



06 April 2022

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Development Committee to be held in The Chamber, Magherafelt and by virtual means Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6EN on Wednesday, 06 April 2022 at 19:00 to transact the business noted below.

A link to join the meeting through the Council's remote meeting platform will follow.

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

Matters for Decision

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 5. Development Report | 3 - 8 |
| 6. Sports Representative Grants | 9 - 12 |
| 7. Extension of the Service Level Agreements with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council | 13 - 20 |
| 8. Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan | 21 - 40 |
| 9. Economic Development Report - OBFD | 41 - 182 |
| 10. Update on ESF Call 3 Match Funding Requests 2022/23 | 183 - 220 |

Matters for Information

11	Minutes of Development Committee held on Thursday 10 March 2022	221 - 232
12	Ageing Well Initiative Update	233 - 234
13	DfC Response - Notice to Quit Periods for Private Tenancies	235 - 256
14	Play Strategy Update	257 - 262

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. Health, Leisure & Wellbeing 2022/23 revised operating model
- 16. Environmental Health Information and Management Systems

Matters for Information

- 17. Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on Thursday 10 March 2022

Report on	Development Report
Date of Meeting	6 th April 2022
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Assistant Director of Development, Tony McCance, Head of Culture & Arts
Contact Officers	Philip Clarke - Community Services Manager, Oliver Morgan-Good Relations Manager, Michael McCrory - PCSP Manager, Caroline Sheehy – Burnavon Arts Manager, Brian McCormick Seamus Heaney Home Place Manager, Joanne Robinson – Hill of O'Neill/Ranfurly House 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	Community Grants - to agree the rolling grant awards - Local Community Festivals, and Good Relations.
1.2	Jubilee Community Arts Programme – to agree the tailored arts activities within the current community arts programme to recognise the Queens Platinum Jubilee.
1.3	Ukraine Refugee scheme – to update members on the Ukraine refugee scheme.
1.4	Development - to update on Development.
2.0	Background
2.1	Community Grants – Council annually delivers an open call for its main grants; and then delivers a number of rolling community grant programmes; Good Relations and Local Community Festivals.
2.2	Jubilee Community Arts Programme – Council as part of its community arts outreach programme delivers a range of activities to schools, community, and key target groups. Arts activities can be tailored to suit thematic areas or events.
2.3	Ukraine Refugee scheme – Council has been receiving update information on the Ukraine Refugee scheme and potential linkages to Council. Development Update - Community Support, Good Relations, Culture, Arts, Heritage, Strategic Community Development, and PCSP.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Community Grants – Rolling Grants 2021 – 2022 - The Good Relations grant is a rolling programme – An application for approval at £600 is recommended for 2021 –

	<p>2022. An application for approval for £600 is recommended for 2021 – 2022. The Community Festivals is a rolling programme - A number of applications for 2022 – 2023 have been submitted and assessed and are recommended for approval – 10 application's received and recommended for grant allocation totalling £6,195 See grant award recommendations in Appendix 1 for approval.</p>
3.2	Jubilee Community Arts Programme – to agree the arts activities within the current programme to recognise the Queens Platinum Jubilee.
3.3	Ukraine Refugee scheme – As updates are shared with Council these will be forwarded to members to keep them up to date. The last frequently asked questions was issued to members. Council communications section is now part of a NI government communications consortium to share key messages to the wider community. Council Development Department is part of a local Council support consortium to identify where Council can assist. The support of Council is still to be confirmed as processes develop.
3.4	<p>Development</p> <p>Community Support The community grants is currently open and support to groups is ongoing. Grant clinics have been held to support groups with applications. Officers continue to support groups in seeking other sources of funding for their development.</p> <p>Good Relations The 2021 – 22 Good Relations Plan is completing with final monitoring with TEO. The new agreed plan is being prepared for delivery.</p> <p>Peace IV Local Action Plan – the shared space projects across the towns – Dungannon, Coalisland, Magherafelt and Cookstown are at development stage ready to commence delivery to be completed by mid-June 2022.</p> <p>PCSP –Ongoing as guided by the PCSP Partnership.</p> <p>Burnavon Arts Centre, Seamus Heaney Homeplace, and Hill of O'Neill & Ranfurly House are continuing to deliver a range of activities, events and performances, as per brochures.</p> <p>Irish language development is ongoing with support to community groups taking place.</p> <p>The new heritage strategy development will be undertaken by the Rural Centre Clogher, who will lead on bringing in necessary expertise as required. Engagement sessions are being planned at present.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u> Good Relations awards £1,200 Community Festival awards £6,195</p>

	<u>Professional Support</u> None
4.2	<u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u> None
4.3	<u>Risk Management Implications</u> None
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Community Grants - to agree the rolling grant awards - Local Community Festivals, and Good Relations
5.2	Jubilee Community Arts Programme – to agree the tailored arts activities within the current community arts programme.
5.3	Ukraine Refugee scheme – to note the update on the Ukraine refugee scheme.
5.4	Development - to update on Development.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix 1 Grant awards. Appendix 2 - Jubilee Community Arts Programme

Appendix 1

Good Relations Grant – March 2022 (Maximum £1200)

No	Organisation Name	Aim	Title Of Event/project	Band	Request	Award
1	The Bridge NI	Community	Art for Hearts	6	£1,200	£600

Community Festivals April 2022 (Maximum £1200)

No	Organisation Name	Aim	Title Of Event/project	Band	Request	Award
1	Friends of Stewartstown Primary School	Community	Community Festival	5	£920	£555
2	Kildress Mothers Union	Community	Tea Party -Queens Platinum Jubilee	6	£1,390	£600
3	Dungannon Friends of Chest/Heart/Stroke	Community	Engagement & Awareness Event	3	£8,400	£960
4	Fivemiletown Royal British Legion	Community	Queens Jubilee Celebrations	5	£1,200	£720
5	Castledawson Village Community Ass.	Community	Fun Day 2022	6	£1,040	£520
6	Benburb Presbyterian Church	Church	Platinum Jubilee Party	6	£1,090	£545
7	Bonn Cultural Group Pomeroy	Culture	Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebration	6	£1,260	£600
8	Pomeroy Queen Elizabeth II (PTA)	Community	Platinum Jubilee Celebration	7	£1,500	£480
9	PTA (Orritor Primary School)	Community	Queen's Platinum Jubilee Fun Night	6	£1,100	£550
10	Dungannon Primary School PTA	Community	Jubilee BBQ and fun day	4	£950	£665

Total £6,195

Good Relations Grant – April 2022 (Maximum £1200)

No	Organisation Name	Aim	Title Of Event/project	Band	Request	Award
1	Naíscoil Charn Tóchair	Community	Easter Egg Hunt & Family Fun Day	6	£1,200	£600

