we do

The second day of the conference opened with reflection on the mind map created the previous afternoon. Participants used the distribution of coloured dots to identify clusters of top trends as follows:

- Infrastructure
- Tourism
- Environmental funding
- Global warming
- Awareness of mental health
- Lack of political direction
- Outdoor recreation
- Branding
- Community/Industrialisation

The conference then divided into its stakeholder groups. The purpose for the next stage was to find connections between key trends and learn what people are doing now and want to do in the future with respect to the Sperrins, bearing in mind that how trends are related leads to better decisions and solutions than dealing with each trend in isolation.

The task was to select three or four trends of greatest concern to the group, to draw a mind map to show how they are related, say what people (individually or as a group) are doing right now to anticipate or respond to these trends, and what new actions they want to take in the future.

Council officers: This group selected four trends: funding (down); lack of political direction (up); outdoor recreation and increased demand for access (up); demand for infrastructure (up).

The things being done right now include a more joined up approach through Community Planning and Local Development Strategies. Work on the ground includes a Culture and Heritage Strategic Framework, forest recreation



(councils and Forest Service working together) and angling (Loughs Agency and councils).

New actions for the future are an AONB Management and Action Plan; a new business leadership programme for the rural area; and increase local engagement and partnership working.

We have had experience of many disparate bodies operating over the years and we don't want more of the same. Our job is to maximise the product – commercial, public, private or community. We need to develop the recreational resource for both visitors and the local community.

We need to have an understanding of what the Sperrins are and then develop a strategic approach to the future of the Sperrins – that is what needs to come from this conference.

Elected representatives: Two key trends are the lack of political direction and lack of finance. Central government gives nothing to the west of the Bann. Another is depopulation: people make an area and we need more people living in the area which means allowing more building and better infrastructure.

A Sperrins brand is needed for tourism and outdoor recreation. Community Planning plays an important role and we need more greenways, festivals, and initiatives like the International Appalachian Trail.



A strategic approach and management plan is critical with the four councils establishing joint authority - adopting a similar approach to cross-council working used by building control.

Government departments and agencies:

The trends selected were lack of political direction, demand for outdoor recreation and demand for infrastructure.

Members of this group observed that Government departments and agencies seldom meet in the way that this conference has enabled. They need to improve on this. There is immense pressure on budgets leading to staff losses and requiring prioritisation of spending. If communities are not promoted to departments, they are neglected.

The draft Programme for Government uses the Outcomes Based Accountability approach and asks the question 'who is better off as a result of what has been done'. This alongside Community Planning could be a positive development. The future must be based on a management and action plan for the AONB with increased local engagement and more partnership working.

Business & industry: The first trend identified by this group was the lack of political direction. Business and industry have been encouraged to ask MLAs to lobby on their behalf but this can't be effective in the absence of government at Stormont.

The demand for infrastructure includes roads, broadband, sewage, flood defences and energy. There is a supply of local materials so infrastructure bodies should buy local and help create jobs. Energy firms are providing security in the form of jobs and skills and this helps to keep people in the area.

Growth in tourism can be achieved by promoting the industrial heritage of the Sperrins and accommodation in B&Bs etc. needs to be developed. The final trend is all about people: there is emigration and therefore skills shortages. We need apprenticeships and there is uncertainty for migrant workers due to Brexit. The challenge now is to continue to manage current and future industrialisation.

Youth: A key trend is the lack of political direction leading to lack of continuity, things not being joined up and stalled decisions. This leads, for example, to poor infrastructure and failure to tackle mental health issues. To capitalise on tourism as a trend we need to come together to invest for further development.

Current work includes Community Plans and the Year of Youth 2019. Activities have tended to be short term programmes with stop-start pattern. Lobbying is needed to secure long term development.

For the future we need long term commitment to a cohesive structure and resources for youth engagement and to create jobs for young people.

Outdoor recreation: This group selected the trends: infrastructure demand (up); tourism & outdoor recreation (up); political direction (down); and funding (down).

The AONB has no management plan, governance body or funding and this leads to a lack of protection from major infrastructure proposals. Visitors are important for the local economy and yet the Gortin Glen masterplan remains unimplemented and councils lack commitment. This means that in terms of what is happening right now, we are not fulfilling our responsibility for the AONB. In the future we must use our influence to protect and celebrate the Sperrins as an AONB.

Landowners: This group identified with many of the trends mentioned by the other groups. The lack of clarity regarding policies creating uncertainty is a major concern for this group. As landowners this is our business and our job is to protect the land but there is uncertainty about income as a result of this. We feel we are poor relations to the Mourne, the Antrim Plateau and Fermanagh Lakelands AONBs.

Global warming has a big impact - flooding has been devastating.

There are challenges for tourism regarding access to land/trespassing/liability and landowners are happy to engage with appropriate bodies. We need to engage with

all stakeholders to get the balance right and to help develop a product that will help Sperrins businesses. The health of families, livestock and land is so important to all who live in the Sperrins.

There is conflict over land use – energy, mining and mineral extraction and this needs to be dealt with by planners in a strategic manner.

Community: Coordinated tourism branding is needed and tourism and planning need to be linked and built on our heritage and history.

Large scale industrial development divides the community and it has a severe effect on the health and wellbeing of the Sperrins population e.g. concerns about the health impact of cyanide use in gold mining. Wind turbines don't exist in the Mourne AONB and therefore shouldn't be in the Sperrins either. At the same time services are diminishing through lack of funding and schools, essential to the community, are closing. The Sperrins include some of the worst wards in NI in terms of lack of services.

We need community involvement from the bottom up where there is a track record in addressing health and wellbeing. We also need council led initiatives and community capacity building.

Environment & heritage: The trends selected were political direction (down); global warming (up); funding (down); and outdoor recreation and tourism (up).

There is an overarching need for a strategic body (a trust) and management plan. A new group needs to be set up to deal with flooding and renewable energy – controversial issues in the AONB. Community led initiatives are the driving force locally yet funding is falling. We need to join up, replicate, and secure council commitment.

Local community led initiatives and local businesses like the Jungle NI are the future of outdoor recreation and tourism and must be supported. Davagh Forest Trails are brilliant but need more investment.

There are real concerns about industrialisation – we need this but not on a large scale. We need to capitalise on what has already been carried out. More lobbying is needed and we should learn from best practices elsewhere – possibly the Belfast Hills and from Scotland.

Tourism: It takes all of us to deliver a tourism product. Although we have some good tourism products such as music, heritage and golf, we have no clear identity or brand for the Sperrins. This has been attempted in the past but hasn't been well done. On the funding trend, people need to take action and stop waiting for the politicians in Stormont or the councils.

The councils need to find a model of excellence for working together. They have often not worked well together in the past and that must not be repeated. The Sperrins Gateway Landscape Partnership has done good work.

Outdoor recreation is only part of the tourism product and we shouldn't be afraid to try something new.

Plenary discussion

This process is encouraging and elected representatives need to take responsibility and drive things forward. There is a commonality of issues and a strong will to work together with everyone pushing for a shared vision and a joint approach.

The AONB is what connects us but who will run with this? We should look at other AONB management bodies. This is an issue – how can it become an outcome?

There are common themes and issues emerging that should be tackled from the bottom up as part of the community. The common denominator is that no one organisation can provide the solution. The answer is a collective of bodies in this room and outside this room. Shared responsibility is needed.

Next year it will be 50 years since the Sperrins AONB was established but it has degraded over 50 years. We need to stop that now by ensuring everyone is involved.

Focus on the present

7. 'Prouds' and 'Sorries'

The purpose of this session was to enable participants to take responsibility for what they are doing and not doing. Working in stakeholder groups they brainstormed two lists based on the following questions:

- "What are you doing right now (individually or as a group) that you are proud of in your relationship to the Sperrins?"

- "What are you sorry about?"

The emphasis was on individuals/groups owning up to their own actions, not blaming or complaining about other people.

Each group selected their three "top prouds" and three "top sorries." These are shown in the table on next page.



Plenary discussion

We need to focus on the kind of strategic management structure we want. Past structures haven't worked. The human connection is important – government is comprised of humans. The Belfast Hills Partnership is a model worth looking at. We should ensure it is a flexible structure that everyone is bought into. There will be different mechanisms to achieve different things. To secure funding we must have an agreed way forward and the Councils can also work together and share services.

“Prouds”	“Sorries”
Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelopment of Broughderg Centre, archaeological tourism, landscape programme • NI's first greenfield festival • Raising awareness of language and cultural history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal sacrifice • We didn't get together sooner – missed opportunities • Didn't prevent contentious industrialisation proposals getting this far
Landowners/Farmers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting with the soul of the area, appreciating its beauty and life force and sharing this with others • Contribution to the land and livestock and connection to the wellbeing of the area and its animals • Taking time to get to know the Sperrins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not sorry: I can only do my best to 'protect' what I perceive to be precious • I haven't tried to understand people better – a closed mind • Haven't taken time to know the Sperrins better
Tourism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding the tourism product • Still here willing to talk after 25 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of area • Working more coherently together • Not connecting with new audiences the way we would like to
Heritage & Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage • Community • To live here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We expected others to do more • Didn't value the Sperrins more until now • We have not promoted the Sperrins enough
Elected representatives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This conference • Proactive in highlighting rural issues • Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignorance of Sperrins • Haven't realised a management plan • Outdoor recreation opportunities unrealised
Industry and business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great companies providing employment and supporting communities • Innovation in engineering • Promoting and supporting tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disconnect between extraction industry and community • Mismanagement of farming impacts on the environment • Lack of investment
Outdoor recreation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing passion for the Sperrins • Doraville objection • Gortin Forest Park management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haven't been vocal enough • History Park in Gortin Glen closed • Don't visit here often enough
Council officers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new product • Developing best bespoke policy • Supporting community actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have not agreed 'Vision' • Local response to changing Sperrins/rural needs • Loyalty to invisible boundaries
Government departments and agencies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing funding • Supporting infrastructure • Capacity to promote globally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureaucracy • We can't provide long term commitments • We don't come together

Focus on the future

8. Desired Future Scenarios

The purpose of the next stage of the conference was to imagine a future that participants believed in and that they were willing to work towards. Working in mixed groups, participants were asked to “Put yourself thirteen years into the future. Today is 29 September 2030. Your dreams are now a reality. The Sperrins is an extraordinary resource where stakeholders feel a sense of ownership and belonging. We are living its potential and sharing responsibility.”

They were asked to describe a scenario in concrete terms using the following as prompts:

- Describe the Sperrins.
- Structures, policies and programmes that keep the dream alive.
- How stakeholders work in partnership.
- How we communicate and sustain the vision.
- Accomplishments through the years.
- Think back to 2017. Note the main roadblock you had to remove to clear the way to where you are now.

Scenarios were to be:

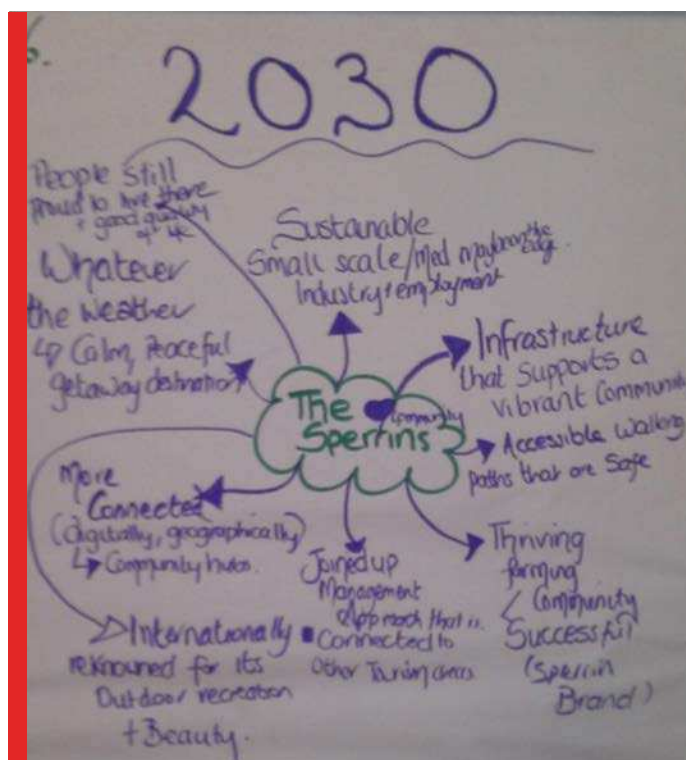
- Feasible – The technical know-how exists to implement it.
- Desirable – Society benefits from its implementation.
- Motivating – Participants are ready, willing and able to work to make it happen.

Group 1: Our vision is of an enhanced natural environment: waterfalls, heather, picnic tables, parking, cycle routes, better roads, camping, nightscape, dark sky structure, signage, shared community halls and even a mountainside rollercoaster.

There is a joint management plan with a committee structure that meets in the Sperrins comprising political representatives, councils, Tourism NI, heritage and landscape, funding bodies, community representatives and an AONB officer.

We have enhanced the natural heritage, improved health and wellbeing and there is civic ownership of the Sperrins and a heightened sense of pride from the people who live there. There are educational programmes, branding and promotional material, sustained communication, training, ambassadors and better protection and enforcement in the AONB. The Sperrins are promoted for all with fewer constraints.

The roadblocks we encountered were the lack of a joined up approach from government, land conflict and lack of funding.



Group 2: There is a wide range of accommodation and plenty to do in the Sperrins. The Jungle, the Ponderosa, the Shepherd's Rest, Davagh Forest, Gortin Glen, the Sperrins Fun Farm and the International Appalachian Trail are just some of the many thriving attractions. There is cooperation with the Roe Valley and guiding in different languages is available. There is cross-selling, good signage, Irish language promotion, music

festivals and other cultural events. New products have been developed and we have won an international tourist destination award.

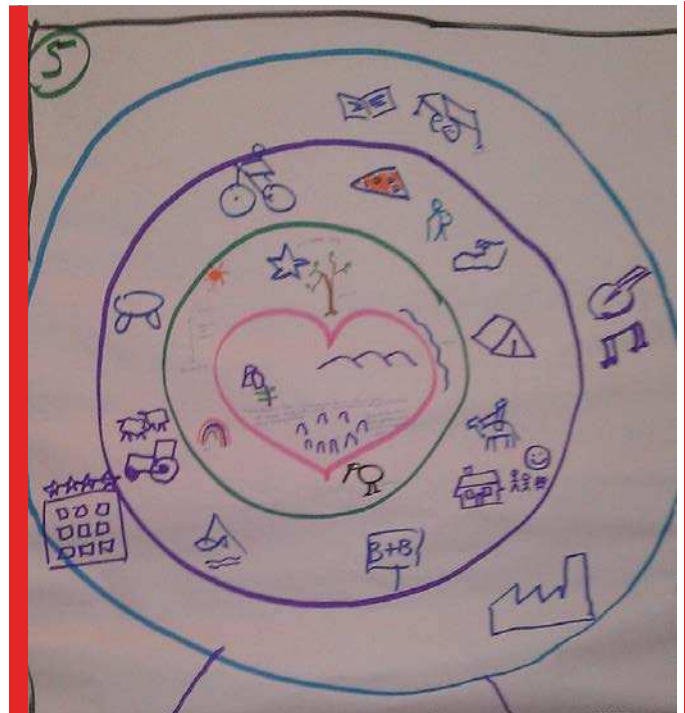
Visitors who come to the Sperrins experience a thriving community which includes new employment from innovative business and industry encouraged by Invest NI. We are scoring high on the happiness index. All this development has taken place under the auspices of the Sperrins Trust.

Group 3: Ours is a community living in harmony with itself and the environment, enriched with quality product, attracting visitors from near and far. We are a diverse community that is bright, vibrant and open: a changeable tapestry and an eclectic balance of archaeology, industry, jobs and environment. There is a Sperrins Management Trust with authority and resources to make things happen and a policy approach that recognises the primacy of environment and community. This is supported by regional and local policies such as enhanced community plans and local economic plans. Infrastructure is enhanced, local services are secure and connectivity is improved.

We work in partnership through getting the right mix of people at the table, sharing responsibility and working towards shared outcomes.

The Trust stays close to the community through engagement and a formal communication strategy. Our work is underpinned by creativity and innovation. It promotes success but doesn't run away from failure.

Our accomplishments include: a rising population with more pupils in primary schools so schools remain open; an AONV – Area of Outstanding Natural Vitality; civic pride and civic leadership; a sustainable economic area; an area recognised for its distinctiveness.



Group 4: We have a strong sense of identity: an understanding of what we are and what we have to offer. This is a great place to live and work sustainably. It is a vibrant, thriving, clean and green place. We have attracted new visitors through a joined up approach to tourism, new products such as food and recreational infrastructure. Our people are happier and healthier and the population has increased.

There is an AONB management structure (perhaps something like the Lough Neagh Partnership) and plan, properly financed and resourced and including different sectors. It reports back to the public every year. Development programmes encourage diversification to activities that are unique to the area as a 'hook' for visitors, e.g. archaeology and Irish language. An inspiring brand has been developed with online resources and effective marketing. We have a strong political voice and representation through effective communication and lobbying. There is regular engagement and consultation with wider stakeholders. Every citizen is an ambassador.

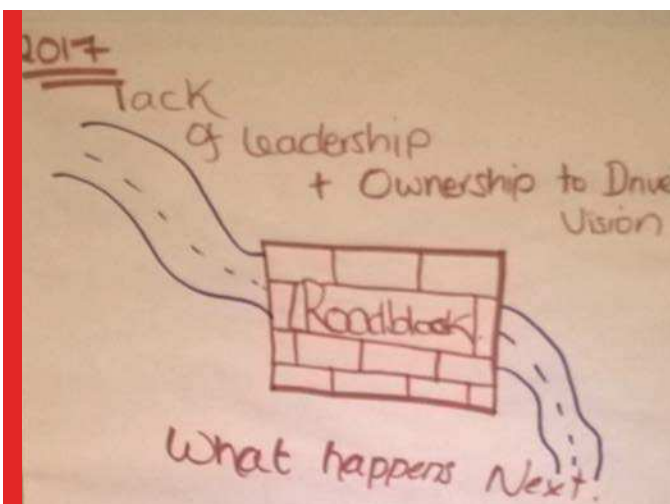
Our accomplishments include effective partnership working to reverse the population decline, infrastructure developments, a new brand developed, visitor numbers up, international recognition and new jobs created. The roadblocks we cleared along the way were

silos working which we replaced with 'one vision' by overcoming administrative boundaries. We enlisted the powers and recognition of central government, which brought finance and political voice.

Group 5: We live in an intact functioning ecosystem with the wild places of the Sperrins at its heart. It is a valued and protected resource. The AONB has reached its potential containing happy communities pursuing a huge range of activities such as an artisan food sector, cycle routes, walking routes, archaeology, farming, tourist accommodation, music, technology and both primary and secondary education. All this has provided new employment and opportunities. We have a well-developed tourism product with a clear identity that is recognised internationally. An enabling structure has been established. It includes multiple stakeholders and is a blend of government and community.

Our accomplishments have been to find a balance between 21st century living and the environment of the AONB; a balanced and growing economy; high value food products; and a £30 million investment in a national museum.

Along the way we faced the challenge of ensuring that development was compassionate to the environment and recognised residents' attachment to their local area. We had to develop a willingness to compromise and we overcame poor communications finding ways to engage positively with farmers, for example. Infrastructure development was a challenge that we met through proper planning processes.



Group 6: The people of the Sperrins are proud to live here and have a good quality of life. Whatever the weather, this is a calm and peaceful getaway destination that is internationally renowned for its outdoor recreation and beauty and there is a joined up management approach that is connected to other tourism areas. We are more connected digitally and geographically through community hubs. There is sustainable, small scale industry and employment; infrastructure that supports a vibrant community; accessible walking paths that are safe; and we have a thriving farming community with a successful Sperrins brand.

There is an appropriately funded, resourced and structured management plan/trust; integrated local and NI-wide strategies; a land use policy strategy (leading to overriding protection where needed); leadership and champions; joined up approach for all stakeholders; a Sperrins youth forum; an agri-food forum; communities supported with resources and finance to achieve healthy lives with wellbeing to the fore; and local business supports. This forum has been revisited to assess its effectiveness.

Partnership is achieved through the Sperrins Management Trust, which includes the community, landowners/farmers, heritage and environment, tourism, youth, elected representatives, industry and business, government departments/agencies, outdoor recreation and council officers.

The vision is communicated and sustained through the central hub created by the Sperrins Trust which has accountability for actions achieved and is built on openness and transparency, strong leadership, respect and mutual understanding, and inclusiveness. The Trust will capture all the great bottom up initiatives and has the right power to make the right changes.

We have accomplished an agreed vision, implemented by the Trust we have established, which is operational and effective. All this was done in the face of a lack of leadership and ownership to drive the vision in 2017.

Focus on the future

9. *Discovering Common Ground*

The next task for the conference was to establish those principles and key features desired by everyone present on which to build the future for the Sperrins. Three groups (randomly formed) prepared a list of common ground elements that reflected what they believed everyone present wanted. The list could include values, norms, structures, programmes and procedures. The groups organised and talked through the common ground, hearing and accepting differences as they arose. Where there was no consensus, it was open to the groups to have a list of 'not agrees'. The three groups then came together and organised the common ground elements under eight themes which were then consolidated into the following five clusters:

- i.** Integrity of the natural environment; Restoration of environment and built heritage; Protection & preservation where appropriate; Biosphere balance (landscape and people); Recognition.
- ii.** Infrastructure; Green access; Biosphere balance.
- iii.** Brand; Biosphere balance; Marketing brand identity; Tourism; Recognition; Communication.
- iv.** Vibrant communities; Recognition; Communication; Inclusion – everyone; Vibrant, happy, healthy, wealthy people and communities; Supporting vibrant sustainable communities (education, health, services etc);

Biosphere balance; Hope for future and current generations security (peace of mind, financial etc).

- v.** Management Structures; Partnerships; Leadership and management that is fully resourced; Common direction and shared vision; Communication; Strategy plan; Innovation; Inclusion; Equality; Responsibility; Accountability; Biosphere balance.

Arriving at a consensus on these points involved a discussion of what was meant by 'biosphere'. It emerged that those who had included the word perceived it as a holistic principle that recognised the interdependence of everything in the Sperrins (people, plants, animals, landscape, water etc) in a self-regulating system. This principle was challenged as being incompatible with human development and leading to a mindset that had led to the depopulation of the Sperrins through regulation that restricted home building and other development. This view held that without people, the Sperrins were an irrelevance.

The group agreed that there was an inherent tension between 'the person as number one' and 'person as part of the whole' but accepted that both are true and the challenge is to manage the tension. To reflect this the term 'biosphere' was amended to read 'biosphere balance'.



Focus on the future

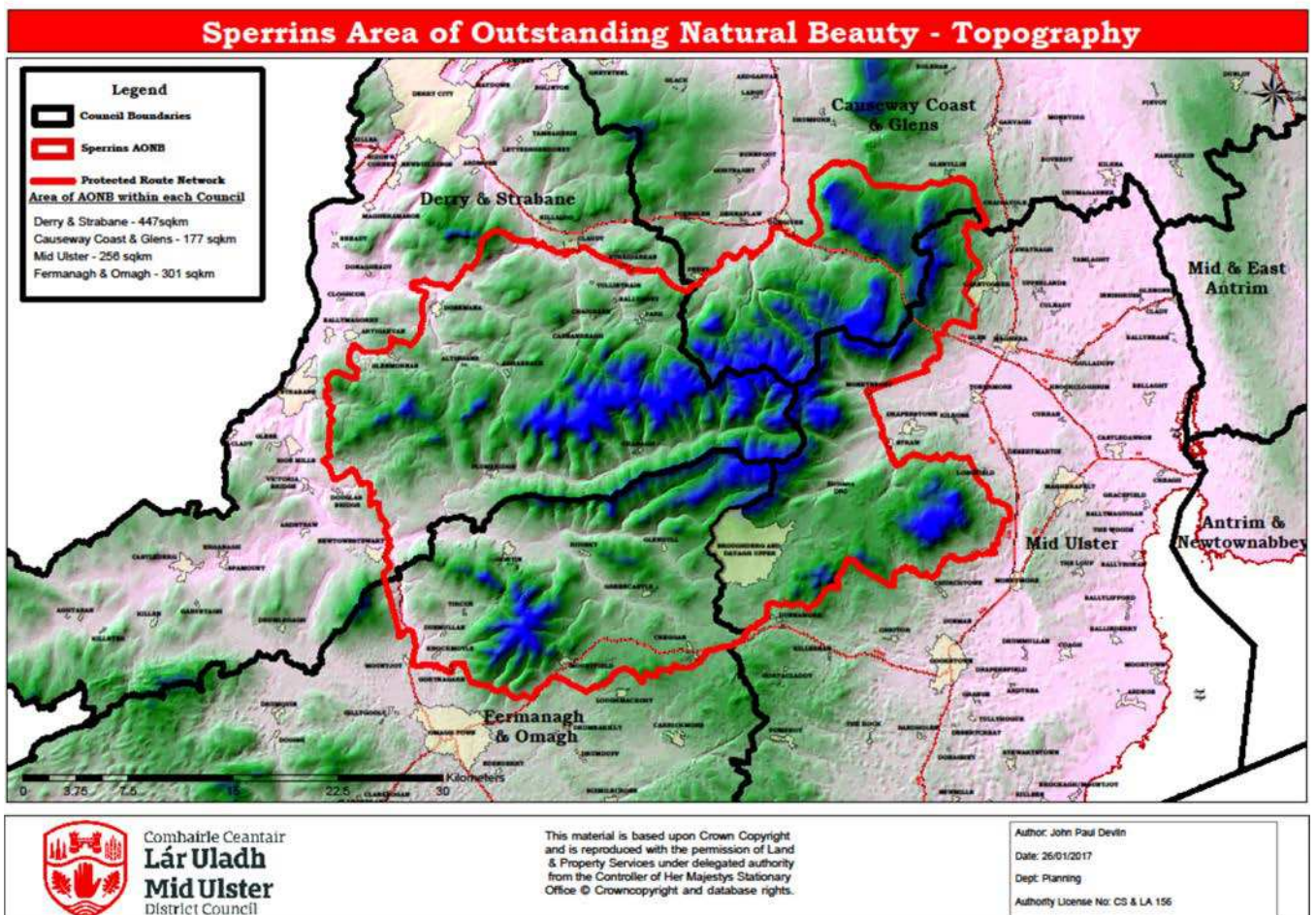
10. Creating Common Ground Statements

On Day 3 the conference reconvened and five self-selecting groups (one for each common ground theme) were tasked with writing a few sentences describing the group's common ground vision. The statement was to be something every person present would agree with and that would be understood by stakeholders who were not present.

The plenary discussion that followed the crafting of the statements focused on what geographical area is included in the term 'The Sperrins'. Definitions varied from the AONB to the much larger area covered by the Sperrins tourism initiative which extended from the border with Donegal in the west to the shores of Lough Neagh in the east. A consensus

emerged that the conference was essentially concerned with the AONB but in the context of the critical relationships between communities within the AONB and the larger settlements beyond. The Sperrins form a hinterland for towns such as Cookstown, Omagh and Dungiven while those towns form a 'reverse hinterland' for the smaller settlements within the AONB. Consideration of the Sperrins should therefore not be overly determined by a line on the map.

While everyone supported the statements, there was plea for recognition of just how difficult life can be for some communities in the face of unwanted development. "My life has been hell", said one participant.



The following five Common Ground Statements were agreed.

Five Common Ground Statements

1. Environment and Heritage:

The spirit, environment and heritage of the Sperrins is conserved, enhanced and responsibly managed so that those who live, work and visit can enjoy, celebrate and respect.

2. Infrastructure:

We provide safe and interesting networks for recreation that complement the environment. We are linked into the wider tourism offering in Ireland. We provide modern communications for the Sperrins.

3. Brand and Tourism:

The Sperrins, spurs of rock, is a great natural, undiscovered and unspoilt destination that is recognised and cherished by others as it is by those who live and work here, and is steeped in history, rich in culture and with majestic views.

4. Community:

We are a community of people of varying needs and aspirations, fuelled by our passion to ensure a strong, vibrant, happy community with equal access to social, health, educational, cultural, economic and creative opportunities. We are the custodians who have lived loved and worked the land for generations, past, present and future. The beauty of the Sperrins is reflected in the beauty of its people.

5. Management Structures:

We are creating a management structure fit for purpose with the necessary resources, authority and expertise, taking forward our shared vision for the Sperrins to enhance an area of beauty we can live and work in.



Focus on the past

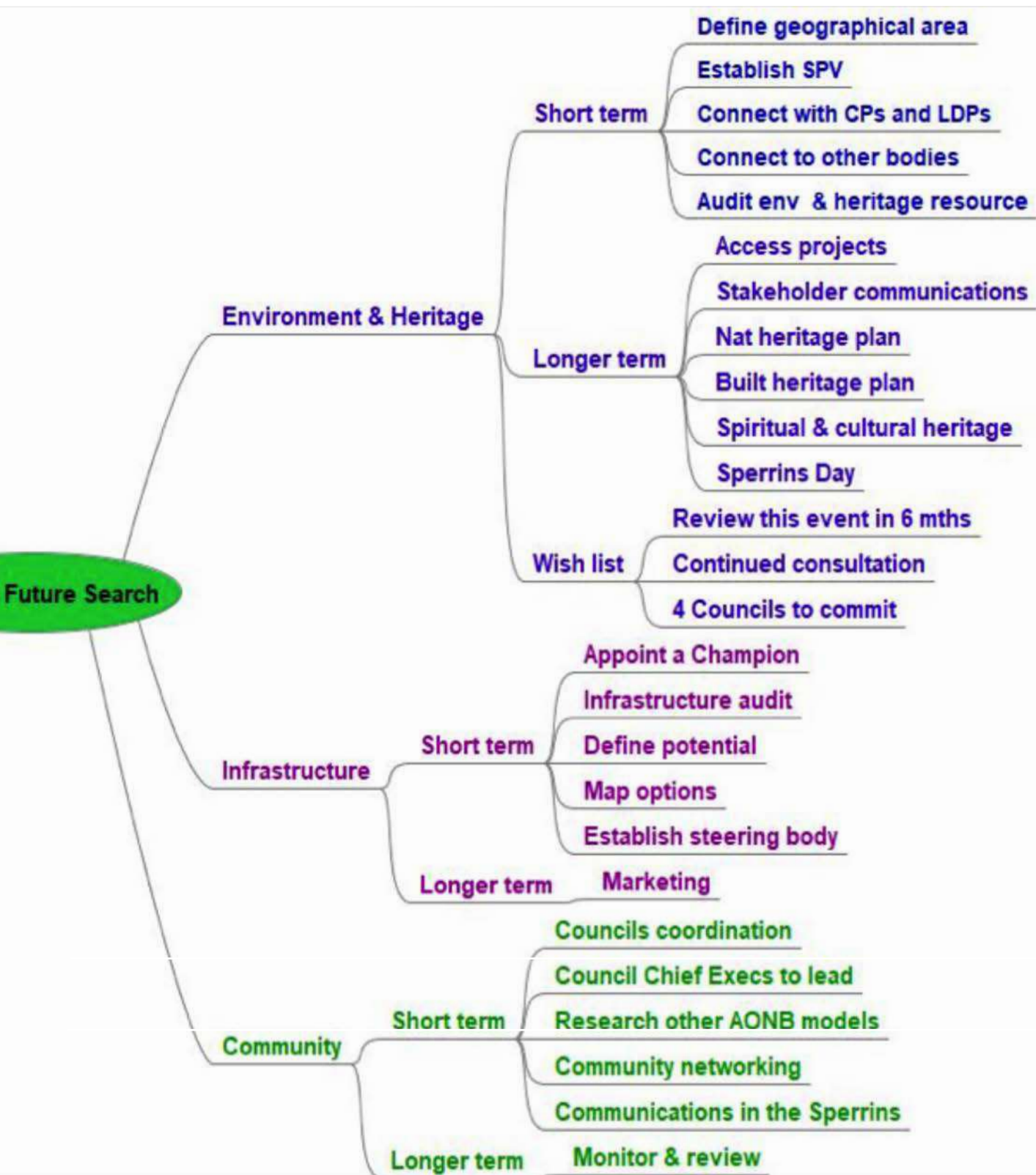
11. Action Planning

The final task for the conference was to decide on action steps, steps that participants were ready, willing and able to take that will work towards the common ground agenda. Each group set out a number of short term and longer term actions including, where possible,

how success will be measured, what help is needed, timeframes and people responsible.

These are summarised in the Mind Map below and are set out in more detail as Five Action Plans.





Focus on the future



Environment and Heritage Action Plan

1. Environment and Heritage: The spirit, environment and heritage of the Sperrins is conserved, enhanced and responsibly managed so that those who live, work and visit can enjoy, celebrate and respect.