Total £1,200

Appendix 2

Jubilee Community Arts Programme

Community Led Activity

Community Festivals

The local community groups are planning a range of festivals and 'get – togethers' in local areas to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee. Groups are currently working with community development officers to get funding support for the events. Groups are currently applying to Council small grants for their activities between the Festival Grant and the Small Community/Culture/Heritage/Arts Grant. These grants are a maximum of £1200

Tree Planting

Groups are seeking to plant trees in their local communities again as part of the Queens Platinum Jubilee celebrations and are receiving trees and support from the Queen's Green Canopy project to do so. These are being supplied to groups across the UK to support tree planting to recognise the Jubilee year. Support is being provided to groups via the Conservation volunteers. Jubilee Pollinator Garden - £100,000 is being made available from DAERA through the *Live Here Love Here* programme for a community to create a bespoke Pollinator Garden to highlight the importance of pollinators and create a legacy garden for future generations and to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee in 2022

Jubilee Celebrations

Groups are also working with community development staff to access other funding currently available for activities and events including:

Links established with the Lottery for groups to get support for up to £10,000 to join in with celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and with the Arts Council who are seeking arts-based Jubilee projects via their Small Grants Programme for the Platinum Jubilee Central Weekend on 5 June 2022.

Street Party Advice

The advice from government is being shared widely with groups across Mid Ulster to support their local activities and events including how to manage a festival and street party safely.

The government has published guidance on organising a street party. The guidance sets out helpful tips, advice and support on preparing for a party to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in 2022. More advice and support can be found at: <https://www.streetparty.org.uk/> and <https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/the-big-lunch>. The government's new Platinum Jubilee website, including an interactive map which will display all the events and activities that will be taking place.

Council Community Arts programmes

Council as part of its Arts outreach programme delivers a number of annual arts activities, performances and events; as part of this annual programme, it is proposed the following would be arranged /themed in recognition of the Queens Jubilee.

Burnavon Arts Centre – Schools art engagement - art poetry competition on the Queens Platinum Jubilee (open to all Mid Ulster primary schools) during May – June with the winning school displaying their art in the Burnavon over a weekend in June
Arts Programme budget

Hill of The O'Neill- family fun day event June 2022- family craft/art activities similar to Easter, Halloween, St Patrick's Day - 1pm – 5pm where families can come along and take part in arts and crafts, fun engagement activities for children
Hill of the O'Neill Events budget (similar events £3000 - £4000)

Bridewell – Exhibition – The Bridewell hosts a range of exhibitions throughout the year. It is proposed that a jubilee exhibition/archive would be hosted in June 2022
Bridewell budget

Chair Reception; The Chair as part of their role to host a Jubilee Reception in June at Burnavon, as part of the reception programme.
Chair reception budget

Report on	Sports Representative Grants
Date of Meeting:	6 th April, 2022
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Leigh Gilmore, Participation Manager Margaret McCammon Community Development Officer

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 present to Members the proposed community grant allocations for the range of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports Representative Grant - Team and Individuals (March 2022)
2.0	Background
2.1	The Sports Representative Grants (Individual and Team) is a continuous rolling programme.
2.2	Previously in March 2022, Members approved the recommendation for the period up to February, 2022.
2.3	Eligibility criteria compliance was completed by officers followed by grant programme assessment.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Detailed analysis of the proposed grant awards are attached with Appendix A for information.
3.2	Summary detail is as follows: The Sports Representative Grant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Individual application were received during this period but one of these was deemed ineligible as the event had already taken place Proposal to award a total of £425 in respect of the above 2 eligible applications.

4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial:</p> <p>The Sports Representative Grant is a continuous rolling programme with an annual allocation for 2021/2022 of £15,000; however £8,000 was allocated in June 2021 to Small Sports Grants leaving a revised budget of £7,000. £2,275 was approved in September 21, £1,650 In October 21, £650 in November 21; £200 in December 22, £250 in January 22, £475 in February 22, £850 in March 22 leaving a balance of £650. Should the grant recommendation contained within this report be approved, there will be a £225 underspend versus budget allocation for the period April 21 – March 22.</p>
	Human: Officer time.
	Risk Management: In line with Council policies and procedures.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of this report and give approval for the sports grant allocations as recommended within this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A: Grant recipients and amount of grant award.

Appendix A: Grant recipients and amount of grant award.

Sportsperson Representative on eligible cost to a max of £250

Name		Project Title	Amount Requested	Band	Amount Awarded
Zoe	Caskey	Winter Triathlon Championships	£620	2	£225
Flynn	Hasson	US Kids Irish Open Golf event	£350	3	£200
Total					£425

Band	Amount
1	£250.00
2	£225.00
3	£200.00
4	£175.00
5	£150.00

Ineligible Sports Representation

Lily	Gallagher	Ulster U16 Hockey	Applied after event had taken place – retrospective funding ineligible
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Report on	Extension of the Service Level Agreements with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Date of Meeting	6th April 2022
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Anne Caldwell, Principal Environmental Health Officer Monica McDonnell, Principal Environmental Health Officer

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 seek Members continued approval for the renewal of Service Level Agreements (SLA's) with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (ABC) for the provision of Tobacco Control and Health Inequalities work for the period April 2022 – March 2023.
2.0	Background
2.1	Due to the nature of funding for Health Inequalities and Tobacco Control work, an SLA agreement has been in place with Mid Ulster District Council and ABC since the review of Public Administration. Both these services are funded through the Public Health Agency (PHA).
2.2	For both SLA's, ABC are responsible for contract administration, line management of staff and for ensuring services are delivered within the Agreement and in accordance with the PHA contract and funding terms.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The details of the two SLA's are contained in Appendices A and B. The documents refer to objectives, reviews, performance management and reporting. Under the SLA, specific programmes of work are put in place in line with the PHA funding and PHA targets.
3.2	For Health Inequalities, this project seeks to engage with those individuals in the most deprived areas of the community, including those living in rural areas and tackling social isolation and inclusion. Signposting services are provided in relation to health and wellbeing within the community.
3.3	For Tobacco Control, targets include underage sales, test purchasing and regulation of the smoke free legislation. Under the Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, Tobacco Control Officers and/or Environmental Health Officers can visit premises throughout the District to check they are complying with the law, offer help and advice and take legal action against offenders (where necessary).

4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Fully funded through Public Health Agency.
	Human: Staff time – staff already in posts.
	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 and give approval for the signing of the renewal Service Level Agreements with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council for the provision of Tobacco Control and Health Inequalities work for the period April 2022 – March 2023.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A: SLA for Tobacco Control work
6.2	Appendix B: SLA for Health Inequalities work

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

TOBACCO CONTROL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY FUNDED SERVICE

2022/23

Between

**ARMAGH CITY BANBRIDGE
AND CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

AND

MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

April 2022

Service Level Agreement

Between

Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council (ACBCBC) and Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC).

(Hereafter referred to as the Agreement and the Stakeholders)

1.0 Background

The SLA provides a framework under which Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council may provide PHA Commissioned Tobacco Control Enforcement Services in the Mid Ulster area on behalf of Mid Ulster Council.

2.0 Shared Objectives

2.1 The Objectives of the Agreement are:

- To establish provision under which ACBCBC may provide PHA funded Tobacco Control services.
- To define the role, responsibilities and obligations of the stakeholders.

3.0 Review of the Service Level Agreement

3.1 The Stakeholders shall jointly review the Agreement after 12 months

3.2 The Review Process will be facilitated by ACBCBC and MUDC, 3 months prior to the end of the financial year.

3.3 The Stakeholders may propose at any time during the period to revise the Agreement, and agree any reasonable alteration or addition to or omission from the Agreement. In the event of such a revision being proposed, ACBCBC shall assess what resources, if any, will be involved, prior to agreeing to the revision.

4.0 Performance Review and Reporting

4.1 The Stakeholders shall jointly review performance on a quarterly basis.

4.2 Progress reports will be developed and forwarded by ACBCBC to the PHA and MUDC. Where significant variances are highlighted, a rationale will be provided.

4.3 ACBCBC shall ensure that necessary action agreed is taken to maintain a high level of service delivery.

5.0 Level of Service Delivered

5.1 ACBCBC is responsible for ensuring services are delivered within the Agreement and in accordance with the PHA Contract.

5.2 ACBCBC is responsible for ensuring services are delivered within budget.

5.3 The time spend for training delivered by ACBCBC is incorporated within the time spend.

5.4 Line Management for the Tobacco Control Officer will be provided by the Environmental Health Department of ACBCBC.

5.5 The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Food Control & Consumer Safety) will have oversight of the TCO work in Mid Ulster District Council area.

6.0 Health and Safety

6.1 Health and Safety of staff employed by ACBCBC is the responsibility of ACBCBC, however adequate provision must be made for ACBCBC staff based at or working within other Council Offices, to ensure that all legal obligations are met, thereby protecting all employees and Stakeholders.

6.2 ACBCBC employees must adhere to the Health and Safety requirements of MUDC, when working in that jurisdiction. This includes adherence to health and safety requirements specific to Council offices as well as in the delivery of services external to the Council offices such as lone working and site specific requirements.

6.3 The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Food Control & Consumer Safety), MUDC is responsible for informing ACBCBC employees of Health and Safety requirements relevant to their Department.

7.0 Resolution of Disputes

7.1 Any day to day matters which give cause for concern or dispute, which have the potential to impact on the fulfilment of requirements within the Agreement, and which cannot be resolved by the Officers directly involved, will be referred to Line Management.

7.2 If a situation arises which Line Managers are unable to resolve, it will be referred to the relevant Head of Department / Assistant Director.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF

ARMAGH CITY BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Head of Department, Environmental Health

MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

HEALTH INEQUALITIES PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY FUNDED SERVICE

2022/2023

Between

ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

AND

MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

March 2022

Service Level Agreement

Between

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council (ACBCBC) and Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC)

(Hereafter referred to as the Agreement and the Stakeholders)

1.0 Background

The SLA provides the framework under which ACBCBC may provide PHA commissioned Health Inequalities Services in the Mid-Ulster area with the Southern Health & Social Care Trust area on behalf of MUDC

2.0 Shared Objectives

2.1 The Objectives of the Agreement are:

- To establish provision under which ACBCBC may provide PHA funded Health Inequalities services
- To define the role, responsibilities and obligations of the stakeholders.

3.0 Review of the Service Level Agreement

3.1 The Stakeholders shall jointly review the Agreement after 12 months

3.2 The review process will be facilitated by ACBCBC and MUDC, 3 months prior to the end of the financial year

3.3 The stakeholders may propose at any time during the period to revise the Agreement and agree any reasonable alteration or addition or omission from the Agreement. In the event of such a revision being proposed, ACBCBC shall assess what resources, if any, will be involved, prior to agreeing the revision.

4.0 Performance Review and Reporting

4.1 The stakeholders shall review performance on a quarterly basis.

4.2 Progress Reports will be developed and forwarded by ACBCBC to the PHA and MUDC. Where significant variances are highlighted, a rationale will be provided.

4.3 ACBCBC shall ensure the necessary action agreed is taken to maintain a high level of service delivery.

5.0 Level of Service Delivered

5.1 ACBCBC is responsible for ensuring that services are delivered within the Agreement and in accordance with the PHA Contract and agreed Action Plan

5.2 ACBCBC is responsible for ensuring that services are delivered within budget.

5.3 The Health Improvement Officer (Inequalities) shall dedicate 18.5 hours per week to MUDC health Inequalities service delivery.

5.4 The time spend for training delivered by ACBCBC is incorporated with the time spend.

5.5 Line Management for the Health Improvement officer will be provided by the Community Development Department of ACBCBC

6.0 Health & Safety

6.1 Health & Safety of staff employed by ACBCBC is the responsibility of ACBCBC, however adequate provision must be made for ACBCBC staff based at or working within other Council offices, to ensure that all legal obligations are met, thereby protecting all employees and stakeholders.

6.2 ACBCBC employees must adhere to the health and safety requirements of MUDC, when working in the jurisdiction. This includes adherence to health and safety requirements specific to Council offices as well as in the delivery of services external to the Council offices such as lone working and site specific requirements.

6.3 The Head of Community Development, MUDC is responsible for informing ACBCBC employees of health and safety requirements relevant to their department.

7.0 Resolution of Disputes

7.1 Any day to day matters which give cause for concern or dispute, which have the potential to impact on the fulfilment of requirements within the Agreement, and which cannot be resolved by the officers directly involved, will be referred to the Line Management.

7.2 If a situation arises which Line Managers are unable to resolve, it will be referred to the relevant Head of Department/Director.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF

ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE & CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Head of Department, Community Development

MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Head of Environmental Health

Report on	Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan
Date of Meeting	6th April 2022
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Anne Caldwell, Principal Environmental Health Officer Conor Breslin, Principal Environmental Health Officer