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
1.Short Term				
Effective information sharing, consultation and communication between F.S. working groups to deliver a co-ordinated and consistent approach to activity planning and delivery and to maximise use of resources. (E&H working group to ensure it helps inform strategic planning and activity). A co-ordinated/overarching website focussing on all aspects of life in the Sperrins.				
1.1 Do we have the right people: Review current composition of E&H working group to address gaps in expertise and knowledge.	1.1.1 Secure Central Government resources for the Sperrins as per other AONBs. 1.1.2 Secure Historic Environment Division HED (Department for Communities DFC) & Northern Ireland Environment Agency NIEA, (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs DAERA) involvement as a Sperrins Champion (NIEA /HED attendance at E&H Working Group meetings and roles and responsibilities defined) 1.1.3 Ensure participation of any missing key stakeholders and decision makers. 1.1.4 Ensure participation of Youth/Young Sector		12 months	New Trust
1.2. Audit of formally designated Built Heritage and Natural Environment resources to include SPA's, GAA clubs, the Grand Loyal Orders and community groups etc. Also outdoor recreation sites from ORNI work on development of Sperrins Outdoor Recreation Action Plan	1.2.1 All existing data collated. Data to include our industrial heritage and continued success at an international level within key sectors e.g. engineering. 1.2.2 Tourism NI , Outdoor Recreation NI joined with Council databases 1.2.3 Data accessible to public	Audit also being suggested by T&B Working Group (Co-ordinated approach required between E&H Thematic Group and T&B Thematic Group when producing respective audits) Four Councils Environmental and Planning services Four council's Local Development Plan teams Sport NI - Outdoor Recreation sites HED - DFC NIEA Officers (DAERA)	12 months	FODC to facilitate (using existing electronic framework). T&B Thematic group responsible for the communication of data.
1.3 Cultural heritage captured and made accessible	1.3.1 Online platform for capturing and promoting intangible cultural and spiritual heritage in place. 1.3.2 Select a suitable intangible cultural heritage good practice and definition model.	Other models including UNESCO; PRONI; National Museums of Ireland; Scope for study, events etc. to be funded or promoted under European Year of Cultural Heritage.	12 months	New Trust Community Working Group

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
1.4 Co-ordinated promotion of Sperrins events and activities all year round	1.4.1 Calendar of events published for the entire area	T&B Thematic Group	Ongoing	MUDC to facilitate preparation of Calendar.
	1.4.2 September designated and promoted as "Sperrins Month" by all.	Four Councils, Tourism bodies, event organisers, Sporting Clubs etc.	6 months	Four Councils
	1.4.3 Delivery of a large scale "Sperrins " 2019 event- Small scale community events are a failsafe for lack of innovation	Special consideration needed for activity events taking place in the natural environment – www.outdooreventplanning.com (useful tool currently used by Mourne & Ring of Gullion)		Community groups Event Organisers
	1.4.4 Delivery of a heritage gala day inclusive of the local population			
1.5 Develop common approach to planning policy for Sperrins across four Council areas. Legal standing position of AONB to be reviewed and communicated.	1.5.1 Four Local Development Plan (LDP) Policies synchronised for Sperrins.	Four LDP Teams National Outdoor Recreation Forum	2 years	Four Councils - facilitated by LDP Teams Co-ordination Group
	1.5.2 Consideration of a buffer zone for AONB with regard to planning strategy.	Recreation planning refer to Northern Ireland Outdoor Recreation Action Plan - www.sportni.net/sportni/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Our-Great-Outdoors.pdf		
	1.5.3 Oversight role re AONB policy including environmental protection and enforcement			
1.6 Contribute to creation of the Sperrins Trust and Sperrins Management Plan ensuring the Trust belongs to all stakeholders	1.6.1 Management Structure Group development of Trust proposal.	NIEA provision of details of Management structures in other AONBs	12 months	Four Councils to facilitate setting up of Trust owned by all stakeholders All stakeholders to participate and support
	1.6.2 Approval by four councils.	Signposting by E&H Thematic Group to other models - for Management Group to consider	Ongoing	
	1.6.3 Heritage and Environment representatives involved in new Trust structure	Irish Uplands Forum - Upland Community Study published 2016 www.irishuplandsforum.org		
1.7 Review and feedback to Community Plan, Local Development Plan and other statutory plans	1.7.1 Contributions made	Four Councils	2 years	All stakeholders
	1.7.2 Plans reflect issues relevant to Sperrins	All Stakeholders		
1.8 New Sperrins Trust co-ordinates with other similar bodies for mutual benefit.	1.8.1 Collaboration for Policy influence	Other AONB Bodies and similar bodies	Ongoing	New Trust
	1.8.2 Learning from other bodies	Regional Government Four Councils		
	1.8.3 Sperrins specific issues discussed and decisions reached.			

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
1.9.1 Explore the possibility of having greenways and improve access routes	Greenways explored and available where applicable	Local Hillwalking Groups	2 years	Infrastructure Thematic Group
1.9.2 Access routes	Access routes	Sperrins Gateway Landscape Partnership Pilot Mountain Access project		Hillwalking Groups
2. Longer term				
2.1 A vibrant and inviting environment created for all to enjoy	2.1.1 Resources available		3-5 years	E&H Thematic Group lead Infrastructure
	2.1.2 Number of visitors and users			
	2.1.3 Health and wellbeing			
2.2 Effective communication strategy established between key/all stakeholders including tourists and visitors	2.2.1 More harmony	Four councils	2+ years	New Trust
	2.2.2 Better working relationships	Regional Government Stakeholders		
	2.2.3 Increasing interest			
2.3 Positives are celebrated	2.3.1 News articles	Four councils	1-2 years	New Trust
	2.3.2 No of positive events	Stakeholders		
2.4 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Plan	2.4.1 Protection Policy created	Four Council Bio diversity Officers NIEA officers	3-5 years	New Trust
2.5 Built and Industrial Heritage Plan To include our industrial heritage and continued success at an international level within key sectors	2.5.1 Protection Policy created	Four Councils HED officers Council Heritage Officer Local farmers Industry – Construction, Engineering	3-5 years	New Trust
2.6 Environmental Management Plan	2.6.1 Protection Policy created	Four Councils NIEA Officers	3 – 5 years	New Trust

Wish list: we want

- Review of this event in six months' time and regularly after that including the four councils led by Mid Ulster so we can see what has come out of this, what has happened, what is the action plan, who is responsible for what, how we can help make sure that this happens.
- Continued consultation on when and how a working group is formed and who it represents.
- We will update the organisations and groups that we represent on what has happened at this event and on progress going forward.
- Councils and others visit and connect with the area.
- What is the agreement/commitment from councils on driving this forward?

Infrastructure Action Plan

2. Infrastructure: We provide safe and interesting networks for recreation that complement the environment. We are linked into the wider tourism offering in Ireland. We provide modern communications for the Sperrins.

Preamble: We expect councils to continue to provide the best services and linkages. We want to provide the linkages between ourselves within the Sperrins.

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
2.1 Appoint a Champion	Identified Champion			
2.2 Audit of infrastructure to establish baseline	Baseline established	Landowners Communities Councils Translink Other transport providers Dept for Infrastructure Tourism Industry Local business Funding bodies Telecoms providers	1 year	Champion Steering Group Stakeholders
2.3 Define potential: greenways, routeways, access to transport	Agreed priorities and programmes			
2.4 Appraisal to establish realistic options				
2.6 Appalachian Trail as first hit				
2.6 Establish steering body	Steering body in place			
Longer term				
2.7 Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use/Visitors • Increased expenditure • Regeneration/sustainability • 100% communications • Recognise infrastructure on Google Maps with local tourism businesses • Develop offer in hubs – each unique 	Trails in place with facilities Marketed Visitor numbers Bedspace/pitches Business starts and numbers Profile of visitors' expenditure	As above but more needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionals: surveyors, architects accountants etc • Service providers: cafes, hotels, pubs, campsites, guides, maintainers, constructors, builders • More people providing work for our children's future 	Progressive increase in income over next 13 years to 2030	



Brand and Tourism Action Plan

3.Brand and Tourism: The Sperrins, spurs of rock, is a great natural, undiscovered and unspoilt destination that is recognised and cherished by others as it is by those who live and work here, and is steeped in history, rich in culture and with majestic views.

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
3.1 Identify where major resources are coming from and how they will be utilised to design, develop and implement the strategies/ action plans developed	Strategic plan / structure required AONB Management Plan as part of wider strategic plan and to gain more recognition/ funding for protection Management body in place Sperrins officer(s)/ guardian(s) appointed and given resources Funding sources identified & applied for	Management Group Tourism NI NIEA Environment & heritage Thematic Group	Urgent - 3-6 months	Management Group Tourism NI NIEA 4 Councils
3.2 Definition: "The Sperrins" area	Agreement reached – The AONB and neighbouring settlements (gateway towns) to be included	/	/	Tourism and Branding Group
3.3 Short term initiatives: - GIS Map of Sperrins Area and current "products"	Map developed	4 Councils – Excel sheet of current products within defined area to be sent to George Bradshaw with Postcodes Co-ordinated approach with other thematic groups eg. environment and heritage to produce one map with the various layers included	End of February	FODC GIS team Staff from 4 Councils
3.4 Definition: the essence and the product: • What is it? • Where is it? • What is the USP? Why would people visit? Current perceptions of the Sperrins?	Audit of what constitutes the Sperrins is required	Wider Stakeholders Collaborate with other Thematic groups for an Audit	3 months	4 Councils Future Search Stakeholders Tourism NI
3.5 Short term initiatives: - Local fam trips	Take staff from VIC's and people on F.S. groups out on tour of Sperrins – let them see what there is to offer Then in the longer term move to a wider audience for FAM trips – media, tour operators, industry professionals	Local stakeholders	6 months	4 Councils
3.6 Short term initiatives: - Event celebrating 50 years of the AONB	Develop a combined 50year celebration of original AONB declaration for September across the Sperrins region that showcases the natural richness and promotes the area, tying in with established/ ongoing community & council events and to encourage more positive action within the AONB than the previous 50years	Tourism NI All Four councils- come together for events NIEA	6 months 2018 -Ongoing organisation, date for event – September 2018	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI Wider Stakeholders

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
3.7 Short term initiatives: - What's on guide / Events Calendar	incorporate current events across all four councils and local community groups etc into a what's on guide/ Events calendar specific to the Sperrins Area, and for the 50th anniversary celebration of the AONB (month of September) produce a special guide incorporating these events	4 Councils VIC and Tourism Staff Tourism NI	Ongoing - 2018	4 Councils Tourism NI
3.8 Research: internal and external – looking at the perceptions of people in relations to the Sperrins, both local and wider audience	Report delivered – Research/ Stats required for informing policy/plans	Tourism NI	12 months and ongoing	Tourism NI Management Structure
3.9 Development of visitor experience plan – Consider development of a wider strategic plan for the Sperrins Area which incorporates V.E. Plan	Output and outcome measures – Strategic Plan developed	4 councils	18 months and ongoing	Sperrins Management Body primarily Future Search Stakeholders / Brand & Tourism group
3.10 Creation of unified Branding/ Logo/ Straplines etc	Identifiable brand that pulls together the identity of the Sperrins and its products/communities	Management Group 4 Councils Tourism NI Other Stakeholders and FS Thematic Groups	1 – 2 years	Tourism & Branding Group
Longer term				
3.11 Brand development: use visitor experience plan to develop current products; expand to new product offerings	Further development of area and additional literature and offerings	Councils Tourism NI Tourism Ireland	2+ years	Sperrins management structure Councils etc
3.12 Trial new initiatives/pilots	KPIs: 2020 – own stand at Holidays world with Sperrins branding and literature, website and social media up and running	4 Councils Tourism NI	2+ years	4 Councils Tourism NI
3.13 Consultation/engagement process	Tactical forward thinking	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI	2+ years	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI
3.14 Brand awareness: marketing/ communications campaigns; tactical plans, use of branding on own social media pages and website development	Building relationships Trade buy-in developed	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI	2+ years	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI
3.15 Flagship events: "Undiscovered" international event	Visitor numbers	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI	2020	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI
3.16 Schools and Youth outreach programme	Pride, more awareness through upcoming generations and across NI	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI EA	2019/20	4 Councils NIEA Tourism NI

Community Action Plan

4. Community: We are a community of people of varying needs and aspirations, fuelled by our passion to ensure a strong, vibrant, healthy, happy community with equal access to social, health, educational, cultural, economic and creative benefits and opportunities. We are the custodians who have lived, loved and worked the land for generations, past, present and future. The beauty of the Sperrins is reflected in the beauty of its people.

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
4.1 Four councils' community planning and community services teams to meet to facilitate and coordinate	A completed scoping study in consultation with stakeholders of emerging cooperative opportunities to include e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Plans • Rural Development Programme • Peace IV • HLF • Local Development Plans • Tourism initiatives E.G. International Appalachian Trail etc. • Co-operative initiatives • Existing community plan partnership structures • Contentious live issues • No. of potential cooperation projects identified 	Council Officers	3- 6 months (The Community Working Group recommends quarterly progress reviews)	The Management Working Group will determine the structures required to facilitate, monitor and measure the future delivery of actions identified by the working groups.

Additional Information / Member Feedback

- Subject to approval, Community Planning and Community Services/Support teams from councils to meet. Review the partnership structures of each Community Plan.
- The different Council Community Plans may be at varying stages of development (DCSDC /FODC have completed theirs) and the level of focus may differ also between councils (DCSDC has launched its overarching strategic community plan for the district but is also currently developing additional DEA focussed local plans – one of these local plans covers the part of the Sperrins in the DCSDC area). Planners from all four councils are already meeting in relation to the alignment of the Local Development Plans in regard to the Sperrins.
- The scoping study should give a clear picture of existing physical infrastructure and resources, community infrastructure, programmes, policy and governance as well as links with CP, LDP, PfG and other relevant policies and governance related issues including new deprivation indices.

4.2 This conference to be on the agenda of the next meeting of the four Council Chief Executives in order to move things forward (and subsequent meetings where key decisions are required in moving forward key actions)	Item on Chief Executive Officer (CEO) meeting agenda	Council Officers	3- 6 months	CEOs
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Additional Information / Member Feedback

- Chief Executive/ Director approval (from each council) to be sought for the allocation of adequate staff, administrative support and finances from council Community Support resources for the delivery of agreed Future Search initiatives.
- Identification of additional sources of funding and support to facilitate successful delivery
- Consideration should be given to equality of funding/resource opportunity funding between rural and urban areas

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
<p>4.3 Research: We want a fresh approach based on our needs, but we also need to know about existing models for other AONBs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collating best practice research on AONB and other equivalent landscape partnership type models on a range of relevant issues. Link with Landscapes for Life (the national association for AONBs) • Sharing of information /resources /services on current research • Undertake research on models of evaluating the programme • Service provision audit of the Sperrins to facilitate the development of a service provision plan 	<p>Other AONBs - Landscapes for Life</p> <p>Other partnership models</p>	0-9 months	Council Directors and associated staff teams

Additional Information / Member Feedback

- Build upon research already undertaken- including European sources. Link with Landscapes for Life (the national association for AONBs) and explore how other AONBs work, taking account of the unique population and community base in each one
- Cross reference against other AONB models , equivalent landscape partnership type models and LEADER project models outside of NI, and extract best practice from each in relation to design; delivery; pitfalls; structure; funding; community engagement; environmental impacts; environmental management versus environmental protection concepts; the issues associated with National Park designation; landscape heritage management; new ways of doing things etc. Look at other models like the Belfast Hills Working Partnership or the Connswater Community Greenway as an example of community engagement driven partnership. The importance of local communities leading actions was strongly emphasised.
- Policy research on all relevant policies affecting the Sperrins including liaising with DAERA (LEADER), DfC, HLF among others
- The group agreed that it would be important to look at and map the baseline of service provision e.g. banks, schools etc... in the Sperrin's. This audit should include the identification of existing essential services and gaps in provision of these essential services; It should also review the "status" of services so as to identify – for example- any which are at risk /under threat of closure; and look at changes in the local and wider environment which are likely to impact on service provision. Such an audit would help identify priority actions and allow forward planning in relation to essential service and wider service provision.



What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
<p>4.4 Gather community development groups together to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and plan the way forward • Facilitate networking and capacity building and to share learning • Develop sustainable community organisations and build in succession planning. • Facilitate community engagement with others e.g. business and industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to create a database of groups for the Sperrins (taking account of data protection) 	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action	0-9 Months	Community Services Teams
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull together community stakeholders to seek their views on the concept of “a stronger together approach” and how communities are best engaged moving forward and how they can be investment ready in regard to emerging opportunities 	Rural Community Network	0-9 Months	Communities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine other ways of gathering information from communities- Walk and Talk events; mini Sperrins Future Search with a community focussed theme; Gather on the Go events 	Local networks like Fermanagh Rural Community Network, Omagh Forum for Rural Assocs, Omagh Focus, Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network, Dennett Interchange, Rural Area Partnership in Derry, Glenelly Dev Trust, Rural North West, Villages Together	0-9 Months	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of information /resources /services e.g. develop an engagement plan for a range of different groups across the area including young people and other Section 75 (Of The NI Act 1998) groups 	Community Services - Village Plans Council Equality Officer and Youth Officers where available	0-9 Months	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a “Sperrins Community Summit ” as part of the wider delivery of the Sperrins’ September Month 	Derry City & Strabane District Council youth officer agreed to assist – ask EA youth officer to also assist	0-9 Months	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a bespoke session with young people in order to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ascertain if and how they represent their voices in any structure moving forward – - get the next generation engaged; to enable succession planning; and build a bank of new emerging leaders 		0-6 Months		

Additional Information / Member Feedback

- The sharing of information /resources /services e.g. to transcend council boundaries (e.g. recycling facilities). Examine new ways of engaging with communities – walk and talk events, mini FS events for communities
- Need to create a new database of all interested groups across a range of genres and interests and ensure S75 coverage. Data protection issues need to be considered when developing a database of groups for the project moving forward
- Needs to include young people / nine key groups listed under S75. Need to think about timings for the engagement of different groups
- Ensure geographical representation and balance across all sectors within the structure of working groups/structures. Need to look at who is missing from the working group /any future delivery structure– Rural Community Network , local groups from Derry and Strabane and Mid Ulster Councils , youth groups , people with a disability and older people are potentially missing. Community Services and Good Relations officers could also assist with this.

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
4.5 Communications: 4 representatives – one from each of the council areas to come together to coordinate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to create a database of groups into which groups opt in (data protection issues) • Create specialist support for Sperrins' communities - a dedicated "Sperrins" Officer/Post- seek resources for same • Create a single Sperrins message and agree on strong channels–e.g. facebook, newspapers etc- to communicate with groups and to strengthen communication between groups. • Launch of Sperrins FS Initiative 	Paid role	0-9 Months and long term 0-9 months	Corporate communications teams New post External support

Additional Information / Member Feedback

- Communication needs to be addressed as part of the development of a strategy for the Sperrins.
- Need for specialist support for Sperrins' communities - a dedicated "Sperrins" Officer/Post (with communications /marketing experience) ; Role to collate information and communicate
- Need to communicate a single Sperrins message
- Need also to have champions/advocates
- Need to have direction on each council's policy of cross promoting each other's Sperrins events (link to Tourism and Branding Working Group)
- Effective communication required to achieve a co-ordinated approach and avoid repetition of effort particularly within proposed Sperrin's Future Search structures and the working groups. (e.g. Three of the working groups have identified research, data collection, and an audit within their action plans – this work should be done in collaboration)



What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
4.6 Strategy development with strong community input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-design, co-delivery and co-production should all be a core part of the strategy development and delivery process. Conference to take forward • Strategy implementation • Success is proof-e.g. Community buy in; builds real communities; reduces polarisation; reduces conflict; integrates communities; community input/views are listened to and valued. • Puts people first – community at the heart and ensure youth are engaged 	Council Community Planning teams Planners	6-15 months +	Directors External Support

Additional Information / Member Feedback

- Needs to put people first
- Needs to aim to deliver the right services – services which will develop /produce vibrant communities
- Needs to deliver on local issues
- Co design element required - e.g. Education Authority input
- Needs to include young people / nine key groups listed under Section 75
- Need to take account of objections and issues that people do not currently agree on
- Need to ensure a monitoring and evaluation and outcomes based approach is also included

4.7 Review/monitor what has been achieved/delivered and that we are still loyal to our vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake research on models of evaluating the programme • Dedicated officer support • Develop an OBA approach for the plan. Agree outcomes, results and indicators 	Community planner University support	6-15 months + in line with strategy	Community planners External support
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Additional Information / Member Feedback

- Need to ensure a link with community planning outcomes and Programme for Government emerging outcomes



Management Action Plans

5. Management Structures: We are creating a management structure fit for purpose with the necessary resources, authority and expertise and taking forward our shared vision for the Sperrins to enhance an area of beauty we can live and work in.

What	Measure	Help from	Due Date	Responsible
Short Term				
5.1 Planning group from Councils to get together, digest the outputs from this conference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite feedback from conference • Present draft report at a reconvened conference in January 	Review meeting organised for Jan 2018	4 Councils Thematic Groups	11 Jan 2018	Council Officers
5.2 Directory of current activity in the Sperrins and support systems. 5.3 Collate information on current activity in the Sperrins from public and private sources	Directory of current activity and calendar of coordinated events	Council Community Plans Tourism Initiatives Sperrins Landscape Partnership Outdoor Recreation Forum Ancient Heart of Ulster LP	Ongoing	5 Thematic Groups Councils
5.4 Build datasets to support future planning May need reworded and discussion on 11/01/2018	All existing data collated	5 Thematic Groups Sporting organisations Community Groups Stakeholders		2 Levels – Local Government and Central Government
5.5 Look at models of best practice and suggest some delivery/structural mechanisms	Implement a best practice model	Councils	Mar 18	Management Thematic Group
5.6 Ask everyone to cross-sell based on new relationships 5.7 Promote cross boundary working	Establish Sperrins brand, develop a communications strategy	Councils Statutory Thematic groups Stakeholders	Ongoing	Tourism & Branding
5.8 Review and feed into Community Planning process, Local Development Plans and align with draft Programme for Government	Contributions made Plans reflect issues relevant to Sperrins	4 Councils Statutory Partners	2 years	4 Councils Statutory Partners
Medium term				
5.9 Establish Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) and partnership comprising community, council and statutory representative. Structure to follow strategy				

Annex A: Facilitators' Biographies

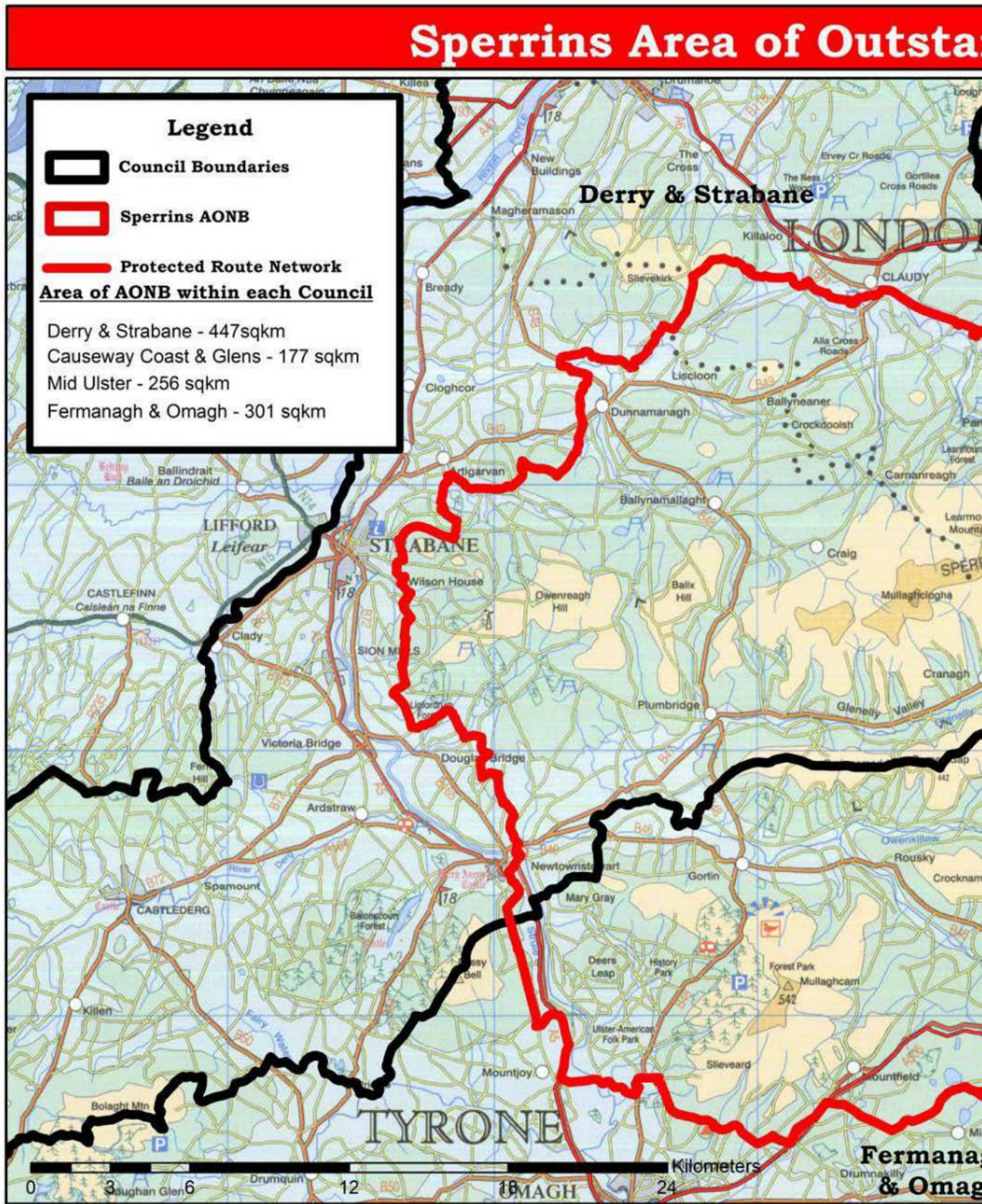


Aideen McGinley is Chair of Galway 2020 European City of Culture and a Trustee of the Carnegie UK Trust. She was National Trustee for Northern Ireland on the BBC Trust from 2012-2017. She has 37 years local and central government experience in Northern Ireland being the first woman CEO in local government and subsequently the first woman Permanent Secretary in central government when she took up post, on devolution, to create the first Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and then moved to the Department of Employment and Learning where she was responsible for further and higher education, employment and skills. Reflecting her interest in regeneration she too took up a secondment in 2009 as CEO of ILEX, the Urban Regeneration Company for Derry-Londonderry, where she was instrumental in developing the £400m 10-year regeneration plan, building the symbolic Peace Bridge and successfully securing the inaugural UK City of Culture 2013 title for the city. Aideen has a particular interest in, and experience of, whole systems thinking and effective stakeholder engagement and successfully embedding the outcomes in policy and practice across a range of issues and sectors. These include Culture and Creativity, Urban and Rural Regeneration, Social Entrepreneurship, Women and Leadership Development. She has been involved in a variety of roles both professional and voluntary in the non-profit sector which, coupled with her private and extensive public sector experience and her ability to create integrated policy and delivery on the ground, has been recognised in her award of an OBE in the Queens millennium honours list and a honorary degree from the University of Ulster. Aideen is an associate of Future Search Associates, Co-Chair of the Carnegie UK Trust initiative on the measurement of wellbeing in Northern Ireland and a jury member for the selection of the UK City of Culture 2017.



Sandra Janoff, PhD co-developed the principle-based methodology called Future Search, a process used world-wide to get the "whole system" focusing on the future and creating values-based action strategies. She is an international consultant and works with global corporations and communities in Africa, Asia, Europe, India, North & South America, Australia and New Zealand. Sandra's humanitarian work includes: UNICEF-sponsored initiatives such as: Finding a Future for the Children of South Sudan during the North/South Sudanese civil war. This resulted in a second Future Search in South Sudan to demobilize child soldiers. Over 13,000 children were released and sent back to their homes. A Future Search in South Sudan in 2013 created solutions for abandoned children in Juba. In a UNICEF initiative, Preventing Violence Against Children in Schools in Uganda, she worked with stakeholders on all levels, from ministerial to district schools, to address the issues of corporal punishment and other violent acts against children and to implement a nation-owned mandate for zero tolerance. Sandra's work with integrated economic development in NI includes Future Searches in County Fermanagh, Derry-Londonderry, Strabane, Coleraine and Lough Neagh. Sandra is Principal of Future Search Associates and Director of Future Search Network (FSN) which won the Global Work Award and the Sharing the Wealth Award. She is co-author of Future Search: An Action Guide to Finding Common Ground (Berrett-Koehler, 3rd ed, 2010), Don't Just Do Something, Stand There! Ten Principles for Leading Meetings that Matter (Berrett-Koehler, 2007) and Lead More, Control Less: 8 Advanced Leadership Skills that Overturn Convention (Berrett-Koehler, 2015). Sandra was just honoured with the Organizational Development Network's 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award.

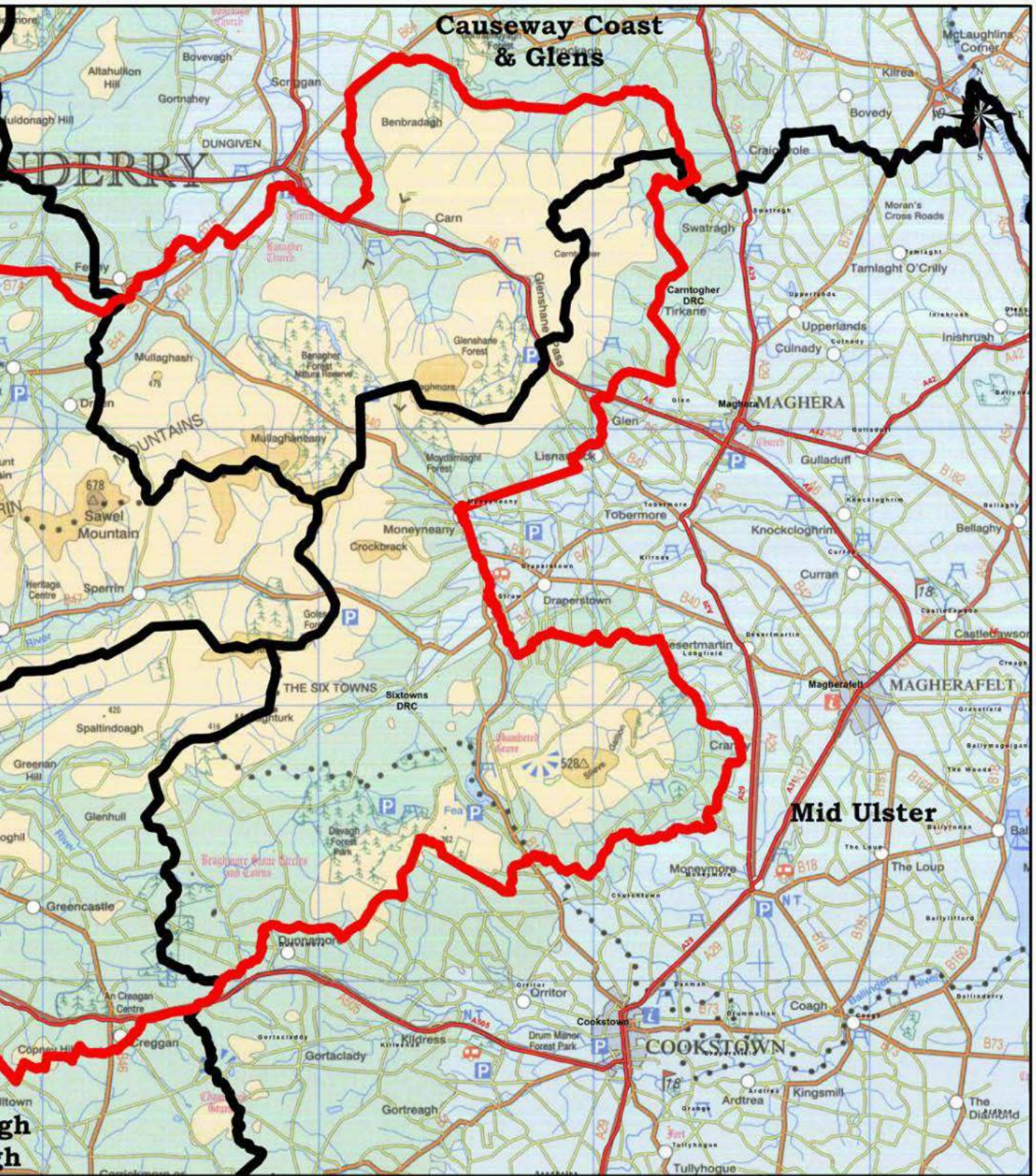
Annex B:



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
 District Council

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Enduring Natural Beauty



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Date: 26/01/2017

Dept: Planning

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Annex C:

The Sperrins 2030

Landowners; Farmers; Tourism; Heritage and Environment; Government Departments; Council Reps; Business; Industry; Youth and Community.

Have all worked tirelessly over the last thirteen years to establish unity.

The Sperrins has a strong place in our hearts;
Its natural beauty, birds, bees and fauna
A rural land, full of heritage and history;
Why we are so passionate about it, is no longer a mystery!