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	This report is to provide an update on the Council's Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan and to seek approval for Council to participate in the ' <i>Walk This Way Initiative</i> ' in partnership with the Dogs Trust and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB).
1.2	Previously in May 2021, Members at the Environment Committee resolved to approve the Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan (minute reference E145/21). A copy is enclosed within Appendix A. In summary, the action plan includes a number of options for addressing the problems of littering and dog fouling across the Mid Ulster District with an enhanced focus on robust enforcement action. The plan has also been incorporated into the Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP 3) – to create cleaner neighbourhoods where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and the environment. Further details on the action plan is included within appendix A.
2.0	Background
2.1	Previously at a workshop held during January 2021, Members expressed the view that a 'Zero Tolerance' approach should be adopted towards unacceptable behaviours associated with littering and dog fouling and that enhanced enforcement action should be taken in relation to offences which are reported to or observed by Council Officers. This led on to the development of a draft Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan which was considered by Members at the Environment Committee in April 2021 (minute reference: E116/21) and following further engagement and amendment, the action plan was approved by Members at the Environment Committee in May 2021 (minute reference: E145/21).
2.2	As part of this decision, Members approved to pilot the use of a private contractor for enforcement for up to 12 months and subsequently a comprehensive overview was provided for Members consideration from the firm WISE (Waste Investigations, Support & Enforcement) Ltd. Thereafter, in October 2021, Members at the Environment Committee resolved to approve the terms of engagement and the associated Service Level Agreement for the 12 month pilot for WISE to be engaged for additional support in the area of addressing dog fouling and littering within the Mid Ulster District Council area.
2.3	This service requires the private contractors to be authorised by Mid Ulster District Council to provide a monitoring service across the district, issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) where necessary (£80 for a litter offence and £50 for a dog fouling offence) and where

	needed, forward information to Council in the event of non-payment of fixed penalty notices for further legal action. This pilot engagement permits the private contractor to work with no cost to Council. Furthermore, in November 2021, Members resolved that a reduced payment option for fines is not permitted during the 12 month pilot (minute reference: E275/21).
2.4	The approved Service Level Agreement ensures that WISE will patrol the whole Council area which includes the rural areas and rural roads. They have estimated that this would be between 10-15% of the overall patrol hours - any additional patrols and time spent on rural areas/roads can be facilitated and will be dependent on submitted intelligence and complaints from Members and the public.
2.5	To add further value to the Council's Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan, Mid Ulster Council have an opportunity to participate in the ' <i>Walk This Way Initiative</i> ' in partnership with the Dogs Trust and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB). The campaign will focus specifically on the issue of dog fouling, encouraging dog owners to carry waste disposal bags with them and highlight the location of nearby bins where dog foul can be suitably disposed of.
3.0	Main Report
3.0	<p><u>Targeted Enforcement Pilot Update</u></p> <p>A team of Council authorised WISE officers commenced operations within the District on 18th January 2022 and Mid Ulster District Council became the 4th Council in Northern Ireland to engage WISE for a 12 month pilot. The team of authorised WISE officers working within the District are now largely settled and all come from a process of local recruitment. The team of 5 litter enforcement officers undertake patrols, working in shifts and provide a 7 day a week operation including mornings and evenings.</p>
3.1	Through the pilot, WISE officers are focussed on providing a visible deterrent and the detection of offences, which also incorporates intelligence and complaint led patrolling across the District. In addition to targeted visits from WISE staff, the areas continue to be monitored by Mid Ulster District Council Enforcement Officers in addition to their other duties.
3.2	From the commencement of the pilot on 18 th January 2022 to the 22 nd March 2022 (9 weeks), there have been 651 FPN's served. Of the 651 FPN's issued, 62% have been paid to date. As part of Councils robust approach to littering offences, should the offender not respond to the 2 reminders issued by the WISE data system, case files on these offenders will be prepared by Council for legal proceedings through the Magistrate's Court for the original littering offence.
3.3	As this pilot has only been operating for 9 weeks, the first tranche of these cases are being prepared and officers from the Environmental Health service will work with the Councils Legal team to support this significant aspect of enforcement arising from the pilot. It is anticipated that the income proportion to Council from the issue FPN's by WISE can meet the cost of the administration of legal proceedings. Further details on the pilot to date is included within Appendix B.
3.4	As well as general patrols, the team will also engage in 'intelligence-led' work, targeting areas of complaint or those identified as litter hotspots. Within the first 9 weeks of operations, there have been 24 hotspots reported with requests for targeted patrolling to be undertaken. Patrols have taken place at 21 of these hotspots to date with educational talks given to people encountered on route. The remaining hotspots are scheduled for visit.

3.5	All those that have been issued a FPN have the right of representation directly to the company to challenge the issue. Details are provided on the FPN and on the Councils website: https://www.midulstercouncil.org/litterenforcement
3.6	For those who do not have internet access, an address for written representations can be provided.
3.7	Should members of the public be dis-satisfied with any element of the service, their first line complaint will be via WISE customer service agents with information being reported back to Council where relevant. Within the first 9 weeks of operations, there has been total of 26 representations made to WISE by citizens regarding the service of FPN's which represents a total of 4% of the total of 651 FPN's served to date. These were mostly relating to a request for extra time to pay an FPN that they had been issued, or saying that they didn't understand the specifics of the offence committed. Of this total of 26 representations, 18 were not upheld and 6 have been accepted with the FPN's duly rescinded. The remaining 2 are being processed at present. Should members of the public still be dis-satisfied with the outcome of their complaint via WISE, the matter is referred back to Council to implement the process as per stage 2 of the Council's complaint policy. To date, no stage 2 processes have had to be instigated by Council.
3.8	A range of communication messages and a variety of media will be used to continue to advise the public of the pilot and that littering is an offence.
3.9	Whilst operating on behalf of the Council visibly patrolling the District, the officers from WISE have been able to offer support to members of the public in various situations alongside their enforcement duties.
3.10	Members are reminded that should they wish to accompany any of the officers on patrol to observe first-hand how they engage with the public, that may be arranged.
3.11	Council officers will continue to work with WISE officers targeting litter hotspots and promoting anti-litter initiatives.
	<u>Walk This Way Initiative</u>
3.13	To add further value to the Council's Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan, Mid Ulster Council have an opportunity to participate in the 'Walk This Way Initiative' in partnership with the Dogs Trust and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB). The campaign will focus specifically on the issue of dog fouling, encouraging dog owners to carry waste disposal bags with them and highlight the location of nearby bins where dog foul can be suitably disposed of. Further details on the pilot is included within Appendix C.
3.14	"Walk this Way" involves creating a dog-friendly walking route in a park, nature reserve, coastal, or woodland area. The route will facilitate more opportunities for owners to suitably dispose of dog waste by improving the sites bin-infrastructure and prominence.
3.15	The dog-walking route is plotted, and highlighted on welcome maps at entrances. Prominent signage and colourful route markers are fixed at regular intervals along the route. Bin stickers are placed on all bins on the route to remind owners that any litterbin can accept dog waste.
3.16	Route markers are positioned every 200 metres to ensure walkers are on the correct path. It is ensured that bins are available at every kilometre along the route, allowing ample opportunity for correct disposal.

3.17	The partners have asked Council to nominate one site for this study and the proposal is to nominate the Lough Fea walk near Cookstown. This is centrally located and is a popular dog walking spot. It is also one of the more significant dog fouling hotspots in the District. Should this prove to be successful in reducing levels of dog fouling in this area similar initiatives may be undertaken in other hotspot areas throughout the District.
3.18	The initiative involves a 4-week baseline study of the amount of fouling along the route. It is proposed to commence this scheme in May and similar follow up studies will be carried out once the signage is in place in both June and October. The route is proposed to be cleansed three times per week and a final report will be received from the Dogs Trust on completion.
3.19	In areas where this initiative has previously taken place, "Walk this Way" have reported that not only have they evidenced reduced dog-fouling, but also increased the perceived value of the area. In fact, through recent study's, 63% of site users agreed that the site had become a more enjoyable place to be, and 60% became more aware how the local authority / site owner was trying to make improvements to the area.
3.20	An update will be brought for members attention on completion of the study.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial: WISE will retain 90% of the income generated and pay Mid Ulster District Council 10% of all income generated at the end of months 3, 6, 9 and 12. There may be additional legal costs incurred for prosecutions in the event of non-payment of fixed penalty notices however, it is anticipated that the income proportion to Council from the issue FPN's by WISE can meet the cost of the administration of legal proceedings.</p> <p>The cost of the "Walk this Way" initiative is £300.</p>
	<p>Human: Staff liaison time with the external enforcement contractor.</p> <p>Staff time for the "Walk this Way" initiative – planning, erecting the signage/route markers and bin stickers. The site is currently cleaned three times per week so there will be no additional staff resource although there will be additional time to monitor fouling for the duration of the study.</p>
	Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant 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	<p>To note the contents of this update report on the Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan and give approval for Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the 'Walk This Way Initiative' in partnership with the Dogs Trust and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) at an initial cost of £300.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	<p>Appendix A – Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan</p> <p>Appendix B – Targeted Enforcement Pilot Update 18th Jan 2022 – 22nd March 2022</p> <p>Appendix C - Details of Walk This Way Initiative</p>

Appendix A – Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan

Private Enforcement

Actions	April 2021 Update	Further Action Required	March 2022 Update
Private Enforcement Officers to be considered across MUDC.	Initial contact has been made with a private company that operates a neutral cost contracting arrangement . Information to date outlines a 12-hour monitoring programme 7 days per week operating across the district. There is no cost to MUDC as Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) income is kept by the company. MUDC would authorise the staff from the private company and MUDC would progress with prosecution decisions in the event of non-payment using the supporting information from the private company. There are some pilot schemes starting with other NI councils. Contact details have been identified if decision is taken to move forward in this direction.	If approved, make further contact with the private company . Wrap round comms. Action plan depending on decisions taken	WISE Enforcement have commenced work on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council on 22nd January 2022. In nine week period from 18th January to 22nd March 651 FPN's issued.

Enforcement

Actions	April 2021 Update	Further Action Required	March 2022 Update
Inhouse monitoring and enforcement by Clean Neighbourhood Officers in set areas across MUDC. Programmed monitoring of agreed areas with heavier footfall across the district such as town centers, shopping areas, drive through food outlets.	Information on hotspot areas already available from complaints received. Monitoring programmes are in place across the district based on complaints received, however these would be changed in line with the new focus. Time allocated by CNO to cover PH matters including litter has been increased on the weekly rota. Specific public and Councillor complaints won't be addressed if the area hasn't significant footfall that will result in a FPN.	Monthly FPN targets to be set for CNOs. Currently when 4 posts are filled FTE 0.8. Potential redeployment of furloughed staff in short term to monitor town centres, raise awareness . Challenging monthly FPN targets set	Target set to double FPN's served by Council Enforcement Officers to 50 FPN's. To date (April 21 - March 22) 56 FPN's have been served.
Inhouse monitoring and enforcement by Parks Inspectors in MUDC owned parks. Signage in place re fouling and byelaws e.g dogs on leads indesignated areas	Names of the 3 Park Inspectors and 2 others have been forwarded for authorisation. Some Parks staff already in possession of vehicle recording books for forwarding information to EH	3 Parks Inspectors to be authorised and trained in enforcement matters. If EH in receipt of complaints close to Council parks then allocated to Parks staff for enforcement . Challenging monthly FPN targets to be set.	On hold pending review of JD's and WISE pilot enforcement programme
Monitoring on rural roads by ES staff through forwarding details of any identifying material when cleaning up fly-tipping incidents.	To date minimal referrals from flytipping material being cleaned up.	ES to continue to provide any/all evidence found in fly-tipped waste to help identify offenders and possible prosecution.	Environmental Health continue to react to information regarding fly-tipping from both public and Env. Services.
In-house monitoring by ES staff to assist enforcement	Litter referral books provided to Environmental Services	Referral books to be provided to relevant ES officers and supervisors. Dash cams to be trialed on some ES vehicles. Consideration of incentive scheme to "reward" any employee (excluding authorised officers)	Review ongoing and proposals to be considered. Litter books provided by Env Health. More available if needed
Reporting from the public needs to be readily accessible.	Contact has been made with a number of APP suppliers and information being compiled mainly on functionality, compatibility, usability and cost.	Decision to be taken on the appropriateness of various APPS. Integration costs to be considered by IT .	Decision made to continue with th current Council Binovation App. This has continued.

ENGINEERING

Actions	April 2021 Update	Further Action Required	March 2022 Update
Agreed target response to clean areas subject to litter/dog fouling complaints to reduce further reporting and help influence behaviour from others using that area.	Existing schedule in place	Rebalance of cleansing resources on main approach roads into towns to address the increased levels of (primarily takeaway) litter due to lockdown• Utilisation of traffic management contractor to permit cleaning of dangerous rural roads	Hotspot area referred to ES for cleansing when complaint made to Env. Health.
Support for local community clean-ups e.g. Big Spring Clean events	Support provided by loan of litter pickers, provision of refuse bags and the removal/disposal of rubbish	12 No. clean-ups supported to date in 2021. Encourage groups to register with Adopt a Spot Scheme to obtain own litter pickers, PPE etc	Ongoing