Sandra and Aideen's Future Search event in 2017 has given us the tools and encouraged us to work together to build a future for our youth;
A shared desire that brought us here today is definitive proof.

From darkness and confusion;
We have risen to a place of sustainable conclusion.
A joint vision, blood, sweat and tears;
Has helped us to preserve the Sperrins for many many years.

Susan Doherty © 2017

Annex D:

Glossary of Abbreviations

AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

AONV – Area of Outstanding Natural Vitality

CCG - Causeway Coast & Glens

CEO - Chief Executive Officer

CP - Community Planning

COM - Community Thematic Group

DfC - Department for Community

DAERA - Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

DCSDC - Derry City & Strabane District Council

DEA - District Electoral Area

E&H - Environment & Heritage Thematic Group

EU – European Union

FODC - Fermanagh & Omagh District Council

FS - Future Search

GIS– Geographic Information System

HLF - Heritage Lottery Fund

HED - Historic Environment Division

KPI – Key Performance Indicator

LEADER - Liaison Entre Actions Development de l’Economie Rurale

LDP - Local Development Planning

MLA – Members of the Legislative Assembly

MUDC - Mid Ulster District Council

NI - Northern Ireland

NIEA - Northern Ireland Environment Agency

OBA - Outcome Based Accountability

ORNI - Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland

PfG – Programme for Government

PRONI - Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

S75 - Section 75

SPA - Special Protection Area

SPV – Special Purpose Vehicle

T&B - Tourism & Branding Thematic Group – T&B

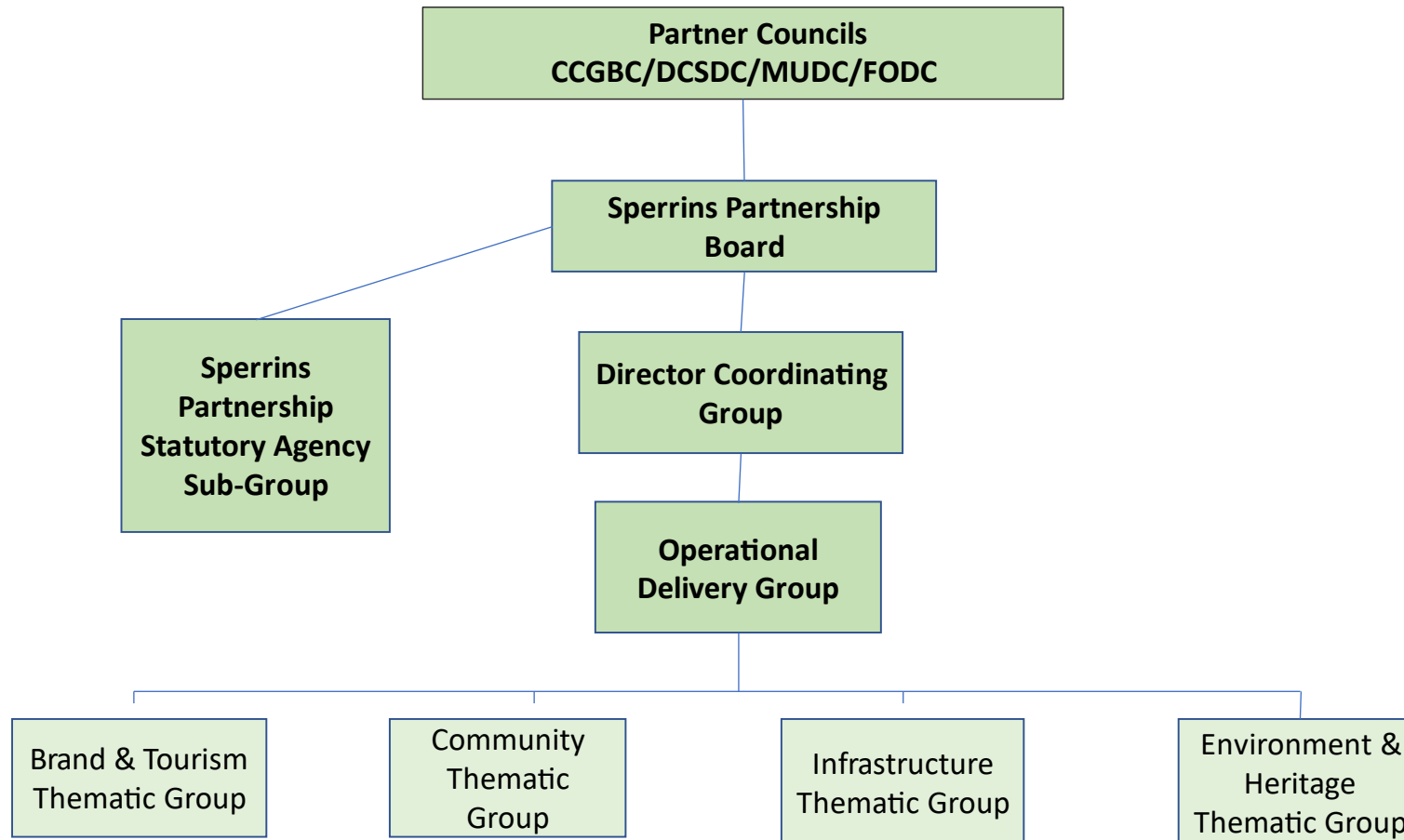
UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

USP – Unique Selling Point

VEP – Visitor Experience Plan

VIC – Visitor Information Centre

Sperrins Partnership Governance Structure



Sperrins Partnership Project Reaching New Heights, Realising Our Potential				
Sperrins Partnership Board (20 Members) – 4 times per year	Director Coordinating Group	Operational Delivery Group	Thematic Groups	Statutory Partnership Sub-group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Elected Members from each Council; • 2 reps from each thematic group; • 2 reps from the Statutory Partnership Group; • 4 Council Leads (Observers) • SPO • SPA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Leisure Directors; • CEx's (on invitation) • 4 Council Leads (if deemed necessary) • SPO; • SPA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Council Leads • SPO • SPA 	Councils/ industry partners/ Statutory Agencies/ Local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIEA; • Tourism NI; • Forest Service; • Loughs Agency; • DfC; • HED; • Sport NI; • DfI.

Sperrins Partnership Project
*Reaching New Heights,
 Realising Our Potential*

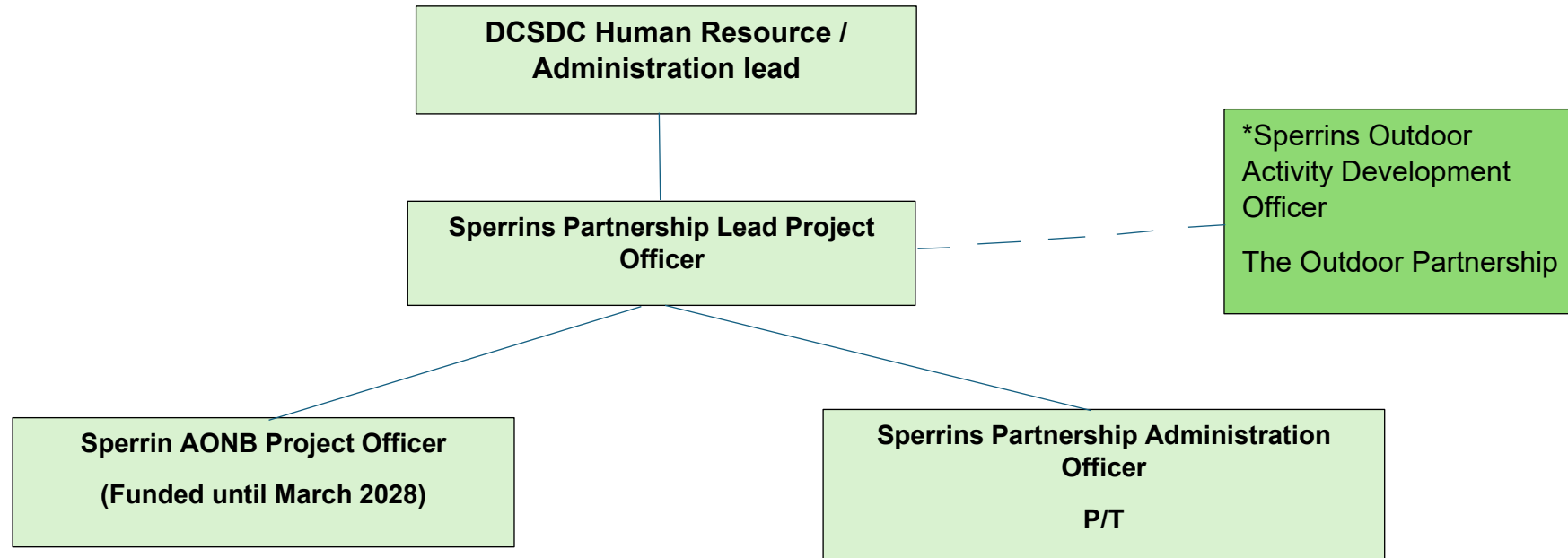
Governance Structure

Group	Purpose	Frequency of meetings
Sperrins Partnership Board (SPB)	Drive the ideas of the wider thematic groups, oversee budgets, employment and management responsibility. Resource allocation.	4 times per year
Director Coordinating Group	Ensure that the vision and direction from the SPB is translated into operational activity; deal with issues and manage risks. Resource oversight.	4 times per year
Operational Delivery Group	Responsible for the coordination of key actions and projects across the 4 Council areas. Project budget management.	Twice monthly
Statutory Partnership Sub-group	Ensure a cohesive cross government approach to the delivery of the Sperrins Project in line with PfG outcomes.	4 times per year
Thematic Groups	Specific delivery of key actions and projects in line with common ground statements.	6 times per year tbc



Sperrins Partnership - Staff Structure

SCHEDULE 2B



*The Sperrins Outdoor Activity Development Officer is part funded by the four Councils up to September 2026. The main funder is National Lottery Community Fund. The main employer is The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) based in Wales. The Councils support project activity with all Councils represented on the quarterly Stakeholder meetings. The Sperrins Outdoor Activity Development Officer provides regular project updates through the Lead Project Officer for Director Meetings, Partnership Board Meetings and the update report to Councils.

SCHEDULE 3 - Sperrins Partnership Lead Project Officer – Role and Responsibilities

KEY PURPOSE

Derry City and Strabane District Council in partnership with Mid Ulster District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council have secured funding to employ a Project Officer.

The aim of the post is to preserve, enhance and manage the natural, built and cultural heritage of the Sperrins area through the identified Future Search Action Plans which have been established through four thematic groups. These action plans will assist with the delivery of the project which have been identified within the Sperrins Future Search report. A key part of the Project is to assist with the implementation and delivery of these plans which will make the area a better place to live, work and visit.

The main purpose of the project is to implement the Sperrin Future Search Action Plans on behalf of the four thematic groups.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Strengthen and review the role of Sperrin Future Search Partnership Group and ensure diverse representation.
2. Seek external funding to assist in the delivery of the four Action Plans.
3. Undertake surveys, consultations, or investigations necessary to develop detailed plans and proposals, for any capital work. Request relevant permissions, especially where third party/ landowner agreements are needed.
4. Communicate effectively when representing Council at meetings with external stakeholders, partners and organisations.
5. Develop, implement and maintain appropriate management and administrative systems to ensure effective monitoring and control of resources.
6. Consult new and existing stakeholders and develop a detailed programme of activities and projects to engage people.
7. Develop detailed costs and a cash flow for the Action Plans.
8. Consider how to sustain outcomes after funding has ended, and how this will meet any additional running costs.
9. Consider how to evaluate the project, and collect baseline data that can measure the difference the scheme makes.
10. Undertake any work necessary to produce all relevant supporting documents.

11. Organise seminars and take the lead role in promotional activities, including the preparation and delivery of materials and presentations at such events relating to the project.
12. Take the lead role in providing management, monitoring and performance information to the relevant funding body in line with the format and deadlines prescribed by the scheme.
13. Prepare all necessary committee, management and project reports, briefing documents, financial reports and attend all meetings as and when required to ensure reports are provided to all Council's.
14. Promote equality of opportunity and access in service delivery and in employment processes.
15. Ensure all staff and operations comply with Health and Safety legislation in line with the departmental Health and Safety management system and corporate policy in compliance with Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) 18001.
16. Provide effective leadership to the relevant staff including carrying out staff appraisals and identifying training and development needs.
17. Participate in and ensure compliance with all Council policies and procedures and operate within the highest standards of management and personal behaviour which reflect the core values of the organisation.

SCHEDULE 4 – Sperrins Partnership – Project Administrative Assistant Roles and Responsibilities

REPORTS TO: Project Officer (Sperrin Future Search)

Derry City and Strabane District Council in partnership with Mid Ulster District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council have secured funding to employ an Administrative Assistant.

The aim of the post is to preserve, enhance and manage the natural, built and cultural heritage of the Sperrins area through the identified Future Search Action Plans which have been established in four thematic groups. These action plans will assist with the delivery of the project and have been identified within the Sperrins Future Search report.

A key part of the Project is to assist with the implementation and delivery of the action plans to make the area a better place to live, work and visit.

KEY PURPOSE

To provide a comprehensive administration service within the implementation of the Sperrins Future Search Action Plans Business Support function/structure including the day to day management and control of services.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide comprehensive secretarial and administrative support to a number of officers on a daily basis including acting as first point of contact for the directorate/public.
2. Process applications, and queries in accordance with agreed operating procedures and systems.
3. Provide an excellent standard of customer service to members of the public, other departments of the Council and external agencies via the telephone, email and face to face.
4. Process and maintain a range of data and document management systems, including checking for accuracy, upkeep of IT systems, transfer of data to other agencies in line with statutory or service level agreement requirements. Preparation of reports, providing/ collating information in relation to FOI responses, duties associated with retention and disposal of records, and issuing of correspondence in line with procedures.
5. Maintenance of financial systems, to include recording and receipt of all monies (including credit card payments), bank lodgements, generating invoices, procurement systems and processes including E-Ordering, receiving and checking

- delivery of orders, maintaining stock control records, assisting with financial claims and budget monitoring in accordance with financial regulations and governance.
6. Organise meetings, prepare agendas, take minutes and distribute all relevant documents.
 7. Assist in the delivery of departmental projects and events, as required.
 8. Prepare papers and reports, actioning relevant recommendations and where requested, monitor follow up and correspondence.
 9. Operate and monitor the Councils manual and computerised room booking systems in accordance with approved procedures.
 10. Participate in the maintenance of relevant Quality Management Systems including monitoring and review of systems and implementing improvements.
 11. Assist with managing and co-ordinating Senior Officers schedules e.g. staff meetings, public meetings and Elected Member Meetings etc.
 12. Assist with compilation of reports for committee and other project board meetings ensuring that all deadlines for reports, responses etc., are understood and adhered to by all concerned.
 13. Assist with the preparation and collation of information with regard to Freedom of Information requests and complaints.
 14. Liaise and work with key stakeholders, social partners, Elected Members, MLAs, MPs and Council Officers to ensure that tasks are completed and issues resolved accurately and in a timely manner, as directed by Senior Offices and the Director of Business & Communities.
 15. Assist with the preparation of financial claims to funding bodies, including monitoring of expenditure and dealing with any queries that arise.
 16. Collect, monitor and accurately updating financial and non-financial data for projects.
 17. Maintain project files to comply with audit requirements and liaise with external agencies and other Council Officers.
 18. Comply with and actively promote the Council's policies and procedures on all aspects of equality.
 19. Participate in and ensure compliance with all Council policies and procedures and operate within the highest standards of personal behaviour which reflect the core values of the organisation.
 20. Ensure full compliance with Health and Safety requirements and legislation in accordance with Council's Policies and Procedures.

21. Undertake any other duties appropriate to scale, which may be required from time to time.

Please note:

- The postholder should be aware that the responsibilities of the post may be subject to change as a result of organisational change. The Council therefore reserves the right to change the duties of the post by adding to or amending the range of responsibilities. The postholder will be required to be flexible and adaptable to meet the changing needs and requirements of the organisation.
- There may be a requirement to work evenings and weekends.

SCHEDULE 5 - Sperrin AONB Project Officer - Duties and Responsibilities

KEY PURPOSE

To deliver an identified programme of conservation, enhancement and promotion actions for natural, built and cultural heritage in the AONB and sustainable tourism activities. To engage with key stakeholders to identify and implement planned measures and agree project solutions. This role will include being responsible for co-ordinating activities in environmental management, sustainable development, raising awareness and good practice within the geographic area with its partners.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To be responsible for the development and co-ordination of activities relating to development of a 1 Number 10 Year Management Plan and 1 Number 5 year Action Plan for Sperrin AONB to include:
 - The development of the management plans through consultations and events
 - The provision of a secretariat service for the steering group / AONB management groups
 - Working in partnership to assist with the implementation of the AONB management plans
 - The review, monitor and evaluate AONB management plans
- To be responsible for the development, coordination and management of a range of projects and initiatives which aim to conserve, enhance and promote the AONB and need for protection
- To engage in a range of sustainable tourism activities
- To undertake a range of representational duties as required by the Sperrins Partnership Board and the AONB Steering Group in support of the overall objectives of the Sperrins Partnership
- To participate in the management, delivery and activity of events organised by Sperrins Partnership and partner organisations
- To be lead officer on the delivery of activities funded by DAERA under the 2023-28 Environment Fund Strategic Programme.

- To provide advice on environmental issues to assist the promotion of sustainable development policy and initiatives within the AONB in partnership with the officers within Sperrin Partnership and partners' officers
- To develop excellent relations, networking and partnerships with key environmental organisations, stakeholders, partners and local communities within private, public and voluntary sectors involved in the AONB
- To work closely and liaise with the partner councils in the area to inform their work and share information on issues of mutual benefit
- To undertake a range of representational duties as required in support of the overall objectives of the Sperrins Partnership
- To identify and develop major projects and funding applications for environmental management or sustainable development initiatives within Sperrin AONB
- Participate in and ensure compliance with all Council policies and procedures and operate within the highest standards of personal behaviour which reflect the core values of the organisation.
- Ensure full compliance with Health and Safety requirements and legislation in accordance with Council's Policies and Procedures.
- Comply with and actively promote the Council's policies and procedures on all aspects of equality.
- Undertake any other duties appropriate to scale, which may be required from time to time.

Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 16 May 2024 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown

Members Present	Councillor McNamee, Chair Councillors Bell, W Buchanan, Clarke, Corry (7.13 pm), Gildernew, McLernon, McQuade, Molloy, Monteith, Quinn, Wilson
Officers in Attendance	Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) Mr Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) Ms Linney, Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) Ms McKeown, Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) Miss Thompson, Committee and Member Services Officer
Others in Attendance	Deputation – Human Library Ms McCreanor

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor McNamee in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee by referring to Annex A to this minute.

D078/24 Notice of Recording

This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's YouTube site.

D079/24 Apologies

Councillors Black, F Burton and Milne.

D080/24 Declaration of Interests

The Chair, Councillor McNamee reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest.

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in Go Succeed as Chair of Cookstown Enterprise Centre.

D081/24 Chair's Business

Councillor Gildernew referred to the ongoing issues in the Killeeshil and Cabragh area arising from odours which are continuing to emanate from the Northway Mushroom Compost Plant. The Councillor stated that everyone is now aware of the issue and the detrimental impact this is having on the community and residents in the area on an ongoing basis. Councillor Gildernew referred to the social media, public meetings and campaigns the community have organised to try to get their voices heard and to achieve a resolution to this issue but that to date there has been no resolution. The Councillor stated that the community feel they are being ignored and failed by a range of statutory agencies. Councillor Gildernew stated that NIEA are the statutory body responsible for regulation of the plant and that they continue to deem the plant as compliant with what seems to residents to display little regard for their lives. The Councillor stated that NIEA is operated by DAERA and proposed that Council write to the DAERA Minister and invite him to Killeeshil to meet with residents and the community group to hear their concerns at first hand and to get a better understanding of this issue.

Councillor Bell seconded Councillor Gildernew's proposal.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to write to the DAERA Minister and invite him to Killeeshil to meet with residents and the community group in relation to ongoing issues with odours emanating from Northway Mushroom Compost Plant.

D082/24 Deputation – Human Library

The Chair, Councillor McNamee welcomed Ms McCreanor to the meeting and invited her to make her presentation on the Human Library.

Ms McCreanor stated she is a Freelance Education Consultant and has been working with First Steps Womens Centre in Dungannon for the last two years to deliver a weekly cultural awareness and integration class. Ms McCreanor advised that from this class she has also started running Human Library Events which help to integrate newcomers into the community and that her presentation tonight is to raise the profile of what a Human Library is (appendix 1).

Councillor Molloy stated he had visited a Human Library event and that it was fantastic to learn from each other about ethnic backgrounds and cultural diversity. The Councillor stated that the more we hear from others on their stories and experiences the more misconceptions can be broken down. Councillor Molloy stated he hoped to hear more about these events in the future.

Councillor Gildernew stated this was her first time hearing about the Human Library and that it sounded like a fabulous event that works at breaking down barriers. The Councillor asked that the next time a Human Library Event is being organised that Councillors are invited to attend.

Ms McCreanor advised that she is hoping to run an event in September which she would invite Councillors to.

Councillor Quinn stated he had also never heard of the Human Library and that it is vital that everyone learns from each other. The Councillor stated that he worked for Terex which is a global company with a lot of different nationalities working together and that asking questions can open up possibilities and brings people closer together. Councillor Quinn stated that the Human Library events sound excellent and that he would like to take part in the future.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee stated he had also never heard of the Human Library before but would look forward to attending a future event. Councillor McNamee thanked Ms McCreanor for coming to the meeting tonight to raise awareness of the Human Library following which Ms McCreanor left the meeting at 7.11 pm.

Matters for Decision

D083/24 Mid Ulster Loneliness Network 24/25

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which provided update on the ongoing work regarding Age Friendly Communities and associated Networks across the Mid Ulster District Council Area and sought approval for a request for funding towards Mid Ulster Loneliness Network.

Councillor McLernon proposed the recommendation and that it is good to see the good work continue with the Loneliness Network and Council's Age Friendly agenda.

Councillor Gildernew seconded Councillor McLernon's proposal.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the request for a contribution of £3,000 per annum for the period April 2024 – March 2026 towards the Loneliness Network in order to further promote and develop the network as supported by the other key partners of the Mid Ulster Loneliness Network including NHSCT and SHSCT.

Councillor Corry entered the meeting at 7.13 pm.

D084/24 Extension of the Service Level Agreement with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the renewal of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (ABC) for the provision of Tobacco Control work for the period April 2024 – March 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Buchanan
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the signing of the renewal of Service Level Agreements with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council for the provision of Tobacco Control work for the period April 2024 – March 2025.

D085/24 Development Report

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the following –

- Regional Minority Languages Bursary Funding 2024-2025
- John Hewitt, and Tyrone Guthrie Bursary Support
- Railway Park Final Design
- PeacePlus Partner Request
- EU Linkages with Community Led Partnership Ayuntamiento Rivas Vaciamadrid
- DFC Welfare Reform Support Project Funding
- Development Department Update

Councillor Monteith declared an interest in Mid Ulster Advice Services and Regional Minority Languages Bursary Funding 2024-2025.

Councillor Monteith referred to the Charlie Donnelly portrait which was previously displayed in the Council Offices in Dungannon and was later moved to Ranfurly House but then seemed to disappear. The Councillor stated that the portrait was presented to the legacy Dungannon Council and asked officers to ascertain the whereabouts of this portrait.

Councillor Gildernew proposed the report recommendations. The Councillor referred to Social Inclusion referred to within the report and welcomed the collaboration Test and Learn process with the Civil Service and government agencies and that she was delighted that Aughnacloy was chosen as one of the projects to be reviewed by all the agencies. Councillor Gildernew stated she hoped valuable lessons can be learned through the Test and Learn projects and that new ways for agencies to work together better can be established. The Councillor expressed her disappointment at the lack of participation into the process by DfI who at the highest level said they would participate but then failed to send anyone to the meeting held in Aughnacloy in January. Councillor Gildernew also expressed her disappointment at the exclusion of elected representatives to the rest of the process after the public meeting in January; by not being invited to a follow up meeting and then when addressed the meeting is held tonight clashing with this meeting and that as a Councillor for the DEA she was disappointed that she has been excluded from the meeting.

Councillor Molloy seconded Councillor Gildernew's proposal.

Councillor Wilson referred to the bursary to attend the John Hewitt Society Summer School and asked if Council has any say in relation to who attends. The Councillor stated that he is supportive of the request but that he had concerns that Council has no say in who attends the Summer School or what the criteria is to attend and that further to this there is no feedback received from the person attending.

The AD: Dev stated that Council should have received a report back last year from the person attending and apologised for officers not following up on this at the time. The AD: Dev stated that officers can get the criteria used for selecting who attends and stay more involved in the process and that the person attending the Summer School could be invited to a future committee meeting to share their experiences.

Councillor Wilson stated he was supportive of the request in relation to the Summer School but that he just had some concerns with the governance but that this could be tidied up with improved reporting back.

Councillor Quinn referred to work ongoing in relation to Coalisland Canal and that engagement is continuing on designs and asked if there was an update on this.

The Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) advised that there is a lot of work ongoing in the background in respect of Coalisland Canal including looking at what alternative options can be presented to the community following the engagement session held in March. The SD: C&P advised that it is hoped to have an update session with DEA Members by mid June followed by a community engagement session with final designs being signed off by early July in order to move forward with whatever project is agreed at that stage.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to –

- Approve the Regional Minority Language Bursary Awards.
- Approve the allocation of funding to support an Arts Bursary Award through the John Hewitt Summer School and Tyrone Guthrie Centre.
- Approve ‘in principle’ the overall concept design and phased approach for Railway Park Regeneration and agree Phase 1 as final designs for implementation (subject to the capital planning process).
- Approve Council participation in the Peace Plus project led by Ulster University in partnership with Foras Na Gaeilge.
- Approve Council participation in EU Linkages Community led Partnership with Ayuntamiento Rivas Vaciamadrid.
- Approve the transfer of DFC Welfare Reform Support Project Funding to Mid Ulster Advice Service (STEP).

D086/24 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Report - OBFD

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) presented previously circulated report which provided update on key activities as detailed below –

- Hidden Heritage Tours 2024
- Digital Signage Service Level Agreement (2024-2025)
- Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024
- A29 Cookstown Bypass – DfI Consultation
- Mid Ulster Gift Card Scheme – Renewal
- Town Business Spruce Up Scheme
- Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Projects Action Plan 2024/25

Councillor Bell proposed the report recommendations and commended officers for their hard work in bringing forward the additional proposals in relation to Hidden Heritage.

Councillor Corry seconded Councillor Bell's proposal and also commended officers for the additional Hidden Heritage proposals which she felt is a great opportunity to showcase the work at the new visitor centre at Friel's Bar and Restaurant in Swatragh. Councillor Corry also raised the following points –

- **Mid Ulster Gift Card Scheme** – Some businesses not aware of scheme and are interested and asked that scheme be promoted again.
- **Town Business Spruce Up Scheme** – Lobby DAERA in relation to potential schemes for smaller towns and villages.
- **Vacancy and Dereliction** – Planning can sometimes cause difficulties in relation to improving derelict buildings and with no funding can become costly.
- **Halloween** – Previous discussion in relation to inclusion of laser lights and asked if there was update/costings.

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in the Town Business Spruce Up Scheme as Cookstown Enterprise Centre had received funding.

Councillor Wilson also thanked AD: EDT&SP and the whole team for the work which went into the Continental Market held last weekend. The Councillor stated the event was superb and attracted a lot of visitors.

Councillor Molloy declared an interest in Enterprise Week under Dungannon Enterprise Centre.

Councillor Molloy agreed that the Continental Market was a great event and echoed Councillor Wilson's comments. The Councillor also agreed with Councillor Corry's comments in relation to working with DAERA regarding a spruce up scheme for rural areas.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee asked if businesses can still continue to register to the giftcard scheme and in relation to Enterprise Week he asked if the multisectoral tendering programme is still being continued.

The AD: EDT&SP responded to Members comments –

Mid Ulster Gift Card Scheme – Officers continue to promote the scheme and are currently working up another wave of promotion. The AD: EDT&SP stated that if a particular business is interested in the scheme to advise her and she would get officers to meet with that business.

Town Business Spruce Up Scheme – The AD: EDT&SP stated the report enclosed in Members' papers this evening (item 14) outlines the various types of funding available for rural/urban areas. She highlighted that Council has convened a

Dereliction Meeting on Monday 20 May 2024 which Members are encouraged to attend and noted that officers from DAERA and DfC will be in attendance. This is a key meeting to ask questions and try to progress things as Council does not have the regeneration powers or funding to tackle dereliction but is keen to work in partnership with Government Departments, which hold the powers and budgets, to co-design schemes to regenerate Mid Ulster's towns and rural areas.

Continental Market – Thanking the Member for his comments, the AD: EDT&SP stated the Continental Market was delivered jointly by her team and the Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing and his team.

Multisectoral Tendering Programme – There is no longer a Multi-Sectoral Tendering Programme, however, there are a range of supports available to businesses through the Go Succeed and other programmes, providing support for business start-up and growth. AD: EDT&SP advised of event being held on Friday 17 May 2024 in the Burnavon Theatre, Cookstown, which Members have been invited to attend. This event will showcase the results of the previous round of business support programmes, whilst also officially launching the new programmes that are now available to support local businesses.

Laser Lights – AD: EDT&SP stated she could not recall a previous discussion in relation to laser lights but would discuss this with the Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing.

Councillor Monteith referred to the 5,000 population limit used to define urban/rural and that this has not been a useful tool on the ground as there is a massive difference in need and has led to a lot of avoidance from Departments in relation to their responsibilities and that Council should do something to challenge this as it is not serving this Council area well. Councillor Monteith proposed that officers carry out research in relation to the 5,000 population limits which Government Departments use to define urban/rural and bring back a report to a future meeting providing an analysis of the difficulties this creates and assess alternative ways forward.

The AD: EDT&SP agreed with the Councillor's sentiments and stated that the debate can commence on Monday 20th May 2024 at the Dereliction Meeting, when officials from the Department for Communities (DfC) and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) will be in attendance. The AD: EDT&SP stated that whilst Council can make recommendations, unless the Departments are willing to adopt such recommendations across Northern Ireland, they are unlikely to agree to specific arrangements for Mid Ulster. The AD: EDT&SP stated a similar situation exists in relation to DfC and their determination that DfC funding can only be attributed to support schemes within 'town centre boundaries'. This therefore excludes the many businesses located between the town centre boundaries and the 30mph limits which cannot avail of any funding.

Councillor Molloy felt there is no reason why Departments cannot work together and have a pool of funding at the same time. Councillor Molloy seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee stated he felt Council is better placed to know where businesses are and where boundaries should lie.

Councillor Wilson stated there are three businesses from the bottom of Oldtown to Moneymore Road corner and that all are excluded under the Business Spruce Up scheme and there is a similar situation on the Fairhill in Cookstown.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council –

- **Hidden Heritage Tours 2024**
 - To provide an additional Hidden Heritage Tour on 2 October 2024, entitled '*Famine and Folklore*' at Friel's Bar and Restaurant, Swatragh and;
 - Enhance the visitor experience by providing living history and storytelling at The Bridewell (Magherafelt), US Grants Ancestral Homestead (Ballygawley) and the Emigrants Walk (Swatragh) during European Heritage Open Days on 15 & 16 September 2024.
- **Digital Signage Service Level Agreement (2024-2025)**
 - To approve Digital Signage Service Level Agreement between Council and Etolan Ltd, trading as Legato Solutions, for financial year commencing 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, at a cost of £2,200+Vat for provision of ongoing digital signage support at four sites across Mid Ulster, located in Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt and Coalisland.
- **Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024**
 - To approve a budget of circ. £28,000 for the delivery of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024 from Council's Economic Development budget 2024/2025.
 - To approve Officers proceed to seek competitive quotes to appoint a professional Management Partner to co-ordinate, manage, deliver and promote Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024 from Monday 11th to Friday 15th November 2024. The costs of a Management Partner will be subsumed within the budget detailed at 5.3.1 of report.
 - To approve Council's Chief Executive be granted authority to appoint the successful Management Partner, following the procurement exercise to allow work to progress over the summer months.
- **A29 Cookstown Bypass – DFI Consultation**
 - To approve Council's draft Consultation Response to the A29 Cookstown Bypass Scheme and by the powers granted by Full Council to the Development Committee, submit response to Department for Infrastructure (Dfi), prior to the closing date of Friday 29th May 2024 at 5pm.
- **Mid Ulster Gift Card Scheme - Renewal**
 - Approval to enter negotiations with Miconex to extend the Mid Ulster Gift Card Scheme for a further 2 years commencing in September 2024.

- Approval of projected budget of £14,000 per year (for 2 years) from Council's Economic Development Budget, as part of the original contract. A management fee will be implemented, if Council decides to terminate the contract as previously agreed under the original contract to honour gift cards purchased up to September 2024.
- **Town Business Spruce Up Scheme**
 - To note that following assessment of applications by the Independent Chartered Architect, applications ranked Nos. 1 - 67 were issued with Letters of Offer (by 31 March 2024), as previously agreed, up to the value of funding received from Department for Communities (DFC), totalling £200,000.
 - To note the number of scheme applicants exceeded the funding available from DFC. Therefore, whilst applicants ranked Nos. 68-117 were successful, scoring 40 or above, with combined funding sought totalling £173,722.45, these applicants were informed in writing they had been placed on a Reserve List until such times as Council may be able to attain additional funding from DFC, and therefore, in the interim period, they must not commence any works.
 - To approve that Council make a further funding bid to DFC to seek financial assistance of up to £200,000 to fund the successful applicants ranked Nos. 68 – 117, which are currently held on a Reserve List. The application would also request that any residual funding from DFC be directed towards offsetting the Independent Chartered Architect's costs.
 - In the event Council's funding bid to DFC is successful and the additional funding is provided to Council to deliver Phase 2 schemes, then approval is requested for Council's Chief Executive to be granted authority to;
 - (a) Sign and return the Letter of Offer to DFC;
 - (b) Issue Letters of Offer to applicants ranked Nos. 68 – 117, on the Reserve List.
 - (c) Procure the services of an Independent Chartered Architect to undertake site visits, verify works, etc, for Phase 2 (Reserve List) Schemes.
- **Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Projects Action Plan 2024/2025**
 - To approve the projects and associated budgets as detailed in the Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Projects Action Plan 2024/2025.
- **Dereliction**
 - In addition to the upcoming Dereliction workshop on 20 May 2024, that officers carry out research in relation to the 5,000 population limits which Government Departments use to define urban/rural and bring back a report to a future meeting providing an analysis of the difficulties this creates and assess alternative ways forward.

Matters for Information

D087/24 Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 April 2024

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 April 2024.

Councillor Quinn asked if there was an update in relation to Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council organising a joint meeting with the Minister in relation to the Blackwater and if there is no update he would suggest that this Council organises its own meeting with the Minister. The Councillor also referred to complaint received in relation to the Ferry Bridge which he understood is under ABC Council control but that there had been a problem with quads in this area going back and forth across the bridge. Councillor Quinn stated that PSNI have also received similar complaints and he asked that this issue be raised with ABC Council with a view to potentially putting bollards at either side of the bridge whilst still allowing for pedestrian and pram access. The Councillor advised that this recent activity has caused damage at both sides of the bridge and something needs to be done.

The Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) advised that he didn't have an update in relation to a meeting with the Minister but that he would check on this. The SD: C&P stated that in relation to the quads issue that officers would look at this and also raise through the PCSP. The SD: C&P stated that bollards may be one solution but that accessibility also needs to be considered.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee referred to the bridge at Lough Fea being closed and that this is having a big impact on users. Councillor McNamee asked how long the work will take to complete and asked that a report be brought to the Council meeting in May.

Councillor Wilson stated that a number of people had also contacted him in relation to the issue and that he had met fishermen who use the Lough. The Councillor asked if there was a possibility of getting a metal bridge in place as a temporary measure whilst work is ongoing.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee asked why the bridge has been shut.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) also expressed frustration that the bridge is currently closed. The AD: HL&W advised that officers were in receipt of a structural engineers report and also NI Water had expressed concern in relation to the bridge and when high water levels and swell causes waves to crash against the bridge it is causing some displacement. The AD: HL&W stated that the structural engineers report cannot be ignored however officers are moving at pace and a design has been finalised and costs are being secured and that it is hoped that the bridge can be reopened as soon as possible. The AD: HL&W advised that an update report would be brought to Council on the situation to date and to put timescales on works.

Councillor Gildernew referred to previous discussion in relation to bridge in Caledon being closed and asked for an update on this as well.

Councillor Quinn referred to event Craic Theatre had in Stormont last week and that it was good to see local talent from the Mid Ulster area putting their point across on the importance of Arts funding.

D088/24 Environmental Health Service Update

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the work of the Environmental Health Service during the period 1st February 2024 and 31st March 2024.

Councillor Monteith referred to housing fitness and proposed that a workshop be held in relation to housing standards. The Councillor stated that one of the first grants to disappear following the financial crash in 2008 was the home Improvement Grant and there was now 16 years of investment lost in keeping houses up to standard. Councillor Monteith stated there are major issues with the Housing Executive stock in the Mid Ulster area and that tenants are still being told that black mould is being caused by condensation and that these tenants are not ventilating their properties properly. Councillor Monteith referred to housing fitness inspections carried out by Environmental Health officers and that several people had been in contact with him who had these inspections carried out but were told by officers they could not get a copy of the report and that they would have to go to the Housing Executive who also would not provide the report. The Councillor felt that the tenant should be entitled to see a report which is carried out on their behalf.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) advised that a Members workshop could be organised in relation to housing standards. The AD: HL&W advised that in relation to inspection reports he was aware that a report does go to the homeowner which in many cases is the Landlord but was unsure as to the forward sharing and disclosure to the tenant but would check and come back to Councillor Monteith. The AD: HL&W stated that tenants rights could also be included as part of the workshop as there have been some recent changes to legislation.

Councillor Corry seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal. The Councillor also referred to the Affordable Warmth Scheme and that people are not getting the help needed to complete the forms and apply for the grants when Members had been assured that applicants would be supported.

Councillor Molloy referred to the Space Shaping report prepared by Council and to be agreed by Housing Executive but has been stalled by Housing Executive. The Councillor asked that this also be looked at again to see what stage it is at.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to hold workshop for Members in relation to housing standards.

D089/24 Forest Schools Programme for 2024/2025

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the Forest Schools programme for 2024 - 2025 within the Mid Ulster District Council area.

D090/24 Open Spaces and Outdoor Recreation Update

Members noted previously circulated report which outlined visitor throughput at the primary outdoor recreational sites throughout the Council area.

Councillor Monteith stated the Members have been contacted by Riverdale Football Club who are located in Benburb and are the primary user of facilities belonging to Council. Due to weather issues the Councillor advised that the club have only been able to use the facilities fifteen times in the last season which is not adequate for a football club. Councillor Monteith proposed that Riverdale Football Club be invited to a future meeting to discuss their ongoing issues as he felt that if weather conditions are not going to change then a lot of the grass pitches will become redundant and not fit for purpose meaning a major investment in new surfaces and drainage. The Councillor felt that in more rural areas where there only is one facility that these facilities should be looked at first. Councillor Monteith asked for an update in relation to Ballysaggart Lough and proposed that DEA meetings be held.

Councillor Wilson stated that it was remiss of him not to mention earlier the Strategic Director of Communities and Place and the Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing and their teams for their hard work in relation to the Continental Market. The Councillor stated that the visitor numbers to facilities were impressive and that he hadn't realised there were so many facilities. Councillor Wilson asked how visitor numbers to the Burnavon and Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House are recorded.

Councillor Molloy stated it was good to see the visitor numbers at facilities but noted that there had been a decrease in numbers at some facilities and asked if there was a reason for this. The Councillor stated it is incumbent on Council to ensure that facilities are maintained regularly and are safe to use and that any anti social behaviour is dealt with. Councillor Molloy felt that Service Level Agreements with local community groups also help to take pride in facilities in their areas. Councillor Molloy seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal in relation to inviting Riverdale Football Club to a future meeting and stated that Dúiche Neill Hurling Club in Benburb are also struggling for facilities and if Councillor Monteith was agreeable he would suggest that this club also be invited to present to Committee either separately or in partnership with Riverdale.

Councillor Monteith agreed to include Dúiche Neill Hurling Club in his proposal.

Councillor Gildernew referred to visitor numbers at Brantry Lodge which have went down significantly but that there had recently been a colour run event held in Brantry with 4-500 people attending. The Councillor stated that a lot of people at the event did not previously know the facility is in their area and that hopefully visitor numbers at this location will rise again in the near future.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) advised that officers have met with Riverdale Football Club and that the club is experiencing significant growth. The AD: HL&W stated that the need is recognised and referenced in the pitches strategy and that concept designs are being worked to convert the pitch at Benburb from grass to 3G and that this will allow officers and the club to look at funding opportunities. The AD: HL&W advised that in relation to Ballysaggart

Lough there are ongoing officer meetings and discussions with landowners but that a DEA meeting will be arranged to provide update. The AD: HL&W stated that the visitor number figures provided are probably conservative and that sensors are sited at locations where most people enter the facility but that some facilities have a number of entry points that are not being monitored. In relation to reduced number of visitors at some facilities the AD: HL&W stated this could relate to weather closures, maintenance or non monitored entry points being used.

Councillor Monteith stated that the potential at Ballysaggart is unbelievable and that a walkway around the Lough has to be the goal. The Councillor stated that he was happy to hear that conversations with landowners are ongoing but that Members have been hearing this for a long time and that there needs to be plans put in place. Councillor Monteith stated he is contacted on a daily basis in relation to the poor condition and upkeep of the site and that it is an Area of Special Scientific Interest in relation to birds but that there is no interpretative panel to indicate this. The Councillor stated that Council has plenty of good facilities but this is not one of them and that there needs to be a clear statement to the community that something is going to happen.

The Assistant Director of Development stated that in relation to visitor numbers at arts facilities there are ways of calculating these numbers such as ticket sales, income and officers are seeking to provide figures which are more robust than just the sensor figures.

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council –
- To invite Riverdale Football Club and Dúiche Neill Hurling Club to present to a future Development Committee meeting.
 - To hold DEA update meeting in relation to Ballysaggart Lough (Dungannon and Clogher Valley Councillors to be invited).

D091/24 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Report - OBF1

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the following key activities -

- International Women's Day Events – March 2024
- Rural Regeneration and Business Support Funding
- Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes – 21.2.24
- Maghera Town Centre Forum Minutes – 25.9.23
- Tourism Development Group Minutes – 10.1.24
- N2/A5 Cross Border Committee Minutes – 30.11.23

D092/24 Service Improvement Plan for Chief Executive's Directorate 2024-2025 - Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes Department

Members noted previously circulated report which set out the Departmental Service Improvement Plan for the Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Service for the 2024-2025 year.

The live broadcast ended at 8.08 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor McLernon and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst members consider items D093/24 to D100/24.

Matters for Decision

D093/24 Pavement Café Licensing – Proposed Fee Structure
D094/24 Tender for Catering Provision
D095/24 Tender for Fireworks
D096/24 Community Grants 2024/2025
D097/24 Catering Provision Contract for Burnavon Arts Centre
Cookstown and Ranfurly House & Hill of O’Neill
Dungannon
D098/24 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic
Programmes Report – Cbfd

Matters for Information

D099/24 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on
10 April 2024
D100/24 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership 2024-2025 Interim
Funding Position

D101/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7pm and ended at 8.48 pm

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the Council's [Policy & Resources/Environment/Development] Committee in the Chamber, [Cookstown/Dungannon/Magherafelt].

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast as aforesaid, will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I will let you know before this happens.

I would remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted.

Thank you and we will now move to the agenda.



Where real people are on loan and difficult questions are expected, appreciated and answered!

What does a Human Library aim to do?



It aims to challenge stereotypes and assumptions by facilitating open conversations that focus on people's lived experiences.

Instead of checking out books, you get to have a personal discussion with a 'human book'.

Innovative Team Building Activity

A human Library isn't just for newcomers. It is great for organisational team building.

It allows team members to connect, learn and share diverse perspectives.

It provides a great opportunity to foster empathy, understanding and collaboration within organisations.



How it works



Following some icebreaker activities, participants are invited to ‘check-out’ a human book for a set amount of time. This can be done on a one-to-one basis or in small groups.

Stimulus questions are provided to guide conversations. After a period, your facilitator will invite you to return your book and borrow a different one.

The aim is to ‘unjudge’ a book by its cover in a safe and facilitated space.

Benefits



‘Books have the power to transport us to new worlds, human books can transport us to new understandings!’

A fun and engaging team building event to foster empathy, understanding and collaboration.

Icebreaker activities and stimulus questions to guide conversations.

Short online pre- & post-event surveys to measure effectiveness.

One off event for time and budget sensitive situations.

Experienced facilitator who will host and lead post event discussion.

“Really enjoyed the event. Wonderful opportunity to learn and hear from inspirational women of our diverse society, sharing impactful stories and lived experiences”.

Alfie Wong MBE,

NICS Race and Ethnicity Champion and Head of Racial Equality Delivery Team at the Executive Office

“Despite not knowing what to expect, the conversations flowed so easily. Everyone was so open. I loved the fun games at the start too. Brilliant morning!”

Maura

Guest at First Steps Women’s Centre event

“What an experience! I loved it. I learnt so much!”

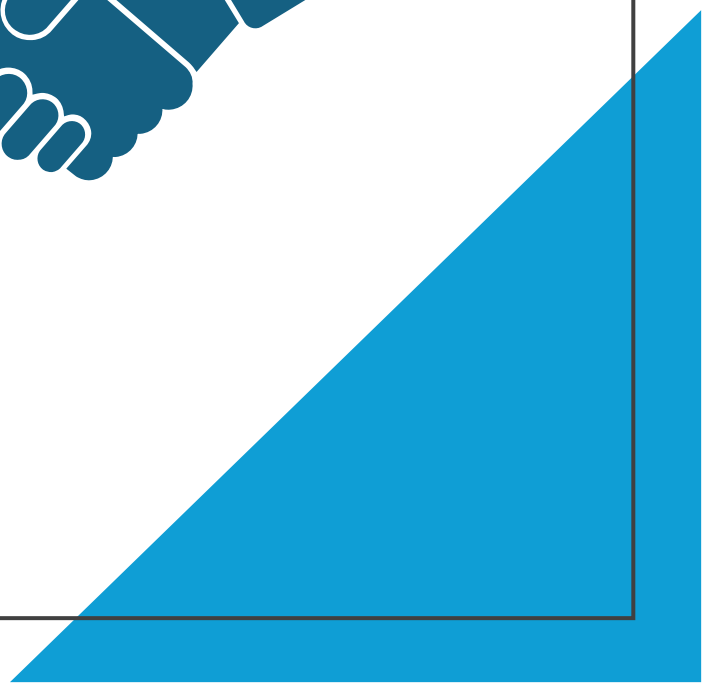
Roisin Shields, Senior Teacher, St Pat’s College, Dungannon

Testimonials

Thank you!



Contact: rosiemccreanor@yahoo.co.uk



Report on	Departmental Service Plan 2024/25: Communities & Place
Date of Meeting	Thursday 13 th June 2024
Reporting Officer	Ryan Black, Strategic Director of Communities & Place
Contact Officer	Claire Linney, Assistant Director of Development Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of the report is to present to Members the Communities & Place Departmental Service Plan 24/25.
2.0	Key Issues
2.1	Members will be aware that the Council has been completing a re-structure over the last number of years, which resulted in the creation of new directorates and service departments across the organisation.
2.2	Over the past 12 months work has been continuing to create and embed new teams, which has result in some re-organisation of services and refocused priorities.
2.3	The Communities & Place directorate is focused on creating a collaborative approach to service delivery internally, across the organisation and with our external partners and stakeholders.
2.4	<p>We operate with 378 Full Time and Part Time posts (not including casuals) and a net budget of £14,172,988. The directorate is responsible for the development, programming and animation of Council owned local amenities, parks, open spaces and leisure provision and works across sectors to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the public from environmental health risks, • Promote health, leisure and well-being, • Develop and preserve our rich arts, culture and local heritage, • Support people to develop their communities by empowering them to identify solutions to local needs and to build and develop good relations. <p>The directorate is organised over 2 departments,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development; • Health, Leisure & Wellbeing. <p>The Development Department is responsible for the Councils Community & Arts portfolios, which includes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Development Support; • Diversity & Integration

<p>2.5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) • Poverty & Community Wealth Building • Arts Development • Burnavon Arts Centre • Ranfurly House & Hill of the O'Neill • Seamus Heaney HomePlace • Languages <p>The Health Wellbeing & Leisure Unit is responsible for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Health; • Leisure Centres; • Parks, Open Spaces and Playareas; • Sports Arenas • Health & Wellbeing • Events <p>Our 2024/2025 Service Plan has built on our new approach with a focus on People, Places and Communities across our agreed themes of Inclusive, Healthy, Creative, Engaged & Informed;</p> <p>The directorate vision is:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>'A better future for all by</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Providing and promoting welcoming and safe places where we develop, deliver and administer services which contribute to inclusive, healthy, creative, engaged & informed People, Places and Communities.'</i></p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Main Report</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>In line with corporate guidance, the Communities & Place Departmental Plan is set in the context of the Councils agreed Corporate Plan and the Mid Ulster District Community Plan 2017-2027.</p>
<p>3.2</p>	<p>The plan is developed within the agreed budgets, as set as part of the 2024/25 estimates process and agreed staffing establishment.</p>
<p>3.3</p>	<p>Some of the key strategic outputs within the plan includes;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Literary Hub & Writers Residency Development, Bellaghy 2. Community Development Strategy and Grant Aid Policy 3. Community Wealth Building Framework 4. Improving Air Quality & Reviewing approach to education and enforcement 5. Physical regeneration through agreed capital programmes; 6. Improved and collaborative approaches to Marketing. 7. Delivery of Health & Wellbeing outcomes through our indoor / outdoor assets; 8. Deliver and develop on the Councils Corporate Event schedule; 9. Developing and maintaining key partnership to support delivery.
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Other Considerations</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p>

	<p>The Communities & Place Departmental Service Plan 24/25 will be delivered within agreed budget resources and staffing complement.</p> <p><u>Professional Support</u> None</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u> None known</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u> As detailed within the plan</p>
5.0	<p>Recommendation(s)</p>
5.1	<p>Members are asked to note the Communities & Place Departmental Service Plan 2024/2025.</p>
6.0	<p>Documents Attached & References</p>
6.1	<p>2024/2025 Communities & Place Departmental Service Plan.</p>



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Communities & Place

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE PLAN - 2024 / 2025

Date

Consulted within staff team

May 2024

Discussed & signed off by Director

31 May 2024

CONTENT

SECTION	TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
	Foreword	
1.0	OVERALL PURPOSE & SCOPE OF THE DEPARTMENT	2
1.1	Purpose and scope of the department	2
1.2	Responsibilities	2
1.3	Customers & Stakeholders	6
1.4	Performance Overview in 2023/24	7
2.0	IMPROVING OUR SERVICES AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE - 2024/25	18
2.1	Budget - 2024/25	18
2.2	Staffing Complement Department – 2024/25	19
2.3	Service Plan – 2024/ 25	20
2.4	Risk Management of Department	37
3.0	OUR STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS	41
3.1	Equality Duty	41
3.2	Rural Needs Duty	41

1.0 OVERALL PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE DEPARTMENT

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Department

The Communities and Place department is responsible for the development, programming and animation of Council owned local amenities, parks, open spaces and leisure provision.

We also work collaboratively with communities and businesses across sectors to;

- Protect the public from environmental health risks,
- Promote health, leisure and well-being,
- Develop and preserve our rich arts, culture and local heritage,
- Support people to develop their communities by empowering them to identify solutions to meet local needs and to build and develop good relations.

Over the past 24 months the directorate has undergone significant changes, resulting from the organisational re-structure.

To support and evolve the business planning process, the C&P teams have worked collectively to develop a new approach to service planning and a collective directorate vision;

'A better future for all by

*Providing and promoting welcoming and safe places where we develop, deliver and administer services which contribute to **inclusive, healthy, creative, engaged and informed people, places and communities.***

This service plans has been developed in line with this vision and actions have been organised thematically under the key themes of **inclusive, healthy, creative, engaged and informed** moving away from traditional service planning to one which works towards more collaborative opportunities and joint working.

1.2 Responsibilities

The directorate is organised into 2 departments, **Development** and **Health, Leisure & Wellbeing**, both of which are responsible for a number of services areas.

Development Department

Neighbourhood Development

The Neighbourhood Development Service provides capacity building and funding to the community and voluntary sector across Mid Ulster. The team manage and administer the Council grant aid programme, which includes community venues, community development strategic support, community development small grant, festivals and events. The team also provides support and guidance to groups on identifying other sources of funding to support localised community development and planning for the development of their local areas. The team oversee and facilitate the advice provision for the district and Neighbourhood Renewal Programme, Dungannon West and Coalisland, both of which are part funded by the Department for Communities.

Diversity and Integration

The Diversity & Integration service is part funded through the Northern Ireland Executive and Special European Union Programme Body to oversee the development and delivery of local actions plans, aligned to the regional Together Building a United Community (T:BUC) and Peace programmes. The key focus of the Good Relations work is on creating shared space, developing good relations between children and young people and developing cultural expression between our communities. Good Relations, as part of the T:BUC commitment also seeks to promote cultural expression across our District with a focus on both traditional communities and new communities. The team deliver the Peace action plan for the district, which seeks to promote peace and reconciliation across our communities, particularly focusing on children and young people and development and usage of shared space.

Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)

PCSP is an independent body to Council with its own governance regulation. The PCSP consists of Councillors, Independent Members, bodies designated by the NI Assembly, and locally designated bodies. They consult and engage with communities on issues of local concern and develop solutions to tackle crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. The PCSP also monitors the performance of the Police against the Policing Plan. The Partnership is funded by the Department of Justice (DoJ), and the NI Policing Board (NIPB), through the Joint Committee. The PCSP team provides management support to the Partnership and oversees governance in relation to delivery of the Partnership agreed actions through appointment and management of staff and governance in relation to value for money and financial management.

Social Inclusion & Community Wealth Building

Mid Ulster District Council is responsible for the facilitation of the Mid Ulster Community Planning. As part of the Community Plan, partners have identified a remit for strategic delivery of key areas. Social Inclusion service co-ordinates the Council input to these areas, which includes Mid Ulster Poverty and Social Housing plans, both looking at partnership delivery and lobbying for greater provision across the District; lobbying on key issues within community planning, and consideration of areas of investment for Council under a partnership approach. The service is also working on the development of a new Community Wealth Building framework for the Council, through a test and learn approach.

Mid Ulster Arts

Mid Ulster Arts is delivered through our Mid Ulster Arts Centre, The Burnavon. This 350 seat performance space provides for a major arts venue for the district alongside a conference space. The Arts Service also offer an arts outreach community programme, working in partnership with our 6 strategic community partners who manage smaller community performance spaces across the district, and deliver an outreach programme to key groups to support the engagement and experience of arts for everyone in our community.

Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House

Hill of The O'Neill provides a heritage experience highlighting the period of the site from early old Ireland through the clans of Ulster and The O'Neill to the Plantation of Ulster. The facility includes the site of Hill of The O'Neill and an exhibition space in Ranfurly House, which also provides space for wider usage including small arts craft and community activity; and the management of the Tullaghoge site (inauguration site of O'Neill).

Regional Minority Language

The Development unit is responsible, along with other departments for the Regional and Minority Language Development programmes throughout the Mid Ulster region. This includes both Irish and Ulster Scots.

Seamus Heaney HomePlace

Seamus Heaney HomePlace is a regional facility located in Mid Ulster. It is the centre for the promotion of the works of Seamus Heaney in its natural home setting of Bellaghy village. It houses an exhibition of the works of Seamus Heaney and a small performance space hosting events and activities associated with the promotion and engagement of the works of the great poet Laureate. The development of Open Ground; consisting of 6 key sites that can be accessed to allow people to seek to relive some of the experience which inspired Seamus Heaney is now available and managed by Development.

Health, Leisure & Wellbeing Unit

Previously the functions associated with Environmental Health, Leisure and Parks were all led as separate service areas. Additionally district wide corporate events were also part of the previous Tourism service area. Following the Council's re-structure during 2021, all the above functions now fall within the new Communities and Place Department and are being delivered together as one new broad service area - Health, Leisure and Wellbeing.

In general, this new combined service area aims to:

- Promote and support innovative ways of achieving Mid Ulster District Council's service aims and objectives through the Corporate and Community Planning process and development, delivery and review of business plans and strategies.
- Contribute to the development of Council's corporate governance framework and ensure it is consistently implemented.
- Ensure the provision and delivery of high quality and cost-effective services, facilities, programmes and events.
- Contribute to the development of Council's policies and procedures which promote high standards of service delivery.
- Provide guidance and professional advice to Stakeholders and elected members, ensuring clear communication, and delivery of agreed Council objectives.
- Work with and consult members of the public, partners, and stakeholders, to ensure the provision of appropriate, effective and integrated services.
- Communicate to staff the strategic objectives and targets for the Department.
- Identify sources of external funding opportunities for service development, formulating fund bids and liaising with funding bodies to maximise benefit for Mid Ulster.

Health

The Environmental Health Service is fundamentally about improving the health and wellbeing of local communities supported by a regulatory function. Our work makes important contributions towards all of the Council's key themes and objectives, but in particular, through aiming to keep our environment safe and where possible, promoting healthier choices.

The purpose of Environmental Health's remit within Council continues to be the control of factors in the environment which can affect public health and safety within the realms of the Council's statutory obligations. This is mainly achieved by enforcing environmental health legislation in both a reactive and proactive manner. The Environmental Health team are split across the Council's three main civic buildings in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.

Leisure

The Leisure team work to provide quality leisure, recreation, parks and sports facilities offering recreational and sporting opportunities both indoor and outdoor. It seeks to provide opportunities for citizens and visitors to improve their health and wellbeing through physical and recreational activities, in safe, quality environments in the most efficient and effective ways using highly trained, engaged staff.

The service is committed to the achievement of quality standards across parks and open spaces in line with the Green Flag status through the attainment of additional Green Flag Awards for suitable sites. The service will support achievement of sustainable development in line with approved management and maintenance plans delivering on the protection and enhancement of the natural qualities of parks and open spaces, embracing positive biodiversity for the benefit of future generations.

The service seeks to actively encourage greater community involvement and additional partnership working between agencies, groups and organisations, exploring opportunities (where compatible with corporate priorities) to provide high quality accessible facilities that are enjoyed by all who visit or live within our shared community. The team coordinate the delivery of specific Council strategies such as the Five Year Play Strategy, the Five Year Pitches and Recreational Spaces Strategy and the Outdoor Recreation Strategy.

This team manages 6 indoor leisure facilities, 2 sports arenas, 1 golf centre, 16 public parks, and 111 park/playground amenities across the towns, villages and hamlets of the district.

Additionally, the team deliver key corporate events across the district that aim to help contribute to increased footfall and visitor numbers which can help stimulate the growth of tourism and other businesses in our town centres and villages. Our corporate events also deliver a range of social benefits for local communities, including raising community pride, teach people new experiences, strengthen relationships and bring communities together.

Wellbeing

This new combined service area works across many internal Council departments in addition to many of our external stakeholders and statutory agencies and aims to play a transformative, supportive, informative and advisory role in all aspects of health and well-being. In many cases, the programmes are directly linked to the ongoing funding and partnership working with key external agencies and many arrangements and associated targets/KPI's with each being reviewed on an annual basis to determine effectiveness and continuation. These help deliver wider physical activity, participation and promotion and the implementation of Council's Age Friendly Strategy. This service also provides an advisory and support services for the citizens of our District through the fuel stamp scheme along with services such as Home Safety, Energy Efficiency and coordinating the management of the Agewell Partnership whilst also helping to support general business development across the leisure, recreation and parks service.

The Communities & Place Department is responsible for the following facilities:

- Burnavon Arts Centre
- Cookstown Leisure Centre
- Countryside Access (Asserted Public Right's of Way)
- Davagh OM Dark Skies Park
- Designated Camping, Caravanning & House Boats
- Designated Forest & Water Recreation
- Drumcoo Bowling Green including playing fields
- Dungannon Leisure Centre
- Fairhill Bowling Green and Tennis Courts including playing fields

- Gortgonis Centre and Playing Fields
- Greenvale Leisure Centre
- Hill of the O'Neill & Ranfurly House
- King George V Bowling Green including playing fields
- Maghera Leisure Centre
- Magherafelt Bowling Green
- Meadowbank Sports Arena
- Mid Ulster Sports Arena
- Moneymore Recreation Centre
- Outdoor Facilities to include Football Pitches, MUGA's, Pavilions Tennis
- Play Areas x 111
- Public Parks x 16 including Ballyronan Marina and Dungannon Park
- Seamus Heaney Homeplace
- Tobermore Golf Centre

1.3 Customers & Stakeholders

Customers & Stakeholders
<p>Internal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected Members • Staff to include other Council service areas
<p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens, businesses & visitors • Community/Voluntary & Social Enterprise Sectors • Schools & Colleges • Funding Bodies • Public Health Agency • Sport NI and National Sporting Governing Bodies • Health Trusts • Tourism Northern Ireland • Tourism Ireland • National Trust • NI Executive Departments, including DAERA, DFC, DFI. • Food Standards Agency • Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland • Northern Ireland Housing Executive • Police Service of Northern Ireland • Office of Product Safety and Standards • Event promoters

1.4 Performance Overview in 2023/24 (Retrospective Review)

2023/2024 Performance Response/ Overview (What we achieved- Measured Activities)	End of Year Progress Status: Activity was - Completed /Commenced/ Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed and submitted OBC to secure All Island Funding, for an all Island literary centre at Bellaghy Bawn linking Seamus Heaney Homeplace and new governance model. 	Outline Business Case Complete New Governance structure agreed and established.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHHP – Seamus Heaney HomePlace has achieved a number of recognition awards over the last year for its quality deliver as a top visitor attraction; the NI Autism Impact Award, the Sandford Award for Education delivery, and the Trip Advisor Travellers Choice 2023 and 2024. The number of people attending the exhibition and Arts Programme events is growing annually and has significantly recovered post covid closure; and an increasing number of schools are participating in the curriculum led education programme. 	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Arts – a programme of community arts was delivered in partnership with our strategic arts partners – Craic, Bardic, Glasgowbury, An Carn, and Brantry. The programme included engagement of children and young people, people with disabilities, older people in a range of arts forms, alongside a showcase of the Mid Ulster Arts which is developing annually. 	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hill of The O’Neill & Ranfurly House – an interactive plan of programmes and activity was delivered during the year from heritage tours/visits, educational programmes, cultural and fun events, community space provision, and open park provision. The numbers accessing the facility are continuing to grow and a new marketing programme is supporting this. 	<i>Complete</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burnavon – Burnavon continues to deliver quality performances over the year with most shows sold out; including well known country and folk artists; alongside community led performances – annual pantomime, song and dance 	Complete

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peace Connecting Pomeroy – the £7.5mn connecting Pomeroy Peace project has been completed with a new state of the art Forest Centre, one of its kind Magical Fairy Trail, and new shared community facilities Peace & Good Relations– a new Peace Plus Plan has been developed, through co design with the local community, and submitted to SEUPB for 5mn Euros 	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Development – an investment of £1mn has been delivered to our local communities with over 600 groups benefiting Community Groups across Mid Ulster have been supported in seeking to maximise investment to their areas and communities 	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Minority Languages & Cultural Diversity – activities included community delivery with a range of community partners, bursary schemes for language development, cultural and language development programmes, and continuation of a new language signage plan across Mid Ulster. 	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty – work is continuing, through a partnership approach, to seek to influence areas that are impacting upon people living in poverty across Mid Ulster; this includes lobbying for additional social housing, mixed tenure, housing rights, to local led emergency support provision via our foodbanks and SVPs, Save the Children and delivery of Mid Ulster Advice service. 	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Wealth Building – a new pilot community wealth building initiative has commenced, with 5 test and learn projects taking place across a number of areas; including – community asset transfer, social procurement, community ownership, social value, and Fair Employment. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that businesses have ready access to Food Hygiene & Food Standards advice and guidance. 90% of all queries responded to within 5 days. 	98% responded to within 5 days (599 queries were received)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support businesses by providing both with targeted health and safety advice or signposting to relevant resources (or other agencies where appropriate). 85% of requests to be responded to within 5 days 	95% of 252 requests for advice were responded to within 5 days (81% within the same day of request).