Education

Actions	April 2021 Update	Further Action Required	March 2022 Update
Continued Live Here Love here programme (LHLH).	New App being developed re 'Adopt A Spot' areas, whereby local groups/ charities/ businesses/ individuals can choose an area e.g. street/park/beach and commit to cleaning it 4 times per year. It also encourages businesses to clean up around their businesses. Budget for LHLH already agreed through Council for next year. Billboard signs and TV campaign being rolled out currently.Ongoing support for local community clean-ups including loan of litter pickers, provision of bags and collection of rubbish or further reliance on LHLH programme	Close links developed between ES and LHLH to maximise effect.	Members at the Environment Committee in Dec 2021 resolved to provide £21,000 per annum in funding for another 3 years, 50% of which comes back into MUDC through a small grants programme. Further billboard advertising campaign March 2022- with focus on cigarette litter
Increased financial support of LHLH programme enabling more local groups to receive financial assistance. Base level of funding back into community grants is approx 50%	LHLH will manage a larger small grants programme with management fee. There were at least twice as many applicants for the small grants programme this year	LHLH can be contacted to increase small grants programme	As per above. MUDC £10,500 small grants programme for 2021 has been assessed with 24 successful applications.
Green dog walker initiative or similar Mid Ulster branded researched.	Initiative used by other councils with set materials. It is a pledge to be a responsible dog owner and encourage others to be also.		On hold pending review - as promotion may hamper Council promotion of Don't Mess Mid Ulster message.
Continuation of Education Programme in Primary schools.	Further linkages to be made with re-cycling officers educational programmes to maximise coverage.	This will not take place in the immediate future due to COVID -19	Pending review and resumption with agreement with schools (restrictions imposed by Covid19)
Corporate "rewards" initiative	In conjunction with the Corporate H&WB programme, permit incentive for office based staff to patrol set routes at lunchtimes	Needs to be incorporated into a pilot scheme to assess uptake at each office location	Review ongoing and proposals to be considered
Review of current signage and informative messaging to general public regarding litter and dog control in designated public parklands and openspace.	Current MUDC standard Litter and Dog Foul/Dog Control Signage deployed across public parks and openspaces.	Introduction of portable HOT SPOT temporary signage to focus on problem areas. Introduction of path stencils message to play areas and public paths. PR campaign to reinforce the agreed message.	Review ongoing and proposals to be considered
Erection of watching you signs for fixed period in areas. Removal of signs at end of fixed period.	More signs have been ordered awaiting erection at set locations.	Assessment of signage across the district which is proportionate to the areas. Launch of new design of new illegal dumping signage for erection at hot spots.May wish to consider the effectiveness of signage and associated spend.	These continue to be deployed at hot spot areas.
Promote key messaging on ES vehicles and litter bins	"Don't Mess with Mid Ulster" livery on 5 No.refuse collection vehicles. "Bag It & Bin It" labels placed on all litter bins (exc. EIS bins)	Livery to be placed on new refuse collection vehicles	Review ongoing and proposals to be considered
Continue to support KNIB Eco Schools Programme	Recycling Officers support schools with Eco Schools registration through joint working on waste, litter etc.	Currently 44% of schools have Green Flag status - aim for 50%	Ongoing

Appendix B – Targeted Enforcement Pilot Update 18th Jan 2022 – 22nd March 2022

In accordance with the pilot working arrangements, WISE officers have been active throughout the DEAs in the District. During previous Committee discussions it has been detailed that WISE have committed to patrol each DEA and to respond to intelligence provided by the Environmental Health Officers in relation to locations and times where offences were likely to occur. This seeks to maximise the efficiency of this element of the service and weekly reports are passed to WISE containing information received from elected members and the general public on targeted “hotspots”.

The below table depicts the numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices issued per DEA area and as anticipated, the majority of these are within the busier urban centres where footfall is much higher which thereby translates in higher likelihood of an offence occurring. These tend to be the areas where large numbers of individuals visit for retail, dining, relaxation, education and therefore a high amenity value should be placed on the cleanliness and appearance of these areas.

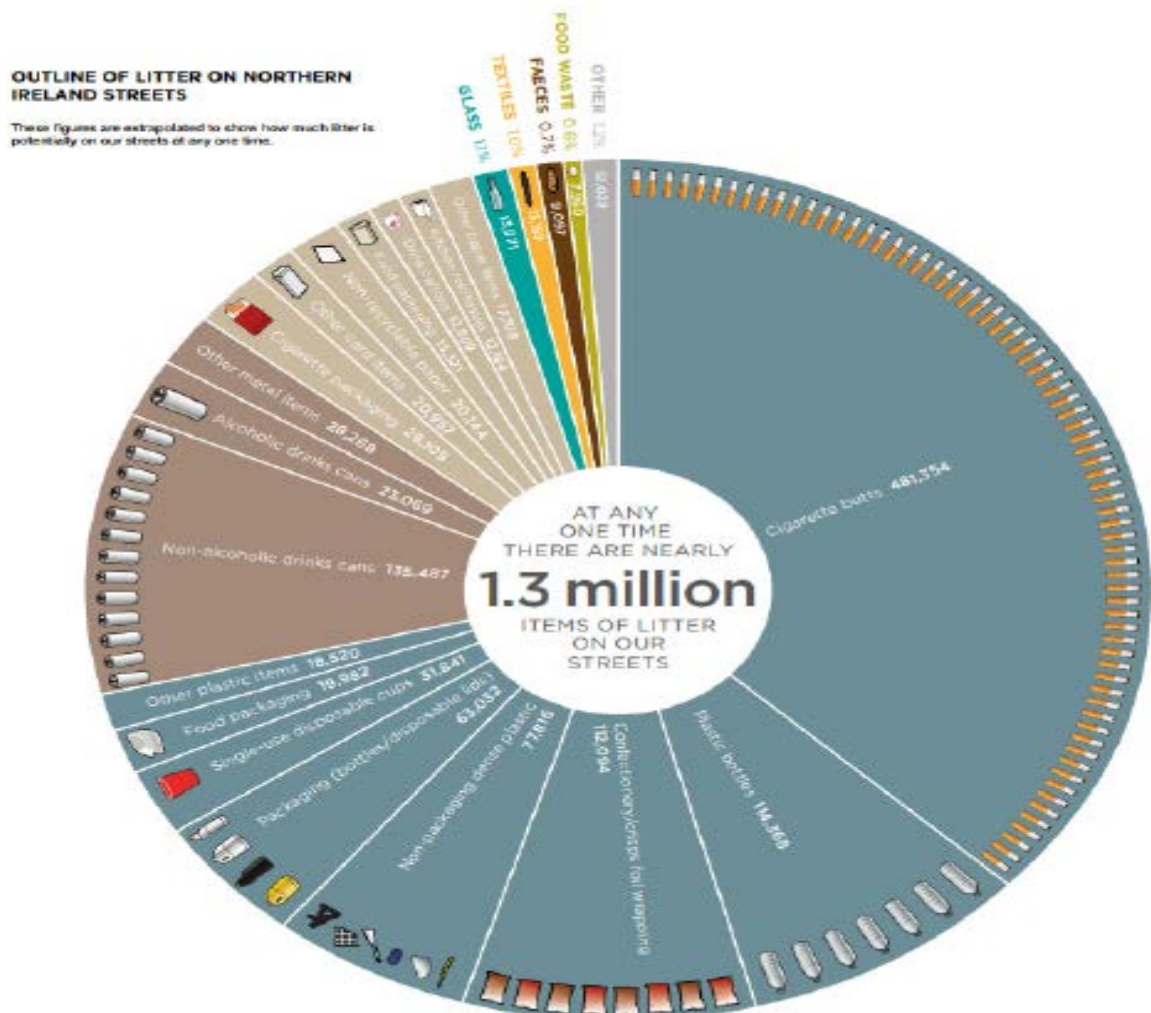
It should also be noted that where a particular town/village does not appear with having a Fixed Penalty Notice recorded, this does not mean that the area is not subject to patrols, but rather, that during the time patrolling took place, no offences were detected.