	<p>66 health and safety complaints were also received, 100% responded to within 5 days (95% within 1 day)</p> <p>31 reportable accident notifications were responded to within 5 working days (97%), with 77% responded to within 1 day.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to the 74 registered Pollution Prevention Control premises. 90% of all related Environmental Protection complaints to be responded to within 3 days. 	<p>100% All Registered PPC premises contacted as scheduled.</p> <p>100% of PPC premise related complaints responded to within 3 days</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately monitor the District for air quality issues and take suitable steps where exceedances of air quality objectives are noted. Investigation of air quality nuisance complaints, with appropriate action to resolve the problem. • 90% of complaints responded to within 3 working days 	<p>100% of N02 Tubes changed on schedule.</p> <p>100% of air quality nuisance complaints responded to within 3 days</p> <p>An Air Quality stakeholder meeting was held in January 2024</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With respect to EU Exit, assist and advised businesses regarding changes in regulatory checks and controls which fall under EH remit. 90% of all complaints to be responded to within 5 days. 	<p>Food Control – 100% of service requests responded to within 5 days (6 requests)</p> <p>Consumer Protection – 100% of 51 service requests were responded to within 5 days. (63% on the same day)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond continuously to Public Health complaints as per Public Health & Housing unit plan. Target to respond to 85% complaints within 5 working days 	<p>97% of Public Health (1244 complaints) and 93% Housing requests (180) were responded to within 5 working days.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplement the work undertaken through the Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan by engaging in cross-departmental activities to support the Clean Neighbourhood priorities, such as reducing dog fouling, etc. 	<p>Regular hotspot monitoring has taken place at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Fisherman's Walk, Portglenone (ii) Moneymore Park (iii) Railway Park, Dungannon (iv) Bellaghy Centre / Football Pitches (v) Round Lake, Fivemiletown (vi) Mayogall Road, Gulladuff (vii) Gortgonis Road, Coalisland. <p>Officers have also engaged with dog owners and distributed dog fouling bags where appropriate.</p> <p>The 'Walk this way' scheme is in operation at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Round Lake,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) Moneymore Park (iii) High Street (iv) Railway Park and (v) Fisherman's Walk. <p>An options paper is pending the outcome of preliminary discussions with other councils regarding the potential of a coordinated approach to enforcement provision</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish advisory/signposting initiative in each of the 3 x main leisure venues to showcase all of the Health, Leisure & Wellbeing services and provide information on access to support, referrals and registrations into programmes, schemes and activities. • To include relevant services within Environmental Health, Leisure and Health & Wellbeing this would seek to provide information events/ workshops/seminars to citizens and groups of business who could potentially benefit from increased awareness. 	<p>A pop up Road show to showcase Environmental Health, Leisure and Open Spaces & Recreation was delivered during Q4 in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.</p> <p>The Environmental Health Service completed its tobacco, tobacco products, nicotine inhaling products (including e-cigarettes/vapes) and butane gas test purchasing exercises in Quarter 4. In total, 70 products were test purchased. There were 6 sales which resulted in 1 Fixed Penalty Notice and 5 written warning being issued.</p>

	<p>The Environmental Health Service undertook initiatives with businesses relating to hiring out inflatables and jewellery. A total of 29 businesses were provided with information on requirements for safety.</p>
<p>Review and enhance the Environmental Health Service's internal processes with respect to the PPC permitting regime to include financial management, ongoing monitoring of existing business and the proactive scoping for new premises which require regulation.</p>	<p>Environmental Health continues to monitor PPC related service delivery closely. Whilst permit related debt significantly decreased during 2023/2024, financial monitoring remains under close review.</p> <p>A proactive scoping was undertaken in relation to the permitting of 'Medium Combustion Plant' (MCP) which is a new tranche of process requiring regulation.</p> <p>A mailshot was sent out to approximately 180 businesses. and subsequently 38 MCP related requests for advice were received / actioned. Follow up work will continue within 2024/2025.</p>

	<p>90 programmed PPC inspections were also completed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a “digital first” approach with staff and customers. • Increased destination digital presences, website, and social media. 	<p>The Environmental Health Service engaged via Councils Digital Transformation Strategy Tailwind Digital in relation to transforming processes within the dog licensing function in order to improve and streamline the digital processes in relation to delivery of this service area. A number of workshops were held during 2023/2024 examining current practices and potential improvements. Work plan agreed for 24/25.</p> <p>All online bookings are available to be booked online for caravans and pods via the council website.</p> <p>Leisurehub functionality for leisure centres growing – online membership joining and booking of group exercise classes.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Active Travel Masterplan for the district (Greenway/Blueway proposals for long distance walking/cycling routes) 	<p>Funds secured for masterplan development and following procurement process, consultant appointed January 2024. Project anticipated to take 12 months</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Wellbeing key messages delivered. Exploration of extended customer journeys through enhanced integration of services with leisure and outdoor recreation teams to maximise benefit for customers. Clients on the existing programme re-engaged with to provide support on key messaging and to provide onward signposting as appropriate through integration with the parks and leisure services. • Age Friendly • Affordable Warmth • Energy Efficiency • Home Accident Prevention • Make a Change • Mid Ulster Agewell Partnership • Physical Activity Referral Scheme • Consider Mid Ulster Agewell Partnership, contract extension and future delivery options with designated partners (NIHE, NHSCT, PCSP, PHA, SHSCT) 	<p>Ongoing funding and partnership working with key external agencies (PHA, SHSCT, NHSCT, NIHE, DfC) and many arrangements and associated targets/KPI's with each being reviewed on an annual basis to determine effectiveness and continuation.</p> <p>During 2023, DfC/NIHE advised the all Council's roles in the Affordable Warmth scheme would end during September 2023.</p> <p>In February 2024, following a procurement process, Council approved a one year tender to continue Mid Ulster Agewell project until 31st March 2025. Review and future tender to be carried out mid-2024.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved engagement of children and adults from the Mid Ulster District Council area in a pilot Physical Activity Programme over the duration of Sept 2023 until April 2024 through the medium of structured and non-structured sessions (enrolment charge of £1 per activity session). Activities included, Active Aging, Strength Balance, Active Aging, Autism Club Beginners Yoga, Water Aerobics, Strength Balance, Post Natal Pilates, Mums & Tums, Ti Chi / Chi MI, Beginners Yoga, Postnatal Yoga, Autism Club, water aerobics, Tuesday Club, Fit 4 U. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>3,209 Approx participants</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of summer camps across MUDC leisure venues. Activities included general centre based activities and also camps focusing on Gymnastics, Tennis, Canoeing, Golf. Discounted £1 activities were available for under 18's between 1st July 2023 – 31st August 2023 in the following areas: soft play, teen gym, courts, golf par 3 & driving range, athletics, tennis courts and 3G pitches 	<p>Completed</p> <p>9,057 Approx participants</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on and launch the Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan with Short term actions underway and also support the Age Friendly Alliance for the District 	<p>3 Year Strategy launched in September 2023. Ongoing meetings of the Age Friendly Strategic Alliance with multi-agency partners</p>
<p>Capital projects Completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access and Inclusion Grant Programme: Pool Pod installation for Dungannon Leisure Centre (total estimated value of project was £52k with approx. funding of £30k achieved from DfC) Access and Inclusion Grant Programme: Wet Gallery accessibility enhancement at Dungannon Leisure Centre (total estimated value of project was £10k with approx. funding of £8.9k achieved from DfC) Access and Inclusion Grant Programme: Accessibility enhancement at the pavilion at Cahore Playing Fields, (total estimated value of project was £9k with approx. funding of £8k achieved from DfC) Access and Inclusion Grant Programme: Accessible Picnic Tables & Seating for various locations across district area, (total estimated value of project was £9.5k with approx. funding of £8.5k achieved from DfC) 	<p>Completed during April 2023 – March 2024</p> <p>Council approved Five Year Play Strategy in December 2019. Delay due to covid pandemic. To date, 52 projects have been completed (approx. value of £2.9m)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derrynoyd Forrest Enhancement (approx. £270,000) • Drumcairne Forest Enhancement (approx. £265,000) • Covid Small Settlements: Manor Park Moneymore (approx. £260k) • Play Park Strategy: 19 playparks enhanced (approx. £928k) 	
<p>Capital projects in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Travel: Clogher • Altmore/Cappagh Forrest Concept Development • Ballysaggart Lough (Reservoir) • Covid Small Settlements: Bellaghy • Covid Small Settlements: Castlecaufield • Covid Small Settlements: Castledawson • Covid Small Settlements: Clady • Maghera Parklands (as part of overall Levelling Up Bid) • Mid Ulster Sports Arena (new 3G & 8 lane rune track) • Play Strategy: Preparation for delivery of 24/25 projects – ie. year 4 and year 5 assigned projects (total of 7 projects with estimated value of £594k) • Pitch & Recreational Spaces Strategy: Preparation for delivery of 24/25 projects – ie. year 1 assigned projects (total of 10 projects) 	<p>Work on various projects ongoing in conjunction with other key departments within Council</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase customer/visitor attendances at leisure and outdoor recreation facilities – aim for a year on year increase 	<p>Total Number of customer/visitor attendances at leisure facilities during April 2023 – March 2024: 1,024,286 (8% YoY increase)</p> <p>Total Number of customer/visitor attendances at outdoor recreation facilities during April 2023 – March 2024: 1,231,450 (10% YoY increase)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review leisure and outdoor recreation Service Level Agreements (SLA's) for provision of various services across the district to include keyholding, opening/closing of facilities, cleaning, litter picking, inspections,etc • Review each SLA annually based on a mixture of performance indicators and service provision to ensure that service level objectives meet with Council's satisfaction and are monitored continuously. • As per the MUDC Five Year Outdoor Recreation Strategy, aim to implement 2 x additional SLA during April 2024 – March 2025. 	<p>Complete 10 x SLA's with separate groups reviewed and Council approved continuation for April 2023 – March 2024 at a total value of £115k</p> <p>Additional 3 x SLA's approved by Council in April 2024.</p> <p>Review/continuation for SLA's for April 2024 – March 2025 approved by Council March 2024.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver schedule of corporate events. • Carry out an events review and bring forward a Five Year Events Strategy for MUDC. 	<p>12 Corporate Events Successfully completed during 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lumarina Ballyronan • Maghera Walled Garden • Coalisland Summer Bash • Halloween (Coalisland, Cookstown, Dungannon, Maghera) • Xmas (Coalisland, Cookstown, Dungannon, Maghera, Magherafelt) <p>Consultant appointed and Events Strategy to be presented to relevant council committee mid-2024.</p>

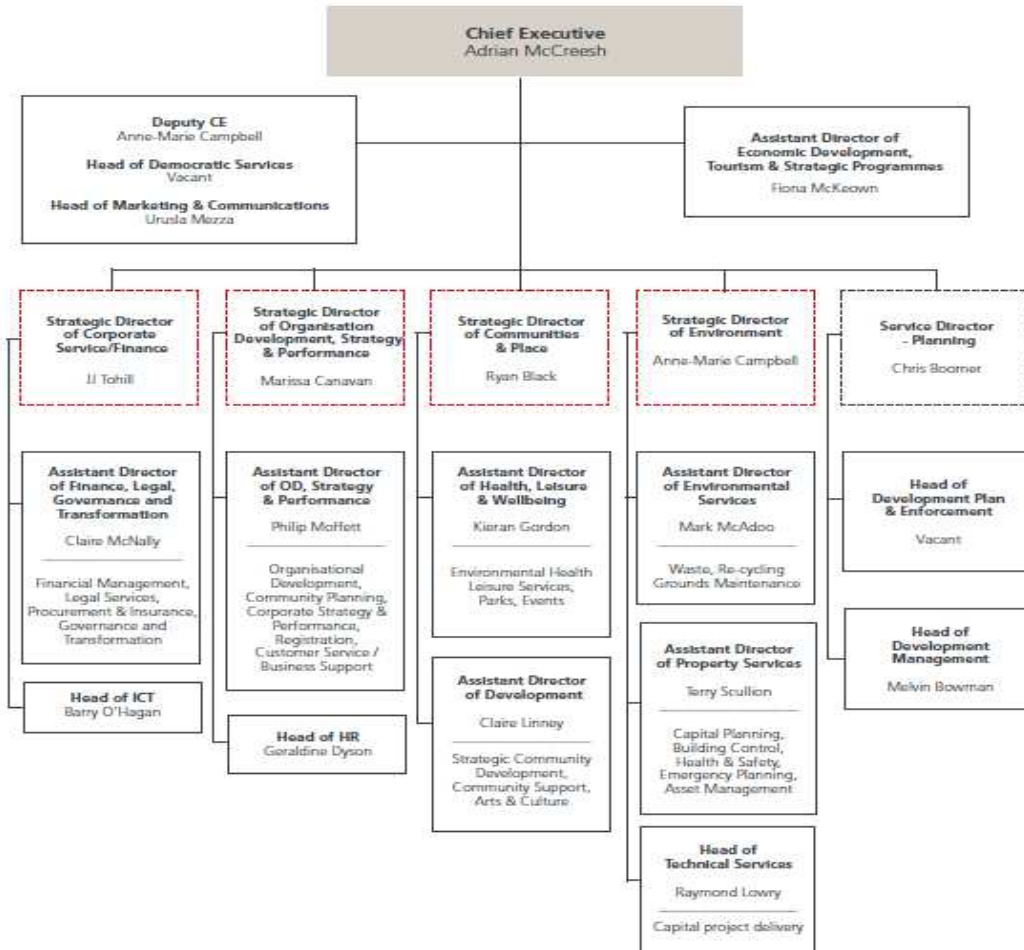
2.0 IMPROVING OUR SERVICES AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE - 2024/25

The following tables confirm the resources, financial and people, which the Department has access to throughout 2024-25 to deliver its actions, activities and core business.

2.1 Budget 2024/25

Budget Headings	£
Directorate Support	£350,733
Development	
Diversity & Integration	£1,450,000
PCSP (including CCTV)	£355,000
Neighbourhood Development	£1,675,000
Arts & Facilities Development (Burnavon, Ranfurly, SHHP, Languages)	£2,469,000
Health, Leisure & Wellbeing	
Environmental Health	£1,979,349
Health & Wellbeing and Events	£1,189,062
Leisure Services	£7,812,421
Open Spaces & Outdoor Recreation	£3,413,350
Gross Budget	£20,693,915
Development Income	£1,968,000
Health, Leisure & Wellbeing Income	£4,553,010
Net Budget for 2024-25	£14,172,905

2.2 Departmental Services - Council Structure - 2024/25



Staffing	No. of Staff
Strategic Director	1
Assistant Director	2
Managers	HLW: 35 Dev:10
Officers	HLW: 35 Dev 20
Remaining Team	HLW: 241 Dev 34
Total	Management Team: 3 HLW: 311 (FT & PT) DEV:64 (FT & PT) TOTAL: 378 (FT&PT) <i>*Does not include casual staff</i>

2.3 Service Work Plan - 2024/25

This is a high-level capture of the Department and the Service outcomes /activities/measures as well our improvement undertakings which we will focus on throughout 2024-2025.

The Plan links to hierarchy of other plans and measures such as:

1. Community Plan
2. Strategic plans e.g. Local Development Plan
3. 2024-2028 Corporate Plan priorities,
4. Annual Corporate Performance Improvement (PIP plan)
5. Corporate Improvement Project Plans (CIP's)
6. Statutory Indicators,
7. Corporate Health Indicators

Mid Ulster District Council's Improvement Objectives for 2024 to 2025 are:

1. Mid Ulster District Council will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of our own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action
2. We will ensure a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them
3. To create cleaner neighbourhoods, where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and environment
4. We will contribute to the on-going regeneration of our district by delivering a capital investment programme, enhancing facilities and opportunities for local people

SERVICES WORK PLAN

CREATIVE: People, Places & Communities						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 4.2 Health & Wellbeing - We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time.</i>			<i>Theme 1 : Our Service Delivery</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):		What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.
CPPC01	To establish Bellaghy as a hub for literary development through regeneration of the heritage and place for the benefit of the people.	Work to establish governance arrangements for Phase 2 of the project with key stakeholders. Work with DfC to progress Capital Scheme at Bellaghy Bawn – completion of Tender Package.	March 2025	Strategic Programme Development Manager	Increased literary development	Level of scheme completion
CPPC02	Deliver quality programmes through the medium of arts and literature in our 3 arts, heritage and literary venues.	Develop programme. Deliver programme.	March 2025	Arts Development Manager SHHP Manager	Varied and wide-ranging arts programmes in all three venues, supported by creative workshops centred on Writing, Painting, Printmaking and Jewellery-Making etc.	Level of programme completion

CPPC03	Deliver an Education Programme catering for children 0-18 years, with outreach strands for the local community	Develop and deliver	March 25	Arts Development Manager SHHP Manager	Varied and wide-ranging Education programmes in Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House, Dungannon and SHHP with a curriculum focus, attracting schools from across NI and beyond	Programme delivered
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SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

Engaged: People, Places & Communities						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 5.1 Vibrant & safe Communities - We are a safer Community</i>			<i>Theme 1 : Our Service Delivery</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.	
EPPC01	Develop a Community Development Strategy and Action Plan that brings together a number of thematic community led programmes under one overall strategy	Establish two co-design groups (Strategic & Local) to input into the new strategy -Review of Community Grants Policy and Procedures	March 25	Neighbourhood Development Manager Open Spaces & Recreation Development Manager	Integrated approach to community development, good relations, community safety and local community development led delivery	Strategy in place

		-Complete a Community & Voluntary Sector needs profile and analysis, focusing on the priorities and capacity building requirements				
EPPC02	Deliver Community Grant Aid Programme across the district with emphasis on climate change and sustainability outcomes	Review criteria of Community and Sports Venues and Facilities Grant	December 24	Neighbourhood Development Manager Diversity & Integration Development Manager	New fit for purpose grant programme developed in partnership with the local community Greater promotion of climate change and sustainability	New grants policy
EPPC03	Expand the Irish language & Cultural development in partnership with local communities	Irish language programme delivered Signage plan 40% complete Cultural programme delivered	March 25.	Arts Development Manager Diversity & Integration Development Manager	Expand the Irish language in line with the ACT Create greater cultural expression across our communities through respect for diversity	Programmes delivered Signage in place
EPPC04	Deliver a Digital Visitor Experience App that enhances and extends the in-person experience with a complementary digital experience.	Develop and deliver	Dec 24	SHHP Manager Arts Development Manager	Provide a full mobile application digital experience that feels connected with the physical identity of the HomePlace and the digital identity of the HomePlace website. The app will link Seamus Heaney HomePlace and Open Ground, giving visitors a more integrated and experience between	Apps in place

					the indoor and outdoor offerings. Develop an app to create an interactive experience for Hill of The O’Neill, recreating the time of O’Neill	
EPPC05	Integration of Technology -booking and ticketing management	To review with ICT as part of the ICT strategy the integration of an online booking and ticketing management systems, to streamline operations, enhance customer experience, and optimise efficiency.	From April 2024 to March 2025	Seamus Heaney HomePlace Manager Open Spaces & Recreation Dev Manager Link ICT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced Customer Experience: Seamless integration improves online booking and ticketing processes, ensuring smoother transactions and higher satisfaction. 2. Operational Efficiency: Streamlined processes reduce manual work, errors, and costs, boosting productivity. 3. Revenue Growth: Targeted marketing strategies driven by integration increase ticket sales and revenue. 4. Competitive Edge: Superior online booking experience attracts more customers, strengthening market position. 	Best practice systems implemented across all the sites.

SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

Inclusive: People, Places & Communities						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 5.3 Vibrant & Safe Communities - We have fewer people living in poverty and fewer areas of disadvantage.</i>			<i>Theme 1 : Our Service Delivery</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.	
IPPC01	Develop and Community Wealth Building Framework and Action Plan	Complete test and learn pilots Develop framework and action plan with CWB Working group Work with Credit Unions to access finance for the CVS Develop upon work commenced in the Good Employment Charter Develop a policy position for Community Asset Transfers and Sponsorships	Dec 24	Social Inclusion Manager	Community Wealth building embedded in Council led delivery	New CWB plan in place

IPPC02	Deliver an anti poverty Action Plan, targeted at the most disadvantaged people and communities, to include emergency support, housing, neighbourhood renewal and capital and Peace Plus Programme	Deliver a number of projects Foodbank Support	March 25	Neighbourhood Development Manager, Social Inclusion Manager & Diversity & Integration Manager	Assistance to those in emergency food/heat crisis	Support delivered
IPPC03	Deliver a Diversity Awareness Message across the District via Council facilities and welcome signs, billboard campaign, awareness programmes, mini mela events - link Arts Festival.	Campaign developed Campaign delivered	Dec 24	Diversity & Integration Development Manager Arts Development Manager	Greater respect for diversity	Campaign delivered
IPPC04	Deliver older peoples initiatives through partnership and direct programmes, intergenerational activity, to reduce fear of crime and improve mental health and resilience	Deliver Older people fear of crime initiative	March 25	Diversity & Integration Manager Open Spaces & Recreation Development Manager	Reduction in fear of crime	Initiative delivered

SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

HEALTHY: People, Places & Communities						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 4.2 Health & Wellbeing - We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time.</i>			<i>Theme 1 : Our Service Delivery</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.	
HPPC01	Provide quality Open Spaces, Recreation & Indoor leisure services.	Deliver broad leisure objectives including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Health and wellbeing programmes. • Deliver activity programmes and promotions. • Maintain quality service provision. • Develop the role of open spaces, recreation & leisure in the health agenda through enhanced partnerships with PHA/Health Trusts/Charities • Delivery on an agreed annual schedule of corporate events • Development and delivery of an annual Active Recreation Plan 	From April 2024 to March 2025	Leisure Services Development Manager Open Spaces & Recreation Development Managers.	Better access to open spaces, recreation & indoor recreational facilities and improved health and wellbeing for children and adults.	2,100,000 users Mystery visitor average ratings over 85% 80 programmes Achievement of KPI's/ targets from various funded programmes

HPPC02	Review and assess air quality within the district against recognised standards to ensure that adequate local air quality management is in place. Improve engagement and partnership working with relevant stakeholders with respect to air quality management across the district.	Monitor current levels of air quality within the district, through the maintenance of an air quality monitoring network. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor air quality by replacing NO2 tubes monthly. • Contribute to the MUDC Climate Change working group. 	From April 2024 to March 2025	Environmental Health Service Manager	It will ensure that MUDC meets its legal obligations with respect to adequately monitoring and reviewing the quality of air within the district. In the event of any exceedance in air quality objectives being identified, it will ensure that the situation is adequately addressed through MUDC's air quality action plan. Residents and visitors will be better informed regarding the district's air quality.	Monthly monitoring of air quality results will be undertaken. An annual review of MUDC's air quality action plan will be undertaken 2 x multi-agency stakeholder meetings on Air Quality will be held during this reporting period. Improved information will be available on the MUDC website.
HCCP03	Delivery a health and wellbeing, and a resilience programme for young people – Link to Peace and Good Relations programmes.	Develop programme Programme delivered	March 25 and ongoing	Diversity & Integration Manager Open Spaces & Recreation Development Managers	Greater resilience of young people	Programmes part delivered and commenced (3 year under Peace)

<p>HCCP04</p>	<p>Supplement the work undertaken through the Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan by engaging in cross-departmental activities to support the Clean Neighbourhood priorities, such as reducing dog fouling, etc.</p>	<p>Work in partnership with the Environmental Services department within Council on relevant Environmental Health actions and enforcement to assist in the delivery of the Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan.</p> <p>Work in partnership with colleagues across the 'Health, Leisure and Wellbeing' department to develop and deliver a joint departmental initiative to promote cleaner neighbourhoods / council property and parks.</p>	<p>From April 2024 to March 2025</p>	<p>Environmental Health Service Manager</p> <p>Open Spaces & Recreation Development Managers</p>	<p>Cleaner neighbourhoods</p> <p>Increase in responsible dog ownership.</p>	<p>Deliver 3 x cross-departmental initiatives to focus on responsible dog ownership and /or litter hot spot areas.</p> <p>Environmental Health Service to scope out new options for enhanced litter enforcement across district.</p>
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SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

INFORMED: People, Places & Communities						
Link to Community Plan Theme:			Align to Corporate Plan Theme			
<i>CMP 4.2 Health & Wellbeing - We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time.</i>			<i>Theme 2: Leadership and Partnership for Local Growth</i>			
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.	
INFPPC01	Promote a “digital first” approach with staff and customers. Increased destination digital presences, website, and social media..	Review further options for development/enhancement of online user experience. Promotion of use of online registration/bookings	From April 2024 to March 2025	Environmental Health Service Manager. Leisure Services Development Manager Open Spaces & Recreation Development Managers.	Increased accessibility of services. And customer experience.	Business case developed/funding secured for the implementation/ development/enhancement of online user experience. Increased year on year bookings and online transactions/registrations, etc
INFPPC02	Joint marketing, communications and promotional strategy between arts and visitor recreation & leisure sites	Joint marketing campaign developed. Joint marketing	September 2024	Arts Development Manager Leisure Services Development Manager	Continued cross marketing through brochures and online content. Venue/facility brochures displayed in all sites. Joint promotion through visitmidulster.com in	New joint marketing strategy.

					<p>conjunction with Tourism department.</p> <p>A page added to brochures to promote other venues, facilities and leisure services.</p> <p>Customer profiling to be complete. A link on between all websites for places to visit - SHHP, Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House, Dungannon; The Burnavon Arts & Cultural Centre, Cookstown; OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory, and link leisure offers to support</p> <p>Marketing officers now have joint monthly meetings to discuss opportunities and assist with creative approaches to promoting venues-& facilities (link sales in Leisure)</p> <p>New Tourism staff provided with an introduction and briefing on the</p>	
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					operations of all venues.	
INFPPC03	Produce an “Enforcement and Education Policy” for Council	Undertake a review of Council’s existing “General Regulatory and Enforcement Policy” (Document reference 2016/09/PH&I) in consultation with relevant regulatory partners within council. Draft a revised ‘Enforcement and Education’ policy for agreement by Members and ratification by Council	From April 2024 to March 2025	Environmental Health Service Manager Diversity & Integration Development Manager	The refreshed policy will ensure that any decisions taken in relation to enforcement action undertaken by Council’s statutory regulation services will be graduated and consistent, in line with relevant guidance and best practice for regulators.	A revised “Enforcement and Education Policy” will be produced
INFPPC04	Develop links with the local Policing and Community Partnership (PCSP) and Multi-agency support hub to improve collaborative working between relevant stakeholders	Establish linkages between environmental health, PCSP and the Multi-agency Support Hub Build awareness of the Council’s statutory regulatory services, legislation and remit Task resources to work together to address issues of concern within the district.	From April 2024 to March 2025	Environmental Health Service Manager Diversity and Integration Development Manager	Linkages between the PCSP, the PCSP, the Multi-Agency Support Hub and the Environmental Health Service will: (1) facilitate more efficient and streamlined referral of vulnerable individuals to relevant support services. (2) will assist vulnerable	Agreed lines of communication between the environmental health service, the PCSP and the Multi-Agency Support Hub will be established and utilised. Each partner within the collaboration will have improved awareness of the others’ remit and how to maximise utilisation of same to address antisocial issues and help those most vulnerable within society.

					<p>individuals to access and benefit from a multiagency approach to addressing their needs which in turn should improve their health, safety and wellbeing.</p> <p>Improved linkages between Council regulatory services and the PCSP will deliver better integration, collaboration and problem solving of anti-social issues within the district.</p>	
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SERVICES WORK PLAN 2024/25

IMPROVEMENT: People, Places & Communities						
Link to Community Plan Theme:		Align to Corporate Plan Theme				
<i>CMP 4.2 Health & Wellbeing - We have better availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time.</i>		<i>Theme 3: Being the Best Council Possible</i>				
Service Objective (What do we want to achieve?):	What are the key activities we will deliver (actions):	By When (Date?)	Service Name /Lead Officers(s)	What difference will it make? (Outcomes)	How Will we Know? (Measures) clear measurement e.g. %, #, £, date etc.	
IAPPC01	Standardise debt management procedures across all facilities and services within the directorate.	To streamline debt management procedures and establish standardized practices, ensuring clarity and efficiency across all debt-related processes.	From April 2024 to March 2025	Seamus Heaney HomePlace Manager Open Spaces & Recreation Dev Manager Finance Department	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced Clarity: By standardising debt management procedures, we aim to provide clear guidelines and processes, reducing ambiguity and ensuring consistent understanding across all stakeholders. 2. Improved Efficiency: Standardisation efforts will streamline debt management 	<p>New policy adoption by council</p> <p>Debt reduction rates - quantified in terms of percentage reduction or monetary value</p>

					<p>workflows, leading to increased efficiency in handling debt-related tasks, resulting in time and resource savings for the organisation.</p> <p>3. Strengthened Compliance: Implementing standardised procedures will enhance adherence to regulatory requirements and internal policies, reducing the risk of non-compliance and potential penalties, thus safeguarding the organisation's financial integrity.</p>	
IAPPC02	Casual Staff roles across all venues within our department	Our service objective is to development of Casual Staff roles across all council venues within our department. By	From April 2024 to March 2025	Seamus Heaney HomePlace Manager	1. Enhanced Flexibility: By developing Casual Staff roles across all	Have the JD's reviewed to allow this flexible element in included an increased number of JD's across our department.

		implementing this initiative, we aim to provide opportunities for flexible employment while ensuring adequate staffing levels to meet the needs of our Service.		Open Spaces & Recreation Dev Manager HR Department	council venues, we'll increase flexibility in staffing arrangements. 2. Diverse Skill Sets: With Casual Staff roles developed across various venues, individuals with diverse skill sets and experiences will contribute to a more dynamic and adaptable team. This diversity will improve our service delivery.	
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2.4 RISK MANAGEMENT OF DEPARTMENT/SERVICES

The purpose of risk management is to manage the barriers which prevents the Council from achieving its objectives. This section of the service plan includes space for the Department to input their key risks (in summary form), which have been identified during the business planning process. The Council uses risk management to maximize opportunities and minimize risks. This improves its ability to deliver priorities and improve outcomes. This is why the Council deems it important to link business planning and risk management. Risk Management aims to:

- Help the Council achieve its overall aims and objectives
- Manage the significant risks the Council faces to an acceptable level
- Assist with the decision making process
- Implement the most effective measures to avoid, reduce and control those risks
- Balance risk with opportunity
- Manage risk and internal controls in the most effective way.

This table illustrates the risks identified to deliver the Department's/Services business as outlined in service plan for 2023-24.

Risk Ref Number	Description of Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Activity
1.	Failure to comply with legislation / regulatory guidance (e.g. Disability legislation) & adherence to policies / procedures	6	Policies & procedures updated. Regular /ongoing communication with staff. Training for all relevant staff. Checklists. Audits.
2.	Significant reduction in funding / income	9	Ongoing budget reviews, Regular engagement with funding stakeholders, Marketing & communications plan.
3.	Failure to deliver on Peace Plus programme	9	Partnership working group in place and partnership agreements with all partners. Regular communication and sign off at each stage
4.	Facilitation of PCSP as an independent body of Council	6	PCSP minutes taken of all meetings and shared with Council for information. PCSP roll out of actions under all Council governance policies regarding finance and procurement
5.	Failure to prevent fraud, bribery & corruption	5	Cash handling / management procedures, Anti-fraud / corruption policy in place. Employee code of conduct. Income held in safe with access restricted to limited individuals. Safe limits set & contents regularly checks.

			<p>Management authorisation required for refunds / credits.</p> <p>Cash collection services.</p> <p>Computerised booking management system which is password protected, authority actions & restricted levels within.</p> <p>Regular staff communication, training & review / updating procedures, Inspection protocols, Regular reporting & escalation if required.</p>
6.	Food Control and Product Safety	6	<p>Keep up to date with FSA / DAERA and OPSS related guidance at local, regional and national level. Provision of adequate levels of EHOs (Food control and Consumer Protection) for support to relevant businesses.</p>
7.	GDPR	6	<p>Reminders at staff meetings</p>
8.	Health and safety	9	<p>Risk assessment ongoing review for all staff and working practices kept under review. Reviewed methods of delivery.</p>
9.	Loss of key supplier / goods	6	<p>Regular ongoing review of Contracts Register.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement with Suppliers.</p> <p>Adhering to procurement processes.</p> <p>Monitor complaints on products.</p>
10.	Ineffective governance arrangements in place	6	<p>Regular staff communication, Inspection protocols, Regular reporting & escalation if required.</p>
11.	A lack of, or untimely, maintenance of Leisure, Parks and Open spaces with the possibility of creating an	6	<p>Currently managed through Property Services.</p> <p>This function of the Council has an extensive</p>

	unsafe environment for public users with potential for injury claims.		remit, responsible for the maintenance of all council lands and property.
12.	Accident occurs on play area	8	Majority of playgrounds are inspected weekly by council staff. Independent annual inspections by ROSPA or RPII Inspectorate. Significant number playgrounds have been replaced or upgraded in recent years and evidence of current good and safe practices reflect in low claim levels. Comprehensive Audit has been completed.
13.	Limited resources to develop strategic events.	6	Continued engagement and delivery needed on a cross departmental basis. All council staff to be involved in delivery of council events where relevant. Continue to monitor and identify needs and external financial opportunities.

Rating	Descriptor
16 - 25	Extreme Risk (immediate action required)
10 - 15	High Risk (urgent action required)
7 - 9	Moderate Risk (action required)
1 – 6	Low Risk (keep under review)

3.0 OUR STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

In carrying out our responsibilities, the Service is cognisant of the statutory duties placed upon the council in the delivery of its services. Whilst the Service operates, under various obligations it is however mindful of the changing context in which it operates and endeavours to mainstream the equality and rural needs duties in the design and delivery of our functions.

3.1 EQUALITY DUTY

The council and by consequence our Service is committed to contributing towards its part in working towards fulfilling obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to ensure adequate time, staff and resources to fulfil our duties.

The Service will also work towards adherence to the council's Equality Scheme ensuring equality duties, together with promoting positive attitudes towards persons with a disability and the participation of people with a disability in public life when carrying out our functions.

3.2 RURAL NEEDS DUTY

The Service will be mindful of the rural needs of its customers when carrying out its functions and subsequent responsibilities, particularly in developing any new policies, plans or strategies throughout the year. In line with the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 we will give due regard to rurality in terms of needs in carrying out the activities within our Service.

Report on	Lough Fea Footbridge
Date of Meeting	13 th June 2024
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	John Howard, Open Spaces & Recreation Development Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>Recently during May 2024 Development Committee, Members requested an update be brought back to the next available committee on the replacement of the footbridge at Lough Fea.</p> <p>This report seeks to outline the background of the current situation, detail the actions taken to date, and offer the high level timelines for the next steps in the project.</p>
2.0	Background
2.1	The wooden footbridge at Lough Fea, which has been in place for over 20 years, has undergone several minor repairs by the council in recent years. The bridge is visually inspected weekly by the Park Inspector. Recently, a survey conducted by NI Water revealed that the footbridge was in poor condition, necessitating further investigation by the council as per the current lease agreement.
2.2	A structural survey, conducted by a competent third party on behalf of the council, instructed that the bridge should be closed immediately and recommended the installation of a new bridge. Consequently, the bridge was closed, and the planning process for its replacement commenced.
2.3	Signage has been installed around the site to inform users that the circular route is not available as part of the walking path. The councils communication team has provided information on councils social media platforms and will do so on a periodic basis to ensure users of this site are kept up to date.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Council officers have engaged a structural engineer to design a new footbridge. A design brief has been agreed and the working drawings are currently being finalised. These drawings are required to enable production of costs estimate for the fabrication, delivery, and installation of the new bridge, ensuring compliance with our procurement processes. It is essential to expedite the completion of these drawings to facilitate accurate costing and adherence to procurement guidelines.
3.2	Council officers continue to collaborate with Councils framework contractor, NI Water and local fishing clubs to facilitate the removal of the old bridge. The removal of the existing bridge is crucial for clearing the existing bridge abutment of any overgrowth and to

	therefore allow a detailed condition survey and accurate measurements to be obtained to determine the span and support conditions for the replacement bridge.
3.3	The new structure will consist of two steel trusses with connecting steel joists to support Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) deck panels. The bridge can be clad in fence boards to match the original look. To address transportability and galvanizing challenges, the bridge will be divided into three sections, each approximately 5.4 meters long. Although segmenting the bridge at the mid-span point is not ideal due to maximum stress points, dividing it into three sections is a practical solution for this remote site.
3.4	Upon finalising the working drawings over the next few weeks, the next steps include proceeding with the procurement process for the fabrication and delivery of the new bridge sections. Meticulous planning for the installation is essential to avoid issues related to mid-span division. Regular progress review meetings are established between Property Services and Health, Leisure & Wellbeing departments to monitor the project's advancement and address any arising issues promptly.
3.5	The timeframe to complete the design, procurement, and installation process for the new bridge is projected to be 3 to 4 months. Given the complexity of the site and the intricate design requirements, this period will allow for a more accurate cost estimate for fabrication, delivery, and installation, contingent upon the completion of the working drawings. This timeframe encompasses the procurement process, ensuring that all necessary materials and services are sourced efficiently and effectively, as well as the installation process, guaranteeing timely and proper construction. The ongoing work over the next two – three weeks aims to precisely determine the procurement route and establish a detailed schedule for the replacement, ultimately facilitating the reconnection of the circular walkway for public use.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: The project will be an unanticipated expenditure and therefore funds will be required to be released via Council's capital programme as the works required are extensive and exceed the scope and definition of revenue expenditure.
	Human: The project will require the involvement of several Council officers to oversee its progress and ensure it is delivered without any delays.
	Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant council policies and procedures.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A

Report on	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All-Island Strategic Rail Review 2. A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Minutes 19.3.24 and Updated Terms of Reference 3. Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – Multiply Programme 4. Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events 5. Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm 6. Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Achievements 2023/2024
Date of Meeting	13 June 2024
Reporting Officer	Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>All-Island Strategic Rail Review</p> <p>At a previous meeting of the Development Committee, Members requested an update on the reintroduction of a rail network to Mid Ulster and specifically the All-Island Strategic Rail Review (AISRR) which was announced in 2021. The reintroduction of a rail network to the District has the potential to enhance further economic growth and prosperity for the area.</p>
2.2	<p>A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Minutes (19.3.24) and Updated Terms of Reference</p> <p>The A5/N2 Cross Border Committee was established in 2019 to lobby for the delivery of infrastructure improvements and upgrades to the A5/N2 route from Dublin to the Northwest and serving the border region and Northern Ireland, with a</p>

particular emphasis on projects on the A5/N2 corridor in the border region and Northern Ireland.

There are 5 Councils represented - Derry City and Strabane District Council, Donegal County Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Mid Ulster District Council and Monaghan County Council – each Council nominates up to 4 Members to the Committee.

2.3 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) - Multiply Programme

In October 2021, the UK Government announced “Multiply”, a new scheme to boost numeracy skills, as part of the broader Shared Prosperity Programme. Following this, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), undertook a brief scoping exercise locally, but no allocation was made to Northern Ireland based providers.

During the summer of 2023, DLUHC approached the Department for the Economy (DfE) with a request to lead on developing and managing a portfolio of interventions, as part of the “Multiply” programme, with the following conditions:

- all provision to be completed by March 2025;
- must be numeracy, or numeracy related training;
- only open to adults, over 19 years old; and
- up to level 2 or equivalent, with no qualification outcome required.
- funding for the numeracy element of larger co-funded schemes; and
- funding utilised for existing provision, with an element of re-badging.

To progress the Multiply programme, DfE engaged with the Department of Education and Department for Communities in Northern Ireland, along with exploring what could be put in place with our FE colleges and universities. Following a pause in late autumn of 2023, discussions restarted in early spring 2024 when DLUHC confirmed funding for the programme. Given the tight timescales to design and deliver any interventions, DfE welcomed any opportunities to work in partnership with local government and, as such, have identified LMPs as an ideal vehicle through which we may be able to deliver Multiply in Northern Ireland.

Subsequently, each LMP was asked to indicate which interventions may be deliverable.

Mid Ulster LMP has since received two Letters of Offer from DfE for the Multiply Programme - £50,000 on 29 March 2024 in relation to Staff Costs (**Appendix 4**) and £208,115 on 20 May 2024 for operational costs (**Appendix 5**) and by the powers delegated to the Chief Executive in March 2024, these letters have now been signed and returned.

2.4 Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events – 2024

Following the success of the inaugural Taste Mid Ulster event that took place in the village of Moy during March 2024, a second ‘Taste Mid Ulster’ Food Heritage event

	<p>will take place on Saturday 29 June 2024. These events celebrate and showcase Mid Ulster’s food heritage from across the district and are linked to the development of Council’s new Heritage Strategy.</p>
2.5	<p>Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm</p> <p>The Council has successfully secured £9.1m from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Levelling Up Fund to support the regeneration of Maghera to include a town centre Public Realm Scheme, the redevelopment of the former High School site as a Business Park and the creation of a Wetland Park.</p> <p>The Council has also committed a substantial amount of additional funding to support regeneration, resulting in a total investment of over £10m in Maghera and its surrounding area.</p>
2.6	<p>Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Achievements 2023/24</p> <p>A significant volume of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes have been delivered during the 2023/24 financial year, much of which includes a range of new interventions, as well as continued delivery of existing programmes, to support Mid Ulster businesses and promote the District’s tourism offering. It is an opportune time to summarise these and reflect on our achievements.</p>
3.0	<p>Main Report</p>
3.1	<p>All-Island Strategic Rail Review</p> <p>The reintroduction of a rail network to Mid Ulster has the potential to unlock the area’s entrepreneurial prospects and secure sustained growth for the future. The continued lack of rail infrastructure to facilitate travel for social, domestic and employment uses has negatively impacted upon those residing and travelling to the area. A full update on the All-Island Strategic Rail Review (AISRR) is attached on (Appendix 1) for Members information.</p>
3.2	<p>A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Minutes (19.3.24) and Updated Terms of Reference</p> <p>The above Committee meets quarterly, and the role of Chair is rotated annually, with the Chair of the Committee’s Council providing the secretariat. Councillor Gael Gildernew from Mid Ulster District Council undertook the role of Chair for 2024.</p> <p>Minutes of the A5/N2 Cross Border Committee meeting held on 19 March 2024 are attached (Appendix 2), along with an updated Terms of Reference (Appendix 3) which was discussed and agreed by the Committee on 30 April 2024.</p>

3.3 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) - Multiply Programme

As reported in March 2024, the, Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership received correspondence on 3 March 2024 from DfE confirming that the Multiply funding bid for Northern Ireland, which was paused by UK Government in November 2023, has now been approved.

The revised bid is now £5.9m, for delivery between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025, through local colleges, universities and labour market partnerships, focusing on 6 key delivery areas, with the aim to provide a mixture of qualifications and interventions

- Maths for speakers of other languages,
- Numeracy for Mature learners,
- Industry led numeracy interventions,
- Numeracy bootcamps,
- Adult/child numeracy collaboration,
- Previous offenders/those in prison system.

Criteria

To be eligible under the Multiply Project criteria is currently as follows:

- Over 19, and
- Do not hold GCSE Maths at grade C and above.

DfE has acknowledged that some initiatives such as the Family Fun Days will reach a wider audience than just those who require numeracy support but recognise the benefits of peer learning in these instances.

DfE requested that all Councils and FE colleges submitted bids for delivery in their area against some or all of the 6 key delivery areas for consideration.

Following extensive consultation with both internal and external stakeholders, Mid Ulster LMP developed 11 projects across 5 areas. These aim to take a 'soft' approach to building numeracy skills and confidence using a 'Maths by Disguise' method to engage residents. One additional project is currently being costed which will enable a pilot to develop a partnership between the Jobs and Benefits Office and Year 11 students.

A summary of approved Multiply Programme Initiatives is shown in **(Appendix 6)**.

3.4 Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events – 2024

At the Development Committee in October 2023, Members approved support towards Taste Mid Ulster events, one in Moy and the other in Pomeroy.

During the second weekend in March 2024, Council hosted its first 'Taste Mid Ulster' event celebrating Mid Ulster's food heritage in Moy Village. Feedback received from both traders and the public was extremely positive. Food related

	<p>events in Mid Ulster have proven to be popular with the public and when such events are coupled with music and entertainment, they draw in significant visitors to the district.</p> <p>The second event will be held in Pomeroy Forest on Saturday 29 June 2024, from 11am to 6pm.</p> <p>Widespread consultation has taken place with numerous individuals and stakeholders' groups to secure community ownership and commitment towards the event.</p> <p>In addition to the Taste Mid Ulster Food Market, there will be a wide range of activities such as live music and entertainment, children's activities, cookery demonstrations showcasing delicacies from across the District with the involvement of Local Cookery Schools.</p> <p>3.5 Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm</p> <p>Local Civil Engineering company, CivCo Ltd, who are based in Maghera, have been awarded the contract to complete the Maghera Town Centre Public Realm Scheme. A 'Meet the Contractor' event was held in Walsh's Hotel, Maghera on Wednesday 29 May 2024 from 8am to 8pm. Invites were issued to the local businesses and residents located within the scheme boundary. At this meeting attendees received a presentation on the works with an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification. A further online meeting also took place with the contractor and disability groups and Maghera Forum Members, to advise of works, with a question and answer session. Pre-Construction works have been ongoing with anticipated onsite works to start mid July 2024. Council officers will be communicating with key stakeholders throughout this programme, with regular update meetings scheduled.</p> <p>The Town Centre Public Realm Scheme in Maghera will create a vibrant high street environment; where a mix of commercial and residential uses complement each other; and where businesses, large and small, feel welcome and the community feels safer.</p> <p>3.6 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Achievements 2023/24</p> <p>The key Achievements attained by Council's Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programme Department for 2023/24 is contained on Appendix 8.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial:

	<p>4.1.3 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) - Multiply Programme Mid Ulster LMP is in receipt of a Letter of Offer for £50,000, received on 29 March 2024 in relation to Staff Costs (Appendix 4) and £208,115 received on 20 May 2024 for operational costs (Appendix 5)</p> <p>4.1.4 Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events – 2024 Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Event will be funded from the Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes budget in 2024/2025 and will cost up to £50,000.</p> <p>4.1.6 Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm Funding has been secured under Levelling Up Fund and Mid Ulster Council</p> <p>4.1.7 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Achievements 2023/24 – Delivered within EDTSP Budgets for 2023/24</p>
	<p>Human:</p> <p>Officer Time</p>
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>4.1.3 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) - Multiply Programme The risk level is mitigated as LMP activity is 100% externally funded.</p> <p>4.1.4 Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events – 2024 Adverse weather conditions could have an impact on outdoor events.</p> <p>4.1.6 Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm Risk register monitored by Maghera Public Realm Board</p>
<p>4.2</p>	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>4.2.3 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) - Multiply Programme Equality and Good Relations Screening has been completed for LMP projects for the period 2024-27.</p> <p>4.2.4 These will be considered as part of the event plan for Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Event.</p> <p>4.2.6 Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm Complete</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications:</p>

	<p>4.2.3 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) - Multiply Programme Rural Needs Screening has been completed for LMP projects for the period 2024-27.</p> <p>4.2.4 These will be considered as part of the event plan for Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Event.</p> <p>4.2.6 Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm Complete</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
	<p>It is recommended that Members;</p> <p>5.1 All-Island Strategic Rail Review Note update report.</p> <p>5.2 A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Minutes 19.3.24 and Updated Terms of Reference</p> <p>(a) Note A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Minutes – 19.3.24</p> <p>(b) Note A5/N2 Cross Border Committee updated Terms of Reference</p> <p>5.3 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – Multiply Programme Note update on the Multiply Programme and that by the powers delegated to the Chief Executive at an earlier meeting, he had signed and returned both letters of offer providing funding to £50,000 for admin costs and £208,115 for operational costs,</p> <p>5.4 Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events – 2024 Note update on the Pomeroy Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Event in Pomeroy Forest on 29 June 2024.</p> <p>5.5 Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm Note update.</p> <p>5.6 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Achievements 2023/24 Note key achievements attained by Council’s Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programme Department for 2023/24.</p>

6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix 1 - Update Report - All-Island Strategic Rail Review</p> <p>Appendix 2 - A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Minutes – 19.3.24</p> <p>Appendix 3 - A5/N2 Cross Border Committee - Updated Terms of Reference</p> <p>Appendix 4 - Multiply Letter of Offer from DfE 2024-2025 – Admin costs</p> <p>Appendix 5 - Multiply Letter of Offer from DfE 2024-2025 – Operational costs</p> <p>Appendix 6 - Summary of Multiply Programme Initiatives</p> <p>Appendix 7 - Maghera Regeneration Programme - Community Newsletter (Issue 1)</p> <p>Appendix 8 – Summary Achievements 2023-2024 - Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Department</p>

Update Report - All-Island Strategic Rail Review (AISRR) **June 2024**

The AISRR was announced in April 2021 by Northern Ireland's Minister for Infrastructure, Nicola Mallon MLA and Ireland's Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan TD. The Council submitted representations to the review in January 2022. It is noteworthy that almost 10% of all responses came from people and groups in the Mid Ulster District (647 in total) making it the 4th largest contributor to the public consultation, after Fermanagh & Omagh, Derry & Strabane and Donegal County. The four council areas together accounted for almost half (49%) of all the responses received across the entire island which highlights the strength of the desire within the four north-western counties to see rail returned.

The AISRR report and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) were published for consultation in July 2023 and Council submitted a response in September 2023.

The AISRR considers how the rail network across the island could contribute to the decarbonisation of the island's transport systems, promote sustainable connectivity into and between major cities, enhance regional accessibility, and support balanced regional development. It also considered the interactions between proposed improvements and existing, or planned, commuter rail services. The time horizon for the Review covers the period to 2050 to align with both jurisdictions' stated goals of achieving net zero carbon emissions by this milestone.

The vision of the Review is to provide a "high quality, sustainable and integrated railway for passengers and goods across the Island of Ireland". The Review sets out six high-level goals which aim to use rail as effectively as possible to:

- contribute to decarbonisation;
- improve All Island connectivity between major cities;
- enhance regional accessibility;
- stimulate economic activity;
- encourage sustainable mobility; and
- achieve economic and financial feasibility.

It also considers the interactions between proposed improvements and existing, or planned, commuter rail services. It does not consider rail within major cities, which is subject to separate and established strategic planning processes.

The AISRR Report published in July 2023 presented findings and 30 recommendations for development of the railways in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland including expanding the total network from 2300 to 2950km, along with electrification, higher speeds, and more frequent services. The 30 recommendations are set across 6 themes as follows:-

Theme 1: Decarbonisation

1. Develop and implement an All-Island Rail Decarbonisation Strategy that includes an electrified intercity network.
2. Develop plans to invest in the skills, supply chains, and rolling stock to deliver decarbonisation.
3. Procure hybrid and electric rolling stock in the medium term.

Theme 2: Intercity

4. Upgrade the cross-country rail network to a dual-track railway (and four-track in places) and increase service frequencies.
5. Upgrade the core intercity railway network to top speeds of 200km/h (125mph).
6. Develop short sections of new railways on congested corridors.
7. Develop a cross-Dublin solution.

Theme 3: Regional and Rural

8. Provide more direct services between Ireland's west and south coasts.
9. Ensure regional and rural lines have at least one train per two hours.
10. Increase line speeds to at least 120km/h.
11. Upgrade Limerick Junction and the Limerick Junction – Waterford line.
12. Reinstate the Western Rail Corridor railway between Claremorris and Athenry.
13. Extend the railway into Tyrone, Derry~Londonderry, and Donegal.
14. Reinstate the South Wexford Railway.
15. Develop the railway to boost connectivity in the North Midlands.
16. Integrate bus service and rail service timetables to connect communities where direct rail access proves to be unviable.

Theme 4: Sustainable Cities Recommendations

17. Connect Dublin, Belfast International, and Shannon Airport to the railway and improve existing rail-airport connections.
18. Extend double tracking in the Belfast area.
19. Segregate long-distance/fast services from stopping services.
20. Explore the case for developing new stations in the Belfast, Cork, Derry~Londonderry (e.g., Limavady), and Limerick – Shannon City regions.

Theme 5: Freight

21. Develop a sustainable solution for first-mile-last-mile rail access for Dublin Port.
22. Reduce Track Access Charges for freight services.
23. Strengthen rail connectivity to the island's busiest ports.
24. Develop a network of inland terminals close to major cities on the rail network.

Theme 6: Customer Experience

25. Continue to invest in initiatives that deliver a seamless customer journey.
26. Continue to benchmark and monitor service quality and deliver continuous improvement.
27. Ensure future rolling stock specifications are aligned to the infrastructure-led interventions outlined in the Review.
28. Invest in improving integration within rail and between rail and other transport options.
29. Deliver 'clock-face' timetable calling patterns.
30. Develop cross-border structures to improve the effectiveness of cross-border infrastructure and rail service planning.

A Map showing how a potential railway could look in 2050 if the AISRR used recommendations. Several of the recommendations will indirectly benefit the Mid Ulster area. However, Recommendation No.13 - reinstatement of the railway between Portadown, Dungannon, Omagh, Strabane, Derry, and Letterkenny will impact directly on Mid Ulster and bring considerable benefits. The restoration of this key rail line would significantly strengthen connections within the North West and Mid South West (MSW) region. It would link the large towns of Strabane, Omagh, and Dungannon to the rail network and greatly improve intercity connectivity between Derry and both Dublin and Belfast (as an alternative to the indirect and constrained existing route).

This recommendation is fully endorsed by rail lobby group, Into The West (ITW), who submitted responses to the consultations that support this as well as further rail expansion in Mid Ulster.

ITW have been campaigning for improved rail transport in counties Derry, Donegal, Tyrone, and Fermanagh since 2003. The group presented to the Development Committee in June 2022 where they highlighted that two of the eleven councils within Northern Ireland do not have rail access, one of which is Mid Ulster District Council. ITW continue to lobby for 7 key rail re-openings across West and Mid Ulster as detailed in the table below:

ITW Priority	Reopening Project	Review Recommends?	Considerations/Issues
A	1. <u>Derry-Portadown</u> Strabane, Omagh, Dungannon.	Yes	Significant concerns re proposed line speed
	2. <u>Derry-Letterkenny</u>	Yes	Concern re location of spur, & if towns will have direct services.
B	3. <u>Connecting Limavady</u>	Yes	Concern re spur preventing direct services.
	4. <u>Connect NI's 3 Airports</u>	Partially	No station at Derry Airport.
C	5. <u>Omagh-Enniskillen-Sligo Line</u>	No	Fermanagh only county without rail.
	6. <u>Letterkenny-Sligo Line</u> (Ballybofey, Donegal Town, Bundoran)	No	- Most of Donegal left without rail. - The gap in the rail map still persists.
	7. <u>Reconnect Cookstown / Mid-Ulster</u>	No	Cookstown dismissed, on flawed grounds.

As indicated in the table, the reconnection of Cookstown/Mid Ulster has been dismissed. According to the Draft All-Island Strategic Rail Review “*physical constraints ruled out some options, such as the Sperrin Mountains ruling out Cookstown as a stop on a service from Derry~Londonderry to either Belfast or Dublin*”.

In their consultation response in September 2023, ITW submitted their recommendation to reconnect Cookstown to the rail network. They have proposed that a spur line to Cookstown is installed in once the Derry-Portadown route is reopened. In addition, they recommend that a spur line from Dungannon to Cookstown be continued a further 10 miles north to connect with Magherafelt and then continue east above Lough Neagh to connect with the Derry-Belfast line. This ‘Mid-Ulster Link’ or ‘Lough Neagh Loop’ would create a spine of rail connectivity through what is not only the fastest-growing part of NI – but also an area with significant industry that could benefit from (and positively contribute to) rail freight access.

Next steps

Following the conclusion of the AISRR SEA consultation, officials from both jurisdictions are working closely with Arup to analyse and consider the responses submitted in detail, with input from the AISRR Project Management Group. These comments will inform the finalising of the AISRR Report and its associated environmental reports. It is currently anticipated that the report will be finalised in Spring/Summer 2024.

Implementation



It is intended that the final recommendations of the AISRR will provide an evidence-based framework to inform the future direction of travel for investment in the railways across the island. However, more work will be needed to test the feasibility and environmental impact of the recommended interventions and to secure the necessary funding before any projects can be implemented.





All Island Strategic Rail Review


Key Stages


- 
- 

Joint launch of Review by Infrastructure Minister Nicola Mallon MLA and Transport Minister Eamon Ryan TD
7 April 2021
 - 

Phase 1: Review of the current context and role of rail through policy review, data analysis, environmental considerations, development of rail case studies, and consultation to gauge stakeholder and public priorities.

 - **Consultants (Arup) appointed to complete Review**
July 2021
 - **Public and stakeholder consultation**
29 November 2021 - 21 January 2022
 - 

Phase 2: Identification of different service and connectivity concepts to address issues and opportunities for rail, applying insights from Phase 1 to inform selection of potential options.
 - 

Phase 3: Final appraisal of developed concepts.
 - 

Phase 4: Completion of draft Final Report
 - 

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

 - **Consultants (Arup) appointed to complete SEA**
May 2023
 - **SEA Applicability Screening Report: Mandatory SEA required**
Completed May 2023
 - **SEA Scoping**
Completed June 2023
 - **SEA Environmental Report and Appropriate Assessments**
Drafts for consultation completed July 2023
 - **Public Consultation of SEA including publication of Draft Report**
Consultation ran 25 July - 29 September 2023. Detailed analysis and consideration of the responses is currently underway.
 - 

Final Review incorporating responses from consultation
It is currently anticipated the review will be finalised in Spring 2024. Publication will be subject to the necessary approvals in both jurisdictions.



MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Meeting of:	A5-N2 Cross Border Committee
Date and Time:	Tuesday 19 th March 2024 at 16:30
Location:	via MS Teams
Chair:	Councillor Gael Gildernew
Councillors Present:	Derry City and Strabane District Council Brian Harte, Ruairi McHugh
	Donegal County Council Johnny McGuinness, Gary Doherty
	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Bernard McGrath, Paul Robinson, Glenn Campbell
	Mid Ulster District Council Mark Robinson, Gael Gildernew, Kevin McElvogue, Eugene McConnell
	Monaghan County Council Brian McKenna, Paudge Connolly
	Donegal County Council Bryan Cannon (A/Director of Service, Roads and Transportation)
	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council John News (Director of Environment and Place)
	Mid Ulster District Council Paul McCreedy (Strategic Programmes Service Manager)
	Monaghan County Council Shirley McIntyre (Business & Investment Officer) Emma Hughes (Meeting Secretariat)
	Monaghan County Council Roisin Moore (N2 Project Liaison Officer) Gareth McMahon (A/Director of Services, Roads and Transportation)
In Attendance:	Derry City and Strabane District Council Cllr Jason Barr, Cllr Paul Gallagher
	Donegal County Council Cllr Paul Canning
	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Cllr Allan Rainey MBE
	Monaghan County Council Cllr David Maxwell, Cllr Seamus Coyle, Robert Burns (Chief Executive)
Apologies:	

No	Item	Action By:
1.	Welcome and apologies	
	Cllr G Gildernew welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves as there are several new Councillors.	Note
2.	Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 30th November 2023	

	AGREED: Proposed by B Harte Seconded by Cllr G Gildernew and agreed: The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 30 th November 2023 were a true and accurate record of proceedings.	Note
3.	Matters Arising	
	There were no matters arising.	
4.	Terms of Reference	
4.1	Discussion took place about the proposal from Donegal County Council for a name change to the Committee. Cllr G Gildernew advised Members to defer any further dialogue and that an exceptional meeting of the Committee would be arranged to discuss the Term of Reference only. The original name will be used in the interim.	All
4.2	Section 2.0 Membership Point 2.2 was discussed with a view to revising the "Role of Chair" to reflect current and future arrangements. Cllr G Gildernew proposed a change to read: <i>The role of Chair will be rotated annually and undertaken by a Member nominated by the Host Council.</i> Change to be reviewed at the exceptional meeting.	All
5.	Correspondence	
5.1	<i>Letter from John News, Director Environment & Place Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (January 2024)</i> As discussed. FODC position and concerns noted.	Note
5.2	<i>Email from Matt Carthy TD (February 2024)</i> Members queried whether to issue another invitation to Minister Ryan. It was agreed that this may be counter-productive and should be reviewed at a later date.	Note
6.	Project overview and update	
	R. Moore, N2 Project Liaison Officer, Monaghan County Council, provided Members with brief synopsis of the Major Road Project Overview. Members have been provided with a comprehensive report on the Major Road Projects in their meeting pack.	Retain on agenda
7.	Proposal to issue invitation to John O'Dowd, MLA, Minister for Infrastructure to attend next meeting	
	Members agreed that an invitation be issued to John O'Dowd, MLA, Minister for Infrastructure, to attend the next meeting. A proposed in-person meeting of the Committee in May/June 2024 was agreed.	MUDC
8.	AOB	
	Cllr McConnell gave Members an update of a meeting held earlier in the day (19 th March 2024) between Minister O'Dowd and the campaign group, Enough is Enough.	Note
	Cllr G Gildernew advised Members that in advance of the next meeting,	MUDC

	she intends to meet with Enough is Enough.	
9.	Date of next meeting	
	The next meeting of the A5-N2 Cross Border Committee will be scheduled in May/June. This will be an in-person meeting. Date tbc.	MUDC
	An exceptional meeting of the Committee will be arranged prior to May/June meeting to discuss Terms of Reference. Date tbc.	MUDC
	The meeting concluded at 17.22	

Terms of Reference
A5/N2 Cross Border Committee
Adopted 30th April 2024

1.0 Committee: Councils, Scope and Purpose

Derry City and Strabane District Council, Donegal County Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Mid Ulster District Council and Monaghan County Council recognise the need to co-ordinate and lobby for the delivery of improvements and upgrades to the N2/A5/TEN-T route from Dublin to the Northwest. These are important routes serving the defined border region in ROI and Northern Ireland and require infrastructural development.

The formation of the A5/N2 Cross Border Committee, comprising membership from all Councils listed above provides a platform from which lobbying and representation can be taken forward to ensure completion of this essential infrastructure project is realised within the given timeframe by central government. There will be a particular focus on projects on the N2/A5/TEN-T corridor in the border region and Northern Ireland including:-

- The A5 Western Transport Corridor (A5WTC), which comprises c.55 miles of road to be upgraded through Northern Ireland,
- The 28km N2 Clontibret to Border Road Scheme in County Monaghan,
- The 32km Ardee to Castleblayney Road Scheme in County Monaghan and County Louth, and,
- The Donegal TEN-T project, which provides onward connectivity to the north and west.

2.0 Membership

2.1 Membership of the A5/N2 Cross Border Committee will be agreed by the individual Councils concerned and shall be no more than 4 Members per Council (20 in total).

2.2 The role of Chair will be rotated annually (alternating between Northern and Southern Councils where practicable) and undertaken by a Member of the respective nominated Council and agreed by members of the nominated Council.

2.3 If there is a requirement for a Deputy Chair – The Deputy Chair shall be nominated from the same Council as the Chair.

2.4 Where a vote is required on any decision then all 20 members appointed to the committee and present at the meeting will be entitled to a vote, with the Chair holding the casting vote.

2.5 Where decisions are required within a limited timeframe and there is no opportunity to bring the matter to a scheduled meeting, the Chair will exercise authority on the matter where it is deemed to be of an uncontentious nature and reflects only the objectives already set out and agreed by the Committee. The Committee will then be provided with an update at the next meeting for information. Where it is deemed that the Committee is required to give consideration to the matter this will be brought before a Committee meeting at the earliest opportunity.

3.0 Meetings

3.1 The A5/N2 Cross Border Committee will meet quarterly or more frequently if required.

3.2 Meetings will rotate annually between the Councils of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Donegal County Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Mid Ulster District Council and Monaghan County Council on an annual basis in line with the designated Chair and secretariat and be hosted as necessary by the Council acting as the secretariate for that period.

3.3 Meetings will be quorate when there is an attendance of 5 Members inclusive of at least one representative from each member Council.

3.4 Minutes of the meetings will take the form of key discussion points and agreed actions.

3.5 A schedule of meetings will be agreed and at least 5 working days formal notice will be given of meetings, together with an agenda and associated papers.

3.6 Each partner Council to give consideration to ensuring minutes of each meeting are reported to their own Council through the appropriate mechanism.

4.0 Administration

4.1 The secretariat will be provided from the host Council of each meeting

4.2 Additional administrative support will be agreed by the member councils.

4.3 Any necessary financial provisions will be agreed by the member councils and be subject to the governance arrangements of the council nominated for that purpose.

4.4 Any costs associated with convening and holding meetings to be incurred by the host Council.

5.0 Key Objectives

5.1 The remit of the A5/N2 Cross Border Committee will include: -

- Lobbying both the NI Assembly, UK and Irish Governments and relevant central government departments to ensure the A5WTC Scheme is effectively progressed
- Lobbying NI Assembly and UK and Irish Governments to secure the appropriate funding to complete the A5/N2 dualling scheme in its entirety; and
- Lobbying the Irish Government to secure the appropriate funding to complete the Donegal TEN-T project in its entirety; and
- Gaining commitment from all relevant stakeholders in terms of the timetable for completion.
- Ensuring that in accordance with their respective statutory obligations the planning and implementation bodies constructively engage with all relevant stakeholders that may be affected by the various projects.
- Advocating Cross Border coordination in terms of planning, funding, and implementation to secure maximum benefit in terms of cost efficiencies and project completion by the responsible bodies.

6.0 Review

6.1 The draft terms of reference will be reviewed by the A5/N2 Cross Border Committee periodically.

Adrian McCreesh
Mid Ulster Council
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 6DT

29 March 2024

Dear Adrian

Multiply Officer – LETTER OF OFFER

Please find attached your letter of offer for a Multiply Officer within the Multiply Project. As you are aware, we have been working with your staff at pace to identify a range of initiatives to support the UK Government's Multiply agenda and funding will be made available for a Multiply Officer to assist in getting your programmes up and running.

Full funding for the role will be paid out on receipt of an invoice from your organisation, which should be submitted before the end of April 2024.

Yours sincerely



RAYMOND KELLY



Multiply Officer

Mid Ulster Council

Letter of Offer

29th March 2024

CONTENTS

Paragraph		Page
1	Parties	4
2	Details of the development	4
3	Duration of Agreement	4
4	Organisation's status	5
5	Organisation's obligations	5
6	Insurance	5
7	Observance of legal requirements	6
8	DfE Contact	8
9	Provision of information and monitoring	8
10	Review and contract	8
11	Confidentiality	8
12	Corrupt gifts or payments	9
13	Funding and Accountability	9
14	Recovery of sums due	9
15	Funding Review	10
16	Breach	10
17	Default	11
18	Accounts and Inspection	11
19	Force Majeure	12
	Form of Acceptance	13
	Annex A Eligible Expenditure	14
	Annex B Customer Service Policy	15

AGREEMENT

1. PARTIES

1.1 This Agreement is made between:

(a) the DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY, and hereinafter called the “Department”; and

(b) MID ULSTER COUNCIL and hereinafter known as the “Organisation”

2. DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The total funding allocation for the Organisation for financial year 2024/25 is:

£50,000

2.2 The Department will fund the Organisation to hire a Multiply Officer to assist with the detail set out below in section 2.3.