DEA	FPN's Issued (18.01.22 – 22.03.22)
Carntogher	6 (0.9%)
Clogher Valley	4 (0.6%)
Cookstown	307 (47.2%)
Dungannon	266 (40.9%)
Magherafelt	56 (8.6%)
Moyola	3 (0.4%)
Torrent	9 (1.5%)
Total:	651

The types of litter that offenders are observed dropping or leaving comprises a wide range of different types with the majority relating to smoking. Factors such as the ban on smoking in indoor locations, the tendency towards being a stationary activity, the readily observable nature of the activity itself, failure by smokers to realise that smoking components are in fact litter are all likely to be factors. It is important to recall that cigarette litter including butts are a significant source of plastic-based litter which detracts from the cleanliness of the District, may be ingested by wildlife and/or may degrade into micro-plastics which ultimately causes wider environmental damages.

Offence Type	Offence Type Count	Percentage (%)
Dog Fouling-Dog Fouling	5	0.77
Littering-Chewing Gum	1	0.15
Littering-Cigarette Butt	574	88.17
Littering-Fast Food Related	3	0.46
Littering-Other Litter	9	1.38
Littering-Packaging	7	1.08
Littering-Rolled up cigarette	48	7.37
Littering-Snack Packs	1	0.15
Littering-Soft Drink Can	3	0.46
Total:	651	100%

The Litter Composition Report 2019/20 compiled by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful produced the graphic below which highlights the categories of littered items and the amount of litter that could be on our streets at any one time and these benchmarked figures are broadly in keeping with the proportion and type of Fixed Penalty Notice issued with the WISE Officers to date within Mid Ulster District Council.



Details of the programme and a series of FAQs are available on the Council website at www.midulstercouncil.org/litterenforcement

What will the WISE team of enforcement officers do?

The 5-strong team of litter enforcement officers will undertake patrols across Mid Ulster, working in shifts and providing a 7 day a week operation including mornings and evenings.

The team's focus will be on issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for littering offences, including dog fouling.

As well as general patrols, the team will also engage in 'intelligence-led' work, targeting areas of complaint or those identified as litter hotspots.

What authority do the enforcement officers have?

They have the same authority as the Council's staff and will undertake their enforcement work in line with legislation and the Council's Enforcement Policy.

The law gives the officers the power to ask for a name and address but not to detain a person. It is an offence not to give your name and address if an authorised officer demands it from you or to provide a false name and address.

The officers will show their credentials if asked for them.

Are the enforcement officers trained and vetted?

Yes. The enforcement officers are all vetted. They all receive bespoke, specialist training and work under the supervision of a training officer before they begin to work independently.

Do Enforcement Officers wear body worn cameras?

Yes. These are used to protect the public and the officers themselves, as they record the interaction between the officers and members of the public.

Cameras are only switched on at the point when officers introduce themselves to someone and they will explain that the camera is in operation. The camera is turned on during the conversation only. The recording can then be used as evidence in the event of a dispute or a future prosecution.

Do the enforcement officers have a quota or a target for how many Fixed Penalty Notices they issue?

No. There are no quotas. Enforcement officers are paid an hourly rate and do not receive bonuses.

What are fixed penalty notices?

A Fixed Penalty Notice is like an on-the-spot fine.

Enforcement Officers will issue a notice to anyone they see who drops litter and does not pick it up (including cigarette butts) and who allows their dog to foul without cleaning up.

How much is a Fixed Penalty Notice?

The Fixed Penalty Notice for littering is £80 and for dog fouling is £50.

How do I pay a Fixed Penalty Notice?

The Fixed Penalty Notice and any correspondence received will contain all of the information to allow you to make a payment.

You can pay:

Online

By automated telephone service: 0330 333 4382

By cash: by taking the slip to a Post Office or PayZone outlet and scanning the barcode.

Can I appeal a Fixed Penalty Notice?

There are no formal grounds of appeal against a Fixed Penalty Notice.

If you have received a Notice and do not agree that you have committed the offence, then the next step for the Council is to take a prosecution case.

At this point the court will decide, based on all the evidence, whether an offence was committed and whether a penalty should or should not be imposed.

The associated fine and potential court costs are likely to be much greater than the cost of paying the Notice.

If an offender wishes to make a complaint online:

Online

If an offender wishes to contact Operational Support (Admin) they can do so:

By email: mudc@wasteenforcement.co.uk

By phone: 0333 577 2949

Does there have to be signage in place warning about littering or dog fouling to allow a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued?

No. No signage is required to allow a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

Why should I pay a Fixed Penalty Notice when there are no litter bins?

Everyone is responsible for their own litter and you should carry your waste home or wait until you come across the nearest litter bin to dispose of it properly. No bin is not an excuse for littering or dog fouling.

Do Enforcement Officers issue warnings?

No. There are no warnings given. If an enforcement officer witnesses the offence, a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued.

Are there any exemptions?

Anyone who is under 18 will not be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

I have limited funds and I will not be able to pay within the 14 days. What can I do?

You can contact us to discuss options:

Online

By phone: 0333 577 2949

By email: mudc@wasteenforcement.co.uk

What happens if I refuse to pay the fixed penalty?

If you refuse to pay a fixed penalty, the Council will take a prosecution against you.

Additional FAQ's (non-website)

Do the litter enforcement team have the power to detain anyone? What guidance are they following in terms of issuing on the spot fines – ie. is the first option to fine or to rectify the issue? Does the definition of littering include accidental? Can people be given the opportunity to pick up the litter/dog mess to avoid the fine when approached by prosecuting officer?

The enforcement officers have the same authority as Mid Ulster District Council enforcement officer, operate under the Council's Enforcement Policy with the remit to issue fixed penalty notices where they observe someone dropping litter and failing to pick it up – this includes allowing a dog to foul and not cleaning the mess. The key point is 'failing to pick it up'. If someone drops litter accidentally, and picks it up there and then (as opposed to walking away from the litter they have dropped) they would not therefore be subject to a fixed penalty notice. In terms of the legislation, the offence is to deposit and leave litter. The officer need to be satisfied that they have sufficient evidence that an offence has been committed and their training specifies that they should not approach the alleged offender until they are satisfied of this. The officers have to provide statements with every FPN issued to confirm that the officer witnessed the littering and that the litter was left in a place to which the legislation applies. (Article 3(1) of The Litter (Northern Ireland) Order 1994).

The law gives the officer power to demand a name and address but not to detain. It's an offence not to give the officers a name and address if an authorised officer requests it or to provide a false name and address. The officers need to show their credentials if asked for them.

What exactly does the legislation say and is there a difference between littering/dog foul on private and public land?