2.3 This funding will be used to support the following proposal in Financial Year 2024/2025:

The key duties for the Multiply Officer will include:

- Management and coordination of Multiply projects.
- Project administration, including liaison with DfE.
- Promotion and marketing of Multiply projects.
- Procurement.

2.4 This funding may be used to support a single individual or be spread across a number of individuals as per the Organisations requirements.

3. DURATION OF AGREEMENT

3.1 This Agreement covers the period from date of signature to 31 March 2025, unless otherwise determined in accordance with this Agreement.

4. ORGANISATION'S STATUS

4.1 In carrying out its obligations under this Agreement:

- the Organisation is not acting as the agent of the Department;
- In other respects, the Organisation shall enter into Agreement with third parties as principal and not as agent of the Department; and
- Accordingly, shall not do or say anything that might lead any person to believe that the Organisation is acting as agent of the Department.

4.2 Nothing in this Agreement shall render the Department liable to indemnify the Organisation in respect of any liability of any kind incurred by them, but this disclaimer shall not be taken to exclude or limit any liability of the Department to the Organisation that may arise, by virtue of a breach of this Agreement by the Department, or any negligent act or omission on the part of the Department, its staff, or agents.

5. ORGANISATION'S OBLIGATIONS

5.1 The Organisation shall carry out the project in accordance with the provisions of **Annexes A and B**. The Annexes to this Agreement shall be deemed to be incorporated in and form part of this Agreement.

5.2 The Organisation shall agree to give publicity to the UK Government's primary role as overall funder of the project, as well as the Department's role in management and support of the project and to have early and prior consultations with the Department about any branding, publicity, publications or public announcements associated with the project.

6. INSURANCE

6.1 The Organisation shall affect and maintain policies of insurance against all risks and to the value such as a prudent Organisation carrying out similar

business would normally insure, and shall produce a policy of such insurance, duly written up to date to the Department, on demand.

7. OBSERVANCE OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

7.1 The Organisation shall not do or permit anything to be done which might cause a breach or infringement of the laws and regulations of Northern Ireland in the performance of this Agreement.

7.2 Without prejudice to Paragraph 7.1 in carrying out this Agreement, the Organisation shall comply with all applicable fair employment, equality of treatment and anti-discrimination legislation, including, in particular, the Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 and 1988, the Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, the Employment Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 2004, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 and the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and shall use its best endeavours to ensure that in its employment policies and practices and in the delivery of the services required of the Organisation under this agreement, it has due regard to the need to promote equality of treatment and opportunity between:

- persons of different religious beliefs or political opinions;
- men and women or married and unmarried persons;
- persons with and without dependants (including women who are pregnant or on maternity leave and men on paternity leave);
- persons of different racial groups (within the meaning of the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997);
- persons with and without a disability (within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995);
- persons of different ages; and

- persons of differing sexual orientation.

7.3 The Organisation shall take all reasonable steps to ensure the observance of the provisions of the above Paragraph 7.2 by all servants, agents, employees, consultants and sub-contractors of the Organisation.

7.4 Where any of the Organisation's obligations under this Agreement are carried out by sub-Contractors, the Organisation shall take reasonable steps to ensure that in carrying out those obligations the sub-Contractors comply with the provisions of Paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2.

7.5 This Agreement shall in all respects be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Northern Ireland and the parties hereby agree that the Courts of Northern Ireland shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine any disputes arising out of or in connection with this Agreement.

7.6 The Organisation shall not, without the prior consent in writing of the Department, assign or transfer this Agreement or any part, share or interest in it.

7.7 The Organisation shall, with regard to personal data collected in arranging and managing the courses, be expected to adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act (DPA) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

8. DfE CONTACT

8.1 Skills Initiatives Branch shall act, on behalf of the Department, to oversee the project. Therefore any queries should be addressed to the mailbox at Multiply@economy-ni.gov.uk

9. PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND MONITORING

9.1 The Organisation shall maintain records to monitor expenditure covering aspects of the aims, objectives, activities and output of this programme (both the full-time and part-time cohorts).

9.2 The Organisation shall use its best endeavours to carry out each programme's activities within the duration of the agreement as set out in Paragraph 2.1.

10. REVIEW AND CONTRACT

10.1 The Organisation shall obtain the Department's written consent to any proposed changes to the Multiply Officer role.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

11.1 This Agreement and the terms and conditions contained therein shall be treated as confidential by the Organisation and should not be disclosed to any other person without the prior consent of the Department. The Department will not disclose any information relating to this Agreement, unless it is legally obliged to do so in order to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or any other legal obligation.

12. CORRUPT GIFTS OR PAYMENTS

12.1 The Organisation shall not offer or give, or agree to give, to any person any gift or consideration of any kind as any inducement or reward for doing or refraining from doing, or having done or refrained from doing, any act in relation to the obtaining or execution of this or any other Agreement for His Majesty's Service or for showing or refraining from showing any favour or disfavour to any person in relation to this or any such Agreement.

13. FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

13.1 It should be noted that the Eligible Expenditure under this agreement, as set out in **Annex A**, is based on the cost provided in Section 2.1.

13.2 For the purpose of securing payment the Organisation will invoice the Department by the end of April 2024.

13.3 Funding will be claimed from the Department via one invoice, including detail of where the payment claim has been reduced if the full amount of funding is not required.

13.4 To safeguard funding as part of the compliance process, the Department shall, at its discretion, review the timesheets of those staff involved in this project.

14. RECOVERY OF SUMS DUE

14.1 If the Department finds after inspection or checking of claims that an overpayment has occurred, this money will be recovered from the Organisation.

15. FUNDING REVIEW

15.1 In respect of funding, if, at any time, the Organisation considers that it will be unable to spend any or all of the funding allocated, or identifies a possible overspend, it should declare this to the Department at the earliest possible date.

15.2 If at any stage during the course it is deemed that the planned outcomes are unlikely to be achieved, the Department has the right to reconsider the level of funding in line with the revised outcomes, e.g. on an apportionment basis. In this event, the Department will consult the Organisation prior to finalising any amendments.

16. BREACH

16.1 Either party may terminate this Agreement with immediate effect in the event of a material breach of any of its terms by the other party. Such termination shall not affect any rights which the party terminating the Agreement may have against the other party in consequence of the breach.

16.2 In the event of a breach of any term of this Agreement the party not in any breach may, as an alternative to immediate termination, serve a notice on the party in breach requiring the breach to be remedied (if capable of remedy) within a period specified in the notice, not being later than three months. If the breach has not been remedied before the expiry of the specified period, the party not in breach may then terminate the Agreement under Paragraph 17.1.

16.3 Service of a remedy notice under Paragraph 17.2 in respect of this Agreement shall not prejudice the rights of the party serving it in respect of any further breach by the other party arising before or after the date of service of the notice.

17. DEFAULT

17.1 If at any time during this Agreement the Organisation is in breach of any of its obligations contained in this letter the Department shall be under no obligation to make any payment or further payment to funding and the Organisation shall, on demand, repay to the Department the full amount of the funding or such proportion thereof as the Department may at its discretion determine.

18. ACCOUNTS AND INSPECTION

18.1 The Organisation shall maintain separate accounts for all costs associated with this appointment. These accounts shall be retained for at least 7 years from the end of the financial year in which the last payment was made under this Agreement.

18.2 The Organisation shall permit duly authorised staff or agents of the Department or the Northern Ireland Audit Office to examine the accounts and other records at any reasonable time and shall furnish suitable oral or written explanation(s) if required. The Department reserves the right to have such staff or agents carry out the examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the Organisation has used the Department resources in the performance of this Agreement. The Organisation shall have regard to the need for economy in all expenditure.

19. FORCE MAJEURE

19.1 Notwithstanding anything that is contained in this Agreement, neither party shall be liable for delay or failure to perform any obligation under the Agreement in so far as the performance of such obligation is prevented by an industrial dispute or by any other causes which are beyond the reasonable control of the affected party.

Signed: 

Name: RAYMOND KELLY

TITLE: Principal Officer, Skills Initiatives

(On behalf of the Department for the Economy)

Date: 29/03/2024

FORM OF ACCEPTANCE 2024:

Multiply Officer as detailed in ANNEX A

The foregoing offer of financial assistance as outlined in Letter of Offer dated 29 March 2024 is hereby accepted by Mid Ulster Council on the terms and conditions stated.

Signed:

Name: (CAPITALS)

Position:

Date:

Signed:

Name: (CAPITALS)

Position:

Date:

Note: This form should be signed by two representatives of the Organisation, one of whom would be the Accounting Officer.

ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

- I refer to the Organisation's recent proposals to avail of a Multiply Officer.
- I am pleased to advise that the Department is prepared to offer the following financial support:

£50,000

- This indicates the maximum funding support available to the Organisation for a Multiply Officer.
- This funding may be used to support a single individual or be spread across a number of individuals as per the Organisations requirements.
- Specific conditions relating to this grant are detailed below.

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

The offer of funding is subject to the following conditions:

- Funding can only be used for a Multiply Officer within your organisation.

ANNEX B

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

The Organisation will ensure the appointed Multiply Officer(s) work in line with the Department's Declaration of Customer Service Policy.

1. This statement formally acknowledges that the quality we provide is of the highest priority to all Department staff. Through effective teamwork and maximum co-operation between all our staff we seek to maximise the benefits to the community from the services we offer.

2. The Department is committed to ensuring that all services are made as accessible as possible to all who seek to use them.

3. Department staff are committed to assisting customers and clients and to demonstrating that they care about their needs.

4. Department staff will provide a competent, helpful and friendly service to the highest professional standards.

5. At all times Department staff will seek to demonstrate a flexible responsive attitude to all customers and clients.

6. This policy will apply to customers inside and outside the Department.

7. The Department is committed to deliver and manage all its services and programmes in a way which is consistent with the policy of the Department for the Economy to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;

- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

The Department for the Economy is committed to delivering a quality service to its customers and to this end a customer complaints process has been put in place which is available at:

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/dfe-complaints-procedure>

MULTIPLY



Department for the

Economy

An Roinn

Geilleagairwww.economy-ni.gov.uk

Adrian McCreesh
Mid Ulster District Council
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 6DT

Adelaide House
39-49 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8FD
Email: multiply@economy.gov.uk

20 May 2024

Dear Adrian

MULTIPLY PROJECT- LETTER OF OFFER

Thank you for your recent proposal(s) regarding Multiply. As you are aware, we have been working with your staff to identify a range of initiatives to support the UK Governments Multiply agenda. The programme requires these initiatives to be developed and delivered at pace, and I would like to thank your team for the time and effort they have put in to date.

This letter of offer contains an allocation for delivery of eleven proposals submitted to the Multiply Project during the period May 2024 to March 2025.

Funding will be paid out in two parts, with 50% up front on receipt of an invoice for costs. The remaining 50% will be paid upon completion, following any assurance and compliance checks, and will be paid out on receipt of an invoice for all related costs submitted upon completion of delivery and no later than end of March 2025.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raymond Kelly".

Raymond Kelly



Funded by
UK Government

POWERED BY
**LEVELLING
UP**

MULTIPLY



Department for the

Economy

An Roinn

Geilleagair

www.economy-ni.gov.uk

MULTIPLY PROJECT PROPOSALS

Mid Ulster District Council

Letter of Offer

20 May 2024



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UK Government**

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UP**

CONTENTS

Paragraph	Page
1 Parties	4
2 Details of the project	4
3 Duration of Agreement	6
4 Organisation's status	6
5 Organisation's obligations	6
6 Insurance	7
7 Observance of legal requirements	7
8 DfE Contact	8
9 Provision of information and monitoring	8
10 Review and contract	9
11 Confidentiality	9
12 Corrupt gifts or payments	9
13 Funding and Accountability	10
14 Recovery of sums due	10
15 Funding Review	10
16 Breach	11
17 Default	11
18 Accounts and Inspection	11
19 Force Majeure	12
Form of Acceptance	13
Annex A Eligible Expenditure	14
Annex B Customer Service Policy	15

AGREEMENT

1. PARTIES

1.1 This Agreement is made between:

(a) the DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY, and hereinafter called the “Department”; and

(b) Mid Ulster District Council and hereinafter known as the “Organisation”

2. DETAILS OF THE PROJECT

2.1 The total funding allocation for the Organisation for financial year 2024/25 is:

£208,115.00

2.2 The Department will fund the Organisation to a maximum funding limit, set out in 2.3 to deliver eleven initiatives for the Multiply Project.

2.3 This funding will be used to support the following proposal(s) in Financial Year 2024/25:

Intervention	Initiative	Maximum funding	Targeted number of participants
Bring Your Grown Up	Family Fun Days	£48,265.00	60-90
Counting on You – Industry Upskilling	Enhanced Learning for Industry	£20,500.00	15
Counting on You – Industry Upskilling	Gamified Learning - Numeracy	£31,000.00	20
Engaging Mature Learners - Making it Count	Financial Planning for Retirement Drop In days	£16,000.00	20

Intervention	Initiative	Maximum funding	Targeted number of participants
Engaging Mature Learners - Making it Count	Financial Planning for Retirement Workshops	£7,900.00	30
MSOL	Financial Wellbeing Workshops for Speakers of Other Languages	£18,625.00	18-30
Numeracy Boot Camps	Health and Nutrition 1-1 Bootcamps	£11,800.00	10
Numeracy Boot Camps	Health and Nutrition Small Group Workshops	£18,380.00	42-56
Numeracy Boot Camps	Financial Wellbeing 1-1 Bootcamps	£9,840.00	15
Numeracy Boot Camps	Financial Wellbeing 1-1 Workshops	£16,555.00	24-40
Numeracy Boot Camps	Money Matters Workshops	£9,250.00	18-30

2.4 The main objective of the programme is to empower adults with the skills and knowledge they need to achieve personal growth, financial wellbeing and social engagement. By providing accessible and engaging learning opportunities, the initiative aims to break down barriers to learning and empower individuals to take charge of their lives. By fostering a supportive learning environment and addressing numeracy, financial literacy and essential life skills the initiative aims to contribute to a more empowered and inclusive community in Northern Ireland where individuals can learn, grow and develop the skills they need to navigate everyday challenges.

2.5 If there is a requirement to change the maximum funding limit, or re-profile funding between initiatives, the Organisation must formally submit a request to

the Department, setting out why this change is required. An updated Letter of Offer will then be issued.

3. DURATION OF AGREEMENT

3.1 This Agreement covers the period from date of signature to 31 March 2025, unless otherwise determined in accordance with this Agreement.

4. ORGANISATION'S STATUS

4.1 In carrying out its obligations under this Agreement:

- the Organisation is not acting as the agent of the Department;
- In other respects, the Organisation shall enter into Agreement with third parties as principal and not as agent of the Department; and
- Accordingly, shall not do or say anything that might lead any person to believe that the Organisation is acting as agent of the Department.

4.2 Nothing in this Agreement shall render the Department liable to indemnify the Organisation in respect of any liability of any kind incurred by them, but this disclaimer shall not be taken to exclude or limit any liability of the Department to the Organisation that may arise, by virtue of a breach of this Agreement by the Department, or any negligent act or omission on the part of the Department, its staff, or agents.

5. ORGANISATION'S OBLIGATIONS

5.1 The Organisation shall carry out the project in accordance with the provisions of **Annexes A and B**. The Annexes to this Agreement shall be deemed to be incorporated in and form part of this Agreement.

5.2 The Organisation shall agree to give publicity to the Department's primary role in and support of the programme and to have early and prior consultations with the Department about any publicity, publications or public announcements associated with the programme.

6. INSURANCE

6.1 The Organisation shall affect and maintain policies of insurance against all risks and to the value such as a prudent Organisation carrying out similar business would normally insure, and shall produce a policy of such insurance, duly written up to date to the Department, on demand.

7. OBSERVANCE OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

7.1. The Organisation shall not do or permit anything to be done which might cause a breach or infringement of the laws and regulations of Northern Ireland in the performance of this Agreement.

7.2 Without prejudice to Paragraph 7.1 in carrying out this Agreement, the Organisation shall comply with all applicable fair employment, equality of treatment and anti-discrimination legislation, including, in particular, the Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 and 1988, the Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, the Employment Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 2004, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 and the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and shall use its best endeavours to ensure that in its employment policies and practices and in the delivery of the services required of the Organisation under this agreement, it has due regard to the need to promote equality of treatment and opportunity between:

- persons of different religious beliefs or political opinions;
- men and women or married and unmarried persons;
- persons with and without dependants (including women who are pregnant or on maternity leave and men on paternity leave);
- persons of different racial groups (within the meaning of the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997);
- persons with and without a disability (within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995);
- persons of different ages; and

- persons of differing sexual orientation.

7.3 The Organisation shall take all reasonable steps to ensure the observance of the provisions of the above Paragraph 7.2 by all servants, agents, employees, consultants and sub-contractors of the Organisation.

7.4 Where any of the Organisation's obligations under this Agreement are carried out by sub-Contractors, the Organisation shall take reasonable steps to ensure that in carrying out those obligations the sub-Contractors comply with the provisions of Paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2.

7.5 This Agreement shall in all respects be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Northern Ireland and the parties hereby agree that the Courts of Northern Ireland shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine any disputes arising out of or in connection with this Agreement.

7.6 The Organisation shall not, without the prior consent in writing of the Department, assign or transfer this Agreement or any part, share or interest in it.

7.7 The Organisation shall, with regard to personal data collected in arranging and managing the initiatives, be expected to adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act (DPA) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

8. DfE CONTACT

8.1 Skills Division shall act on behalf of the Department, to oversee the project. Therefore any queries should be addressed to the mailbox at multiply@economy-ni.gov.uk

9. PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND MONITORING

9.1 The Organisation shall maintain records to monitor expenditure covering aspects of the aims, objectives, activities and output of this programme (both the full-time and part-time cohorts).

- 9.2 The Organisation shall use its best endeavours to carry out each initiative's activities within the duration of the agreement as set out in Paragraph 2.1.
- 9.3 The Organisation shall complete and submit monitoring reports to the Department, in the format requested and within required time scales.
- 9.4 The Organisation shall seek permission from participants to share their post code, age bracket and their existing level of mathematics qualification with the Department. Where the initiative offers a qualification, the Organisation shall also seek permission from the participant to share their achievements with the Department. This information will be used to report back to funding providers, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

10. REVIEW AND CONTRACT

- 10.1 The Organisation shall obtain the Department's written consent to any proposed changes to each of the Initiatives (including but not limited to start/end dates of the Initiative, individual activities and associated costs).

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 11.1 This Agreement and the terms and conditions contained therein shall be treated as confidential by the Organisation and should not be disclosed to any other person without the prior consent of the Department. The Department will not disclose any information relating to this Agreement, unless it is legally obliged to do so in order to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or any other legal obligation.

12. CORRUPT GIFTS OR PAYMENTS

- 12.1 The Organisation shall not offer or give, or agree to give, to any person any gift or consideration of any kind as any inducement or reward for doing or refraining from doing, or having done or refrained from doing, any act in relation to the obtaining or execution of this or any other Agreement for His Majesty's Service or for showing or refraining from showing any favour or disfavour to any person in relation to this or any such Agreement.

13. FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

13.1 For the purpose of securing the Start Payment (the Start Payment will be to the value of 50% of the maximum value for each initiative as listed in 2.3). The Organisation will invoice the Department following receipt of this signed letter of offer. The invoice will be itemised to show monies claimed against each initiative.

13.2 Completion payments will be to the value of 50% of the maximum value for each initiative listed at 2.3. The final payment will only be submitted following any assurance and compliance checks required by the Department are completed in discussion with the organisation.

13.3 Funding will be claimed from the Department via invoices, including detail of where the payment claim has been reduced to take account any cohorts which are not delivered.

13.4 To safeguard funding as part of the compliance process, the Department shall, review the delivery documents, in order to confirm that the cohorts were delivered.

14. RECOVERY OF SUMS DUE

14.1 If the Department finds after inspection or checking of claims that an overpayment has occurred, this money will be recovered from the Organisation.

15. FUNDING REVIEW

15.1 In respect of funding, if, at any time, the Organisation considers that it will be unable to spend any or all of the funding allocated, or identifies a possible overspend, it should declare this to the Department at the earliest possible date.

15.2 If at any stage during the course it is deemed that the planned outcomes are unlikely to be achieved, the Department has the right to reconsider the level of funding in line with the revised outcomes, e.g. on an apportionment basis. In

this event, the Department will consult the Organisation prior to finalising any amendments.

16. BREACH

16.1 Either party may terminate this Agreement with immediate effect in the event of a material breach of any of its terms by the other party. Such termination shall not affect any rights which the party terminating the Agreement may have against the other party in consequence of the breach.

16.2 In the event of a breach of any term of this Agreement the party not in any breach may, as an alternative to immediate termination, serve a notice on the party in breach requiring the breach to be remedied (if capable of remedy) within a period specified in the notice, not being later than three months. If the breach has not been remedied before the expiry of the specified period, the party not in breach may then terminate the Agreement under Paragraph 17.1.

16.3 Service of a remedy notice under Paragraph 17.2 in respect of this Agreement shall not prejudice the rights of the party serving it in respect of any further breach by the other party arising before or after the date of service of the notice.

17. DEFAULT

17.1 If at any time during this Agreement the Organisation is in breach of any of its obligations contained in this letter the Department shall be under no obligation to make any payment or further payment to funding and the Organisation shall, on demand, repay to the Department the full amount of the funding or such proportion thereof as the Department may at its discretion determine.

18. ACCOUNTS AND INSPECTION

18.1 The Organisation shall maintain separate accounts for any and all initiatives, whether online or in-person, associated with this programme. These accounts shall be retained for at least 7 years from the end of the financial year in which the last payment was made under this Agreement.

18.2 The Organisation shall permit duly authorised staff or agents of the Department or the Northern Ireland Audit Office to examine the accounts and other records at any reasonable time and shall furnish suitable oral or written explanation(s) if required. The Department reserves the right to have such staff or agents carry out the examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the Organisation has used the Department resources in the performance of this Agreement. The Organisation shall have regard to the need for economy in all expenditure.

19. FORCE MAJEURE

19.1 Notwithstanding anything that is contained in this Agreement, neither party shall be liable for delay or failure to perform any obligation under the Agreement in so far as the performance of such obligation is prevented by an industrial dispute or by any other causes which are beyond the reasonable control of the affected party.

Signed: 

Name: RAYMOND KELLY

TITLE: Principal Officer, Skills Initiatives

(On behalf of the Department for the Economy)

Date: 20/05/2024

FORM OF ACCEPTANCE 2024:

Various online courses listed in ANNEX A

The foregoing offer of financial assistance as outlined in Letter of Offer dated 20 May 2024 is hereby accepted by Mid Ulster District Council on the terms and conditions stated.

Signed:

Name: (CAPITALS)

Position:

Date:

Signed:

Name: (CAPITALS)

Position:

Date:

Note: This form should be signed by two representatives of the Organisation, normally the Accounting Officer and Head of Training.

ANNEX A

ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

- I refer to the Organisation's recent proposals for the Multiply Project.
- I am pleased to advise that the Department is prepared to offer the following financial support:

£208,115.00

- This indicates the maximum funding support available to the Organisation for the delivery of the initiative(s) outlined.
- As the funding is based on many different costings throughout the duration of the programme e.g. material costs and facilitation costs, the actual funding may be less than the total funding available if all are not utilised.
- Specific conditions relating to this grant are detailed below.

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

The offer of funding is subject to the following conditions:

- Funding is delivery based and payment will be made on the Organisation's delivery of the proposals, which have been approved by the Department. The Organisation must seek prior approval for any material change to the proposal.

ANNEX B

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

The Organisation will organise and run each programme in line with the Department's Declaration of Customer Service Policy:

1. This statement formally acknowledges that the quality we provide is of the highest priority to all Department staff. Through effective teamwork and maximum co-operation between all our staff we seek to maximise the benefits to the community from the services we offer.

2. The Department is committed to ensuring that all services are made as accessible as possible to all who seek to use them.

3. Department staff are committed to assisting customers and clients and to demonstrating that they care about their needs.

4. Department staff will provide a competent, helpful and friendly service to the highest professional standards.

5. At all times Department staff will seek to demonstrate a flexible responsive attitude to all customers and clients.

6. This policy will apply to customers inside and outside the Department.

7. The Department is committed to deliver and manage all its services and programmes in a way which is consistent with the policy of the Department for the Economy to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group,
- age, marital status or sexual orientation;

- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

The Department for the Economy is committed to delivering a quality service to its customers and to this end a customer complaints process has been put in place which is available at:

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/dfe-complaints-procedure>

APPENDIX 6
Summary of Multiply Programme Initiatives

Intervention	Initiative	Max funding	Target number of participants
Bring Your Grown Up	<p>Family Fun Days 6 Family Fun Days across the district, during the summer in council parks and forests with a 'Numeracy' theme – crystal maze/escape rooms style central activity to complete along with general numeracy games such as connect 4, place value toss, snakes and ladders, mini golf – some games to be adult only to ensure interaction. Team will need to include at least 1 adult with key elements of tasks requiring an adult to complete.</p>	£48,265	60-90
Counting on You – Industry Upskilling	<p>Enhanced Learning for Industry Access to accredited and CPD/non accredited (via Open University) qualifications in subjects such Computerised Bookkeeping, Computerised Payroll, Digital Marketing, SEO, Data Analytics etc to upskill those within industry.</p>	£20,500	15
Counting on You – Industry Upskilling	<p>Gamified Learning – Numeracy Gamified Essential Skills Courses providing a new learning experience using novel digital technologies and/or Virtual Reality technology. Participants are assessed at the start of the course to determine current level of knowledge and are entered into the appropriate level - Entry Level 3, Level 1 (equivalent to a GCSE D), Level 2 (equivalent to a GCSE C).</p>	£31,000	20
Engaging Mature Learners - Making it Count	<p>Financial Planning for Retirement Drop In days Drop in Days in each of the 5 main towns providing access to relevant support agencies and providers of financial planning and budgeting for retirement. Support agencies/providers will take stands and be available throughout the event to speak to attendees face to face.</p>	£16,000	20

	<p>Speakers will present on following at preset times for allow residents to plan when and how long they would like to stay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budgeting for retirement including pensions, cost of living, shopping, nutrition and recipes, - Online banking and fraud awareness. - Financial planning for retirement including life insurance, funeral cover, power of attorney, and wills. <p>Community transport will be provided to bring people to and from the event and refreshments will be served throughout the day.</p>		
Engaging Mature Learners - Making it Count	<p>Financial Planning for Retirement Workshops</p> <p>Providing relevant speakers to 6 local Age Friendly groups across the district, delivering key speaker presentations relating to financial wellbeing for Over 50s (one per month on following 3 areas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budgeting for retirement including pensions, cost of living, shopping, nutrition and recipes - Online banking and fraud awareness - Financial planning for retirement including life insurance, funeral cover, power of attorney, and wills. 	£7,900	30
MSOL	<p>Financial Wellbeing Workshops for Speakers of Other Languages</p> <p>Small Group Financial Wellbeing workshops to assist with budgeting, shopping and recipes, debt management and benefits and income, UK tax system for employees provided over 4 weekly sessions</p> <p>To be held in 3 locations across the district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each location will target a different ethnic group - Appropriate translation services provided 	£18,625	18-30
Numeracy Boot Camps	<p>Health and Nutrition 1-1 Bootcamps</p> <p>1-1 training session from a personal trainer as well as tailored advise on nutrition, measuring and tracking, using calorie apps.</p> <p>15 participants over 10 weekly sessions.</p>	£11,800	10

Numeracy Boot Camps	<p>Health and Nutrition Small Group Workshops 4 week programme delivering Small Group 45 min coaching session followed by speakers on the following topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nutrition and Calorie counting - Recipe planning including how to scale up and down - Planning your food shopping for healthy eating - Monitoring Weight, apps to help, planning ahead <p>To be held in 4 MUDC Leisure Centres plus a venue within Clogher Valley (to be confirmed as no Leisure Centre available), as well as 2 walking tracks at MUSA and Gortgonis, and will work closely with the designated Leisure teams in each venue.</p>	£18,380	42-56
Numeracy Boot Camps	<p>Financial Wellbeing 1-1 Bootcamps 1-1 support for 15 individuals already struggling to manage finances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed assessment of income and outgoings - Budgeting advice - Individual plan on how to manage finances better - Debt management, understanding loans and credit cards - Meal planning, nutrition, and shopping calculations <p>Referrals primarily from Food Banks and community groups but open to everyone who is eligible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial assessment. - In-depth budget and income assessment with recommendations on how to manage money more effectively. - 3 x follow up sessions to continue to support implementing improvements. 	£9,840	15
Numeracy Boot Camps	<p>Financial Wellbeing 1-1 Workshops 4 weekly workshop sessions to be held in 3 locations across the district:</p> <p>Week 1 - budgeting: household bills, Week 2 - budgeting: shopping and nutrition Week 3 - benefits and income check Week 4 - Managing debt and understanding loans and credit cards</p>	£16,555	24-40

Numeracy Boot Camps	Money Matters Workshops Small Group Financial planning workshops to assist with understanding finance, pension planning, loans to be held as evening workshops across 3 weeks: Week 1 - Savings Pension Planning at the various stages of life Week 2 - Mortgage and Loans Week 3 - Understanding the implications of debt including credit rating To be held in 3 locations across the district Evening sessions to suit those in work	£9,250	18-30
	Total Operational funding	£208,115	

APPENDIX 7

Maghera Regeneration Programme

Maghera Public Realm
Concept design for illustration purposes only

Issue 1: May 2024

Welcome to the first community update for the Maghera Regeneration Programme.

We're excited to share details of this £10 million project, funded by the UK Government through its Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Levelling Up Fund, along with support from Mid Ulster District Council.

The Maghera Regeneration Programme consists of three key projects that will revitalise Maghera:

1) A New Town Centre Look:

We're sprucing up the heart of Maghera with a fresh Public Realm Scheme, making it a more attractive and enjoyable place to shop, stroll, and spend time with family. This involves new paving, street lighting, tree planting, and street furniture.

The Public Realm Scheme is the first of the three projects to begin, with local contractors CivCo Ltd appointed in March 2024. The work will be carried out over the next 12 to 18 months, rejuvenating the town centre.

The scheme covers Main Street and extends to:

- Coleraine Road
- Station Road
- Meeting House Avenue
- Tirkane Road
- Church Street
- Glen Road
- Hall Street
- Bank Square
- St Lurach's Road

2) Business Park Development:

The former High School site will be redeveloped into a modern Business Park, creating new job opportunities, and providing local businesses with space to grow.

3) Wetland Park Creation:

This new park will offer a peaceful escape for residents and visitors, with nature walks and spaces for family outings.

The Maghera Regeneration Programme aims to enhance the social, cultural, environmental and economic wellbeing of Maghera, creating a vibrant and thriving community.



Funded by
UK Government

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**LEVELLING
UP**



Comhairle Ceantair
**Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster**
District Council



Maghera Business Park
Concept design for illustration purposes only

Maghera Business Park:

This part of the Regeneration Programme will provide serviced sites for local businesses to grow and thrive. It's also designed to attract new businesses, creating high-quality jobs, and boosting employment in the area.

Right now, the plans for the Business Park are with the Department of Infrastructure, and we're waiting an outcome. Stay tuned for more updates!

Maghera Wetlands Park:

We're also planning a beautiful Wetlands Park, which will bring more green spaces and fun places to relax for both residents and visitors. This new park will give everyone more chances to socialise and enjoy the outdoors, leading to better health and well-being.

Right now, a design team is working on how the park will look. Once they have the concept ready, you'll be able to see



Maghera Wetlands Park
Concept design for illustration purposes only

the designs at the Maghera Leisure Centre (date to be announced).

Stay Updated on Maghera Regeneration Programme

The Regeneration Programme has three big projects, and they'll continue to develop in the coming months. We'll keep you informed through regular social media posts and website updates, so be sure to stay tuned. We look forward to seeing the changes this investment will bring to Maghera and its surrounding area - together, we can create a vibrant community for future generations.

If you'd like to know more about the Programme or have any questions, you can contact us at:

- ☎ 03000 132 132
- ✉ info@midulstercouncil.org
- 🌐 www.midulstercouncil.org/magheraregenerationprogramme

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES DEPARTMENT 2023/24

This Report provides an overview of the comprehensive range of work delivered across the Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes section in 2023/2024 and details some of the year's highlights and initiatives delivered under each of the four key Themes of the Council's Economic Development Strategy, 'Our Plan for Growth' and Council's Tourism Strategy.

THEME 1: ENABLING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Go Succeed Programme



Go Succeed Start Up (Engage and Foundation) & Go for It

Go For It ended September 2023 with the new Go Succeed provision then commencing, **433** clients had accessed enterprise support.

Growth and Scaling Support for existing businesses and social enterprises from November 2023:

200 Mid Ulster businesses have been engaged to receive support to grow and scale

203 Mid Ulster businesses attended **22** growth focused events

Digital Transformation Flexible Fund



11-Council Regional Launch of Digital Transformation Flexible Fund Programme (Nov 2023)

The Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) is the first cross-City/Growth deal bid to be awarded funding (£6M) under the first tranche, managed on an 11-Council basis. It offers up to 70% (or up to £20,000) of project costs towards capital equipment aligned to 6 advanced digital technologies:

Smart technologies (Internet of Things) | Process Automation | Big data and Analytics
 Immersive Technologies | Artificial Intelligence | Blockchain Technologies.

Council officers are promoting DTFF and engaging with businesses to progress applications to maximise uptake from the region.

Call 1

The DTFF was formally launched with Call 1 opened in November 2023. Mid Ulster Council area had the joint (with Belfast) highest number of applications (14) with 12 businesses being offered funding as below:

Total Project Value	DTFF Fund	12 Businesses Match Funding
£305,622.94	£204,736	£100,886.88

Call 2

Opened March. Of the Stage 1 (Expressions of Interest) 11 Councils’ total of 154 submitted, Mid Ulster businesses accounted for 29 of these (highest of all Council areas at 18%).

Business Support Programmes 2019-2023

(Funded by European Regional Development Fund, Invest NI and Mid Ulster District Council)

Launched in August 2020, the four Business Programmes, namely; (1) Gearing for Growth; (2) Digital First; (3) Tender Ready and (4) Transform, were designed to build the capacity, resilience and growth prospects of 690 Mid Ulster micro and small businesses (<49 employees) to December 2022.

An Independent Evaluation (completed Sept 2023) confirmed:

Total Investment £1.128M for 4 Business Programmes

Mid Ulster District Council	£225,760 (20%)
Invest NI	£225,760 (20%)
ERDF Investment for Growth & Jobs	£677,280 (60%)

Results

- 2992 days support delivered to 714 businesses
- 12 events delivered to 680 participants
- 344 new jobs created – valued at £7.33M
- 32 businesses won new work of £28.45M
- Businesses supported to access £1.274M
- 57 businesses accepted as Invest NI Quality Referrals
- 31 Mid Ulster businesses offered £1.015M from Invest NI’s Ambition to Grow Fund
- Total Investment (Council | EU ERDF | Invest NI) £1.128M
- Total Economic Impact £37.054M
- A Celebration event to promote the results of the Programmes, coupled with the Local Launch of the Go Succeed Programme was held in the Burnavon Theatre, Cookstown on 17 May 2024 with a wide range of invited stakeholders.



These Programmes were part funded by Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the Investment for Growth and Jobs Northern Ireland (2014-2020) Programme and Mid Ulster District Council.

Mid South West Net Zero Project

In July 2023, funding of **£300,000** from Innovate UK was secured by the Mid South West (MSW) region to assist local businesses in their transition towards achieving Net Zero emissions.

The 'Driving Net Zero Transformation of the Mid South West Region' project will offer up to 90 businesses from across the region the opportunity to baseline their current emissions and develop an action plan that will support them in working towards transitioning to, and ultimately achieving net zero. The project will also seek to raise awareness of Net Zero and enable knowledge transfer to a wider range of businesses across the region.



Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2023 (Monday 13 – Friday 17 November 2023)



To mark Global Entrepreneurship Week 2023, Mid Ulster District Council's fifth Enterprise Week took place from Monday 13 November to Friday 17 November 2023. The week's theme was *Challenge, Adapt, Succeed* in today's ever evolving economic landscape. There were six in-person events and five online free events. The week was launched with 'AI Uncovered – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Business'; a topical panel discussion hosted by UTV's Paul Clark with 3 expert speakers.

Followed by a wide range of topical events and speakers which brought a variety but also a clear relevance to the needs of the local business community and this was reflected in the attendance levels and types of businesses who engaged across the week, with a total of 700 people attending the programme of events.

Council's Business Ezine Service

Over the year, Council have issued 42 comprehensive ezines to businesses registered on Council's Business Directory. The ezine provides valuable up to date information to businesses across the district. These ezines include details on funding opportunities, changes in business legislation, as well as networking / capacity building events, and other sources of support from recognized business organisations..

THEME 2: ENABLING SKILLS & EMPLOYABILITY

Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP)

The Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) is focused on improving Mid Ulster's employability outcomes and labour market conditions by working with a wide range of partners, being flexible to meet local needs and helping to connect employers with employees.



Following delivery of the 2022-23 Action Plan which completed in December 2023, the Partnership received £386k funding from the Department for Communities to deliver the 2023/24 Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan. This funding support enables Mid Ulster LMP to develop and implement a range of targeted projects and initiatives aimed at directly impacting the local labour market by bringing unemployed or economically inactive constituents back into work or assisting in upskilling or reskilling those at risk of redundancy.

Such initiatives included a HGV/PCV Academy alongside four Sectoral Academies which offer a range of routes back to employment whilst providing one to one mentoring and support in employability skills and guaranteed job interviews. In addition, the LMP engaged with a number of local employers to raise awareness and understanding of the special needs of people with disabilities and those out of the labour market for a period of time due to caring responsibilities, and how to bring them back into the workforce to fill skills and labour shortages within Mid Ulster industry.



A range of events including job fairs, career events and employer support and training have also been delivered to over 1,000 participants supporting residents across the skills and employability arena and the LMP are currently developing an Employer Toolkit to assist local businesses understand the issues within the labour market and help them react positively to challenges.



The 2022-23 Action Plan resulted in 155 residents gaining employment and a celebration event was held in November 2023 to recognise the achievements of participants and employers. To date **45 participants** are in employment due to initiatives within the 2023-24 Action Plan.



THEME 3: ENABLING URBAN & RURAL REGENERATION

Maghera Regeneration Project

The Council has successfully secured £9.1m from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Levelling Up Fund to support the regeneration of Maghera to include a town centre Public Realm Scheme, the redevelopment of the former High School site as a Business Park and the creation of a Wetland Park.

The Council has also committed a substantial amount of additional funding to support regeneration, resulting in a total investment of over £10m in Maghera and its surrounding area.

The overall programme has three core project elements:

- **Town Centre Public Realm Scheme**
- **Maghera Business Park**
- **Maghera Wetland Park.**

Town Business Spruce Up Scheme

Funding to the value of £200,000 was secured from Department of Communities to deliver a Town Business Spruce Up Scheme to eligible commercial properties located within the town centre boundary of each of the towns (Coalisland, Cookstown and Dungannon as per Area Plan 2010; and Magherafelt as per Area Plan 2015).

Letters of Offer have been issued to 67 successful applicants. Further engagement is ongoing with the Department of Communities to seek additional funding for the remaining 50 schemes, which met the criteria, but had to be placed on a reserve list until Council ascertains if DFC will provide additional funding to allow these schemes to progress.

Mid Ulster Gift Card

There are currently 226 businesses across the District registered to participate and accept the Mid Ulster Gift Card.

This includes Council leisure facilities and cultural venues. Registrations continue to increase, with over £78,000 being uploaded onto the gift cards, to be spent in participating businesses across the district. Mid Ulster Gift Cards can be collected free of charge from Ranfurly House, Dungannon, The Burnavon, Cookstown and The Bridewell in Magherafelt. A consumer simply chooses the value this wish to spend and upload the value by visiting www.midulstergiftcard.com. Alternatively, consumers can also purchase online at the same website address.



International Women's Events 2024

To celebrate International Women's Day 2024, Mid Ulster District Council hosted two sold out events at the Royal Hotel, Cookstown and the Ryandale Inn, Moy with a total of 258 attending.

The first event took place on Wednesday 6 March 2024 at the Royal Hotel with speakers Lynda Bryans, Journalist and Course Director at Belfast Metropolitan College and Jade Bradley, Burnout Recovery Specialist, Nutritionist and Health Coach.



The second event was held in the Ryandale Inn, Moy, on Wednesday 13 March 2024 with speakers, Vivian McKinnon, Award-Winning Public Speaker and Post Traumatic Growth Specialist and Tara Grimes, Nutritionist, and accredited Personal Trainer.

Representatives from Causeway and Mid Ulster Women's Aid also presented during both events, shedding

light on the substantial challenges the charity is confronting due to the increasing numbers of women seeking help. **£892.69** was donated the Causeway and Mid Ulster Women's Aid.





Roar Roar Dinosaur- Maghera Walled Garden 2023

Maghera Walled Garden was buzzing with excitement as families gathered for the Council's highly anticipated summer 2023 event with the theme being Roar Roar Dinosaur held on Saturday 09 September.

Families from the local community flocked to the garden to partake in an afternoon filled with dino-themed entertainment and activities.



Coalisland Summer Bash 2023

This event was developed to complement the Newell 10K and 5K event held within Coalisland on Sunday 28th May 2023. Over 1,000 people attended the event which encompassed free family fun activities.



Dungannon Halloween Event 2023

This event marked its nineteenth year taking place on Friday 27th October 2023 in Market Square, Dungannon. It is estimated that an audience of 3,000 attended throughout the evening. The programme of entertainment included face painters, balloon modellers, walk about characters, fire/LED performers, a range of Halloween workshops/activities along with on stage entertainment. To conclude the evening a ten-minute firework display took place.



Coalisland Halloween Event 2023

This was held on Tuesday 31st October 2023 at the Parochial Centre and Fr Peter Campbell Park (Coalisland Fianna G.F.C Grounds). The event provided family friendly activities with amusements for all to enjoy and fireworks to end the event. It is estimated that up 2,000 people attended the event throughout the evening. In the week leading up to this event there were community activities held at various locations throughout the town and surrounding area.

Christmas Programme of Events & Marketing Campaign 2023

The traditional Christmas Switch-On events were delivered in each town centre – Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Coalisland and Maghera.

Cookstown Christmas Lights Switch

Friday 24th November 2023

It is estimated 3,500 people attended the Christmas Lights Switch on in Cookstown. The event took place from 6.30pm - 8.00pm and focused on providing the opportunity for local groups to be involved in the entertainment. Activities for the children included a gaming bus, arts and crafts, face painting, character walkabouts and selfie boards.



Dungannon Christmas Lights Switch On 2023 Saturday 25th November 2023

Dungannon Lights Switch On took place on Saturday 25th November commencing at 6pm until 8pm. The programme of entertainment included a mix of on stage and street entertainment with performances from a local Theatre Company, the Manhattan Swing band, walkabout characters, face painters, family fun activities. In partnership with Dungannon Town Traders, Santa arrived on a De-icer lorry into Market Square to switch on the Christmas Tree and festive lights along with the Council Chair. It is estimated that 2,000 people attended this event.



Magherafelt Christmas Lights Switch On 2023 Saturday 25th November 2023

Huge crowds attended the 2023 Christmas festivities in Magherafelt on Saturday 25th November.

For the first time, Market Square hosted a Children's Christmas Village where children met the Grinch, enjoyed Christmas crafts, musical performances, puppet shows and storytelling with Mrs Claus.



Free face painting also took place in the Bank of Ireland on Market Square which proved as popular as always, and live entertainment was on offer from local choirs, musicians, and popular walkabout characters.

The main event was Santa's arrival to switch on the Christmas lights with help from the Deputy Chair, with a finale firework display and marked the start of the festive season in Magherafelt.



Saturday 2nd December 2023 Maghera Light Switch on 2023

Maghera hosted its annual Christmas lights switch-on event. Santa Claus made his customary appearance at Maghera Walled Garden, where he interacted with children of all ages.

Prior to the light switch on, festivities took place at the Lurach Centre, with featured activities such as Christmas decoration making, face painting, and letter writing to Santa. Subsequently, Santa relocated to the Potting Shed at Maghera Walled Garden to greet the children. Throughout the event, friendly elves provided entertainment for attendees, while the garden was adorned with an impressive LED display and festive characters, creating an inviting backdrop for festive photographs.



The highlight of the evening was the official switch-on of the Christmas lights, led by Santa and Council Chair marking the commencement of the holiday celebrations in Maghera.

Coalisland Lights Switch On 2023 Sunday 3rd December 2023

The fourteenth annual Christmas event in partnership with CRAIC theatre saw Santa take up residence in a Grotto in the Cornmill Car Park on Sunday 3rd December 2023 where children could come, meet Santa and receive a free selection box. Entertainment and festive fun took place in the carpark of the Cornmill Centre throughout the afternoon with music by a DJ and a live band, Christmas walkabout characters along with a special appearance from the Craic Theatre's Pantomime. It was estimated that over 1,000 people attended this event.



Shop Local Campaign – Christmas 2023

To coincide with Christmas lights switch on a two week "Shop Local" campaign ran with both television and outdoor advertising. A TV Advert formed part of Mid Ulster Council's Christmas Marketing Campaign to promote the 'shop local' message and encourage additional footfall in our main towns in the run up to Christmas. Airtime advertising for a 30 second TV advert run on UTV from 11th December to 22nd December 2023. This campaign also promoted the Mid Ulster Gift Card.

In addition to the Christmas Lights Switch On Events, entertainment was provided in the five main towns on three Saturdays before Christmas, to encourage shoppers to the towns. This included pop up entertainment in each town centre, along with local musicians playing.



Reduced Christmas Car Parking 2023 in Dungannon and Magherafelt

From Saturday 25 November there will be a return of the Christmas parking promotion at all Council owned pay and display car parks in both Mid Ulster towns. This campaign provides reduced car parking fees with 10p for the first three hours in Dungannon and Magherafelt, running up to Saturday 6 January 2024

THEME 4: ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE & CONNECTIVITY

Project Stratum

Project Stratum is the largest Full Fibre broadband project across NI. In Mid Ulster, it is on target to deliver broadband improvements to almost 13,000 rural premises. This is year 3 of a year roll out plan.

Strategic Transport Infrastructure

The A29 Cookstown Bypass has been progressed to Draft Orders Stage and Public Information Event. The Bypass is a key project under the MSW Growth Deal.

Council continues to lobby to ensure a bypass for Dungannon is included in the RSTNTP.

Council has lobbied for the reintroduction of rail in Mid Ulster. One of the recommendations in the All-Island Strategic Rail Review (AISRR) Report published in July 2023, is the reinstatement of the railway between Portadown, Dungannon, Omagh, Strabane, Derry~Londonderry, and Letterkenny which would bring significant economic benefits to the District.

Desertcreat Green Innovation Business Park

A Strategic Outline Case (SOC) was developed for the Desertcreat Industrial Lands Project. However, this project has now evolved into the Desertcreat Green Innovation Business Park and a Programme Business Case has commenced under the Mid South West Growth Deal.

Furthermore, the Council is a partner in a cross-border project, which received €250k funding through the Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund. All partners identified an undersupply of appropriately serviced and digitally connected green industrial lands and enterprise space as a common threat to sustainable long-term economic growth and an obstacle to SME innovation cluster development. As part of this project a Feasibility Report was completed for cross-border investment in industrial/enterprise space with border Councils including Monaghan (lead Council), Cavan, and Leitrim, as well as northern partner Councils in Fermanagh and Omagh and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon. The Report was submitted to the Department of the Taoiseach in November 2023.

Cookstown Market Scoping Study

Following an extensive process involving research and consultation, a detailed scoping study has been completed for Cookstown Saturday Market. The findings will inform the best way forward to sustain and rejuvenate a Cookstown Market.

Sperrins Walking Programme

Sperrins Walking Programme, developed and delivered by The Sperrins Partnership and outdoor experts Far and Wild, appeals to a broad range of walkers to enjoy the beautiful landscape of the Sperrin AONB as well as promoting health, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

Participants enjoyed discovering a great choice of walks ranging from moderate ability to more demanding longer walks, all in small groups, guided by experienced leaders who helped to uncover the stories, history, environment, and heritage of this unique landscape.



The Mid Ulster walks over the weekend of 23rd and 24th September 2023 involved a moderate looped walk looking at adaptive plant species in the area around Davagh Forest (8km) and two challenging looped walks, one on Slieve Gallion including a prize for the best landscape photo (12km) and exploring place names on Carntogher (12km).

A stringent marketing and PR campaign raised the profile of the Sperrins and was delivered by Harriott Communications. It included a successful launch with Celia Daly on Slieve Gallion, Davagh Forest and local tour guide Cathy O'Neill featured on UTV Life, BBC Radio Foyle, regional press and social platforms.

Sperrins Sculpture Trail

The Sperrins Sculpture Trail Project consists of 3 iconic pieces of artwork positioned in spectacular settings within the Sperrins. The sculpture trail is designed to promote the natural and built heritage of the region and encourage rural tourism and out of state visitors whilst preserving the natural assets of the rural community.

This project is a working partnership between Derry City and Strabane District, Mid Ulster District Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. The Sperrins Giant Sculptures - The Storyteller, The Guardian and The Stargazer have been installed at their respective sites. Works are now complete, and the official launch took place in July 2023.



Sperrins Partnership Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The Sperrins are a defined Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, one of only eight in Northern Ireland and had been declared an AONB in 1968. The Sperrins Partnership Project (previously Sperrins Future Search) is a joint collaboration between 4 councils: Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council. External funding has been secured through the DAERA Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023 – 2028 to develop a Management Plan for the AONB.

An new Sperrins AONB Project Officer has been recruited and commenced on 20th November 2023. The post is fully funded through the DAERA Environment Fund. The AONB Officer will assist with developing the Management Plan and Action Plan. An AONB consultant has been appointed to undertake a 6-month consultation process with all key stakeholders and the public. The deadline for plan development is November 2025.

Experiential Mentor Programme

Lough Neagh Partnership were appointed by Mid Ulster District Council to spearhead a new initiative aimed at fostering the development and growth of tourism experiences in the Mid Ulster area. This new project showcased everything that is unique about the area, especially its people and their stories, family history, cultural traditions, and invaluable skills. From the Programme 3 strong experiences are being developed with the potential of becoming a TourismNI Embrace a Giant Spirit experience.

Brown Signage

The current tourism brown signage policy in Northern Ireland is implemented by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) in partnership with Tourism Northern Ireland (TNI). Brown signs are used as a traffic management tool to guide visitors to tourist destinations in a safe and sustainable manner. Council conducted a review of brown signage across the district between December 2022 and March 2023, noting what needs to be updated, made visible and implemented. All existing signs were surveyed, photographed, geo-located and placed on a google map link, allowing all photos of the signs to be identified at their actual geographic location.

SHARED ISLAND FUNDING

Feasibility Study to Develop Sliabh Beagh as an Eco-Tourism Destination

ORNI and partners were appointed by Monaghan County Council on behalf of the Sliabh Beagh Partnership Committee (comprising Mid Ulster District Council, Monaghan County Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council), to develop 7 work packages of projects to collectively enhance rural tourism and outdoor recreation provision. A feasibility study was undertaken to investigate options to develop Sliabh Beagh as an eco-



tourism destination through delivery of an exciting range of outdoor experiences that supports both the understanding and conservation of this special landscape. A number of inter-connected work packages were considered to build on the existing services and facilities in Sliabh Beagh area.

Tullaghoge Fort Feasibility Study

A successful application was made to Shared Island, made in partnership with Leitrim County Council, to complete a feasibility study which includes the creation of new pathways with interpretation at Tullaghoge Fort. Total funding awarded is 100% to the value of €20,000. The purpose of this project is to preserve, protect and transform the heritage of the Forts, research and increase awareness and understanding of the history the sites and examine the viability of introducing a new pathway.



THEME 2: BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Tourism Business Engagement Workshops

Tourism hosted 6 business engagement tailored workshops, with on average 20 businesses attending each workshop to gain transferrable knowledge and skills. These included:

- Branding Guidelines – Understanding the Unwinding Time Brand
- Social media
- Canva
- Pricing for Success
- Recruiting and Retaining Staff
- Content Creation

Tourism WhatsApp Group

Established in response to the pandemic, membership of Mid Ulster WhatsApp group currently stands at 198 business representatives. It continues to highlight news, updates, and information in a fast and convenient manner for businesses, with organisations, such as, Tourism NI, NI Hotels Federation and Hospitality Ulster feeding into the group.

FAM Trips

FAM Trip Monday 26th February 2024

JAC Travels an International tour operator visited OM Dark Sky and Observatory and Seamus Heaney HomePlace. This was organised with Mid Ulster Council with Tourism NI through a sponsorship agreement with ITAO to support members on NI fam trips.

FAM trip Thursday 14 March 2024.

Five members of staff from the publicity and digital departments at Tourism Ireland joined teams from DCSDC, FODC and MUDC to experience the giant adventure of the Sperrins Sculpture Trail Project. The trip visited all three recycled sculptures by Thomas Dambo inspired by geological wonders and ancient heritage.

Once in our district the Tourism Ireland staff were guided through OM Dark Sky Park facilities. FAM trip attendees availed of hospitality over discussions about the light show before visiting the actual Giant sculpture.

Media Visits

Through Tourism Northern Ireland tourism organised media visits to Mid Ulster. Tourism NI's media team visited the district in February 2024. They visited Glenshane Country Farm, OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory, The Clogher Valley namely, St Patrick's Chair and Well and U.S. Grants Homestead. They also visited Ranfurly House and Hill of the O'Neill.

The trip was very successful in that it provided Tourism NI with greater product awareness, experience of on the ground practicalities, deeper/new relationships with suppliers, a greater relationship with Mid Ulster Council. All of which can be fed into TNI's media planning visits and to the wider industry.



World Host Training 2023

Tourism Development Officers delivered 'World Host' Principles of Customer Service training and World Host Ambassador training to Staff within Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Ranfurly House, Parks and Leisure Centres in 2023.

World Host training focuses on customer service skills that are vital to improve standards & service provision, to upskill staff & to compete in today's ever-changing environment. The practical aspects of the training delivery help to reinforce the benefits of excellent customer service to the employee, team, Council & the customer.

THEME 3: TOURISM CLUSTERS

Tourism Development Group (TDG)

The Tourism Development group is comprised of Council, business, education and training representatives and statutory agencies including Tourism NI. This group works alongside officers to manage the delivery of the Council Tourism Strategy and act as an advisory body for the industry.

The following clusters are subgroups who feed into the TDG:

- **Loughlinsholin Cluster (formerly Seamus Heaney Cluster)**

This cluster of 15 Tourism and Hospitality businesses continues to evolve and is progressing through the Invest NI Phase 2 Collaborative Growth Programme.

- **Clogher Valley Cluster**

The Clogher Valley Tourism Cluster (CVTC) had been successful in being awarded Invest NI Phase 1 Collaborative Growth Programme funding. This group comprised of Todds Leap (Lead Business), Blessingbourne Estate, The Valley Hotel, Corick House Hotel and The Forth Chapel. Runda Hospitality & Tourism Solutions were appointed as facilitator to implement work on Phase 1 of the Scoping Study and recruitment of other businesses in the Clogher Valley.

The Cluster were successful in receiving a Letter of Offer from Invest NI for Phase 2 of the Project. Again, facilitated by Runda Hospitality & Tourism Solutions team, the cluster is now working with a further 11 local businesses who are interested in advancing forward and becoming part of the Clogher Valley Tourism Development Programme.

- **Archaeology, History and Heritage**

Hidden Heritage Tours 2023 proved successful with very positive feedback.

The first tour to take place was Stars and Stones on 23 June at OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory and Beaghmore Stone Circles. There was a full house for this with Craic Theatre providing Living History at Beaghmore Stone Circles.

The next tour was on Saturday 8 July in the Clogher Valley featuring William Carleton and his connections, visiting Clogher Cathedral, The Forth Chapel and Carleton Cottage. Again, this tour was fully booked.

The final Hidden Heritage Tour took place on Saturday 30 September in Maghera. This was a walking tour visiting Maghera Heritage Centre, St Lurach's Church and the Walled Garden and other points of interest within the town.



European Heritage Open Days, September 2023

Over 17 properties across Mid Ulster opened their doors as part of European Heritage Open Days. The theme was 'Living Heritage' referring to the practices, knowledge and skills passed on through the generations and which are still being used today.

- U.S. Grant Homestead – Sunday 10th Sept, 4 tours took place with Mrs Simpson meeting approximately 70 visitors.
- The Bridewell – Sat 9th Sept had five fully booked tours in the Bridewell. Visitors were met by Mrs McKinley and the tour finished with a visit to the old graveyard to explore some of the gravestones and hear stories of those buried there. Magherafelt guided walking tours were also available.



Great Days Out

Great Days Out event took place in the Glenavon Hotel on Wed 18 October 2023. The event showcased the vast array of tourism businesses and experiences across the Mid Ulster District which can offer a range of day trip experiences and overnight stays. 25 Mid Ulster tourism businesses participated with some reporting back that they secured bookings from Group Organisers who attended the event.

Outdoor & Events Cluster

Maria McAlister, Tourism NI Interim Manager Landscapes and Activities, visited Mid Ulster to familiarise herself with outdoor product on offer and visited a range of businesses.

- Glenavon House Hotel,
- Todds Leap
- Blessingbourne Mountain Trails
- OM Dark Sky Park and Davagh Forest
- Splash NI
- Ballyronan Marina
- Good 2 Go Paddle Boarding



Bike

Ireland's Association for Adventure Tourism (IAAT)

A number of outdoor businesses were invited to attend Ireland's Association for Adventure Tourism (IAAT) in Derry/Londonderry on 29th September. The IAAT is the representative body for over 250 adventure activity tourism operators on the island of Ireland and provided an opportunity for our businesses to network with similar outdoor adventure businesses and discuss challenges/opportunities facing the sector.

Heritage Strategy and Map

Mid Ulster Heritage Strategy

A five-year Mid Ulster Heritage Strategy & Action Plan is nearing completion. The strategy highlights the heritage environment within Mid Ulster, with provides a range of proposed actions to enhance the visibility of the heritage offering within the region and foster greater community participation and visitor engagement in Mid Ulster's range of rich and diverse heritage.

Christmas Grotto at the Bridewell

Santa's Grotto turned the Bridewell into a festive experience in the heart of Magherafelt town and opened to coincide with the Magherafelt Christmas switch on. Running over 3 weekends and for a nominal of £6 children were able to:

- Write and post their letter to Santa
- Make magical reindeer food to take home
- Visit Santa in his Grotto and receive a small gift
- Have the opportunity to take their own photos.

ASD/sensory friendly sessions were available also



fee

THEME 4: MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Summer Marketing Campaign 2023 – focusing on Loughs and Shores, including Ballyronan, Heaney Open Ground, Splash and Lough Neagh Stories.

Autumn/Winter Marketing Campaign 2023 – Showcasing attractions, places to visit and accommodation reinforcing the brand message of unwinding time and directing traffic to the Visit Mid Ulster website and the autumn offers. There was a focus on the Stargazer, Ceoldán - Giant of the Sperrins in Davagh Forest.

Spring Marketing Campaign 2024

This campaign focused on 'Taste Mid Ulster' and on the launch of the first ever Taste Mid Ulster Food and Heritage event in Moy Village.

Launch of Taste Mid Ulster Cluster – Taste Mid Ulster Food and Heritage Event Moy Village

The event on 9/10 March 2024 in Moy, showcased local businesses, accompanied by live music and children's entertainment. A total of 19 traders attended the event here were live cookery demonstrations, and 13 music acts entertained onlookers across the two days. The event attracted over 3,300 customers over the weekend.



Taste Mid Ulster Market, Pomeroy

A further Taste Mid Ulster Market is planned for Pomeroy in June 2024. It is anticipated that 'Taste Mid Ulster' will become an annual event, rotating around areas within the district.

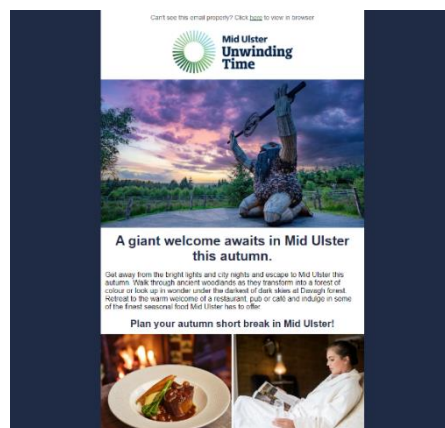
Building on the success of the first 'Taste Mid Ulster' it has been agreed it would be advantageous to re-instate a 'food' cluster which will become the 'Taste Mid Ulster' Cluster. MUDC officers are working to progress this and will provide updates in due course.

Tourism Newsletter

Trade Newsletter supplied to 380 tourism businesses and Visitor Newsletter issued to 300 visitors on a fortnightly basis. The newsletter incorporates the Unwinding Time brand which keeps brand consistency across all platforms. Visitors can sign up to the newsletter through our website. This has proved an excellent communication platform targeting both markets.



Trade Newsletter



Visitor Newsletter

HEADLINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES ACHIEVEMENTS 2023/24

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES

The activities the Council's Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes sections have undertaken over the past 12 months have resulted in the achievement of some key outputs, which include:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES

<p>v' £9.1M secured from Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to deliver a large capital regeneration project in Maghera.</p>
<p>v' 169 new jobs created through the Business Start Programme</p>
<p>v' ERDF Programme Evaluation (2019 – 2023)</p> <p>Total Investment £1.128M - Total Economic Impact £37.054M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 344 new jobs created – valued at £7.33M o 32 businesses won new work of £28.45M o 57 businesses accepted as Invest NI Quality Referrals o 31 Mid Ulster businesses offered £1.015M from Invest NI's Ambition to Grow Fund
<p>v'NEW Go Succeed Enterprise Service (Start Up, Growth and Scaling)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Start Up (incl Go For It) - 433 clients accessed supported o Growth – 200 businesses recruited and receiving Growth support o 57 businesses accepted as Invest NI Quality Referrals o 31 Mid Ulster businesses offered £1.015M from Invest NI's Ambition to Grow
<p>Digital Transformation Flexible Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 12 businesses supported to access £204,736 funding for new digital technologies (+ business match funds £100,886 = total investment £305,622.94) o From Calls 1 & 2 Mid Ulster businesses accounted for the highest number of Applications (14 & 29 respectively)
<p>Mid South West (MSW) Net Zero Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Mid South West (MSW) Partnership secured £300,000 from Innovate UK's Fast Followers Programme to assist local businesses in their transition towards achieving Net Zero emissions
<p>Desertcreat Green Innovation Industrial Park</p> <p>A Strategic Outline Case (SOC) was developed for the Desertcreat Industrial Lands Project. However, this project has now evolved into the Desertcreat Green Innovation Industrial Park and a Programme Business Case has commenced under the Mid South West Growth Deal.</p>

Shared Island Funding

- A Feasibility Report was completed for cross-border investment in industrial/enterprise space with border Councils including Monaghan (lead Council), Cavan, and Leitrim, as well as northern partner Councils in Fermanagh and Omagh and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon. The report was submitted to the Department of the Taoiseach in November 2023.

v' Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP)

2022-23 Action Plan (delivered up to 31 December 2023)

Employment Outcomes:

- Sector Focused Employability Academies: **68**
- HGV/Coach Academy: **31**
- Employer Led Disability Inclusion Programme: **13**
- Registered Childminder Academy: **16**
- Careers Fairs: **25**
- Total employed as a result of 2022-23 initiatives: **153**

2023-24 Action Plan (on-going)

Employment Outcomes to date:

- HGV Academy: **7**
- Construction Academy: **7**
- Health and Social Care/Classroom Asst Academy: **6**
- Tourism and Hospitality Academy: **2**
- Female Returners: **5**
- Employer Led Disability Inclusion Programme: **8**
- Total employed to date as a result of 2023-24 initiatives: **28**

v' Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (13th – 17th November 2023)

- Over 700 people participated in Mid Ulster's fifth Enterprise Week.
- There were 11 free online and in-person events

v' Town Business Spruce Up Scheme

Phase 1 - 67 Letters of Offer issued to businesses.

Phase 2 – 50 further projects held on a Reserve List (pending funding bid to DFC)

TOURISM

<p>Sperrins Partnership AONB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>External funding has been secured through the DAERA Environmental Fund Strategic Strand 2023 – 2028 to develop a Management Plan for the AONB.</i>
<p>Shared Island Funding</p> <p>Feasibility study to develop Sliabh Beagh as an Eco-Tourism destination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sliabh Beagh Feasibility Study completed. <p>Tullaghoge Fort Feasibility Study completed</p>
<p>Visit Mid Ulster, Social Media and Marketing</p> <p>Social Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>From 1st April 2023 – 27th March 2024, reach was up 18% on Facebook and 151.4% on Instagram. Visits were up 168% on Facebook and 106.4% on Instagram.</i>• <i>From 21st May 2023 – 16th March 2024 content interactions have gone up 186.7%.</i> <p>Visit Mid Ulster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>From 1st April 2023 to 28th March 2024, 74k users, 73k new users, average engagement time 51 seconds, organic search was up to just over 40k.</i> <p>Spring Marketing Campaign 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The radio advertisement had impacts of 733,017 and reach of 317,611.</i> <p>Autumn/Winter Marketing Campaign 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The radio advertisement had impacts of 870,419 and reach of 330,929.</i> <p>Spring Marketing Campaign 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The radio advertisement had impacts of 1,788,569 and reach of 463,230.</i>
<p>Taste Mid Ulster, Moy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Over 3,300 people attended the event over the weekend 9th and 10th March 2024.</i>
<p>Business Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Fortnightly newsletter was distributed to 380 businesses and 300 visitors</i>• <i>Live WhatsApp engagement to 186 businesses.</i>• <i>Delivered six in-house business mentoring workshops in addition to Tourism NI's TED programme to 120 tourism businesses</i>• <i>Four active clusters with up to 50 businesses collaboratively working with Invest NI</i>• <i>Hosted six meetings with Tourism Development Group meetings.</i>