Below are relevant extracts from The Litter (Northern Ireland) Order 1994

Offence of leaving litter

3.—(1) If any person throws down, drops or otherwise deposits in, into or from **any place open to the air**, and leaves, any thing whatsoever in such circumstances as to cause, or contribute to, or tend to lead to, the defacement by litter of any such place, he shall, subject to paragraph (2), be guilty of an offence.

(2) It shall be a defence for a person charged with an offence under paragraph (1) to prove that the depositing and leaving of the thing was—

(a) authorised by law, or

(b)done with the consent of the owner or other person or authority having control of the place in or into which that thing was deposited.

(3) A person who is guilty of an offence under this Article shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale.

(4) A district council, with a view to promoting the abatement of litter, may take such steps as the council thinks appropriate for making the effect of paragraph (3) known to the public in its district.

Offence of permitting dogs to foul

4.—(1) Subject to paragraph (4), if any person, being a person in charge of a dog, permits the dog to deposit its excrement in any place prescribed by regulations he shall, subject to paragraph (2), be guilty of an offence.

(2) It shall be a defence for a person charged with an offence under paragraph (1) to prove that—

(a)he took all reasonable precautions and exercised due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence; or

(b)he made a reasonable attempt to remove the excrement.

(3) A person who is guilty of an offence under this Article shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.

(4) Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a blind person in charge of a dog kept and used wholly or mainly for his guidance or to a stock person in charge of a working dog being used for droving livestock.

(5) In paragraph (4) “livestock” has the same meaning as in Article 2(2) of the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983(1).

Does the legislation allow WISE and also Council’s own employed enforcement officers to go onto private land and issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)?

Yes – legislation refers to “open to the air/public”

If an FPN is issued to someone on private land, do they have to pay? Are they pursued through prosecution if non-payment?

Yes – as with the previous Q&A above. Complaints process is via WISE but in line with Council’s enforcement policy. Council officers cant withdraw an FPN if an offence has been committed and evidenced. Should the person refuse to pay it may result in prosecution and would be a matter for the courts to determine payment/non-payment.

Is the person who has committed the offence expected to pay the fine there and then? What is the timeframe in which they are permitted to pay?

No – there is a 14 day period in which to pay and WISE also issue 2 reminders during this time. The Fixed Penalty Notice and any correspondence issued will contain all of the information to allow a person to make a payment.

Ways to pay are:

Online

By automated telephone service: 0330 333 4382

By cash: by taking the slip to a Post Office or PayZone outlet and scanning the barcode.

If a person has limited funds or will not be able to pay within the 14 days they can contact WISE to discuss options to include a staggered payment plan. Contact details are:

Online

By phone: 0333 577 2949

By email: mudc@wasteenforcement.co.uk

Appendix C - Details of Walk This Way Initiative

Walk this Way

Calling Project Partners!

Dogs Trust, the UK's largest dog welfare charity are looking for partners to take part in the successful dog-fouling intervention - Walk this Way!

This proven and evidenced project aims to reduce dog fouling incidents by nudging owners to correctly dispose of their dog's waste. Project partners, selected through an application process, will run this innovative project to help keep popular dog walking areas free from dog mess and create cleaner, more enjoyable spaces for everyone to enjoy.

A Foul Problem

Dog fouling is seen as one of the biggest littering nuisances blighting public spaces and consistently one of the highest sources of complaints to local authorities. Whether you own a dog or not, dog poo impacts on us all.

To better understand the issue and identify the behaviors contributing to the problem, we polled 2,000 dog owners and discovered that:

- 13% of owners admitted to leaving bagged dog poo behind (either accidentally or deliberately)
- Of those, 54% said that they had done so because there were no bins nearby
- Other reasons given were forgetting to collect on the way back; bins being full; and not wanting to carry it around

About Walk this Way

With poor bin infrastructure identified as a leading barrier to dog owners correctly disposing of their dog waste, Walk this Way was born.

First piloted with just 6 partners in [2017](#), we achieved positive results by reducing fouling instances by 38%. Working with 15 local authority and landowner partners in [2018](#), a reduction of 40% was achieved. We have bigger, more ambitious plans for 2022, which we would like you to be a part of.

Walk this Way has since gone on to win two awards in its application of using behaviour change techniques in tackling dog fouling: winning first place at the Health Psychology in Public Health Annual Conference and the highly commended award in the 'Nudge for Good' category at Nudgestock 2018, the festival of behavioural science.

What will the project look like?

Walk this Way will involve creating dog-friendly walking routes in a park, nature reserve, coastal, or woodland area. These routes will facilitate more opportunities for owners to correctly dispose of dog waste by improving your sites bin-infrastructure and salience.

We will provide you with the materials needed to plot your dog walking routes, including welcome signage, a selection of colourful route markers, and bin stickers/ wraps to remind owners that any litter bin can be used to dispose of dog waste.

Welcome signs at site entrances will greet visitors and introduce this dog-friendly approach to eliminating dog fouling. Your walking routes will be mapped, and colour coded (dependant on length) and displayed on your

welcome signs. Route markers will be positioned at every 200 metres to ensure walkers are on the correct path. Additional bins, provided by you, will be placed at every kilometre, allowing ample opportunity for correct disposal. Furthermore, your newly positioned bins won't be missed with their new, eye-catching graphics.

Suitable Sites

Walk this Way has been designed to be effective across larger sites with multiple walking routes and where opportunities to correctly dispose of dog waste are less frequent.

Previously successful sites included large-scale parks, coastal/ river walks, and even a newly developed old mineral line! As you will be required to install a welcome sign(s) and route markers, you will need to identify if there are any existing features within the site which they can be affixed to. In the absence of suitable existing features, you will need to install wooden posts or equivalent to affix the sign(s) and markers.

What is involved

We would work together, in partnership, for a total of 10 months to cover; baseline research, (1 month) installation of the intervention (approx. 1 month) and monitoring of its impact (intermittent throughout the remaining 8 months, depending on your availability). Throughout this period, we will offer support and guidance to help you successfully deliver and measure the success of the project.

Date	Task
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners to attend an online briefing session Partners to have planned walking routes, bin allocation and provided route map for welcome sign(s) Partners to have ordered <i>Walk This Way</i> materials Intervention materials received from Dogs Trust
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners to begin pre-monitoring baseline data collection (w/c 2nd May for four consecutive weeks) Baseline monitoring ends (w/c 23rd May) Installation of <i>Walk This Way</i> materials, bins and walking routes defined (w/c 30th May)
June - July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners to begin monitoring post installation (Phase 1) (w/c 6th June for four consecutive weeks) Phase 1 Monitoring ends (w/c 27th June) All data to be sent to DT for analysis (w/c 4th July) Phase 1 Perception surveys (as described in table below) to be carried out by Dogs Trust (w/c 18th July). All partners will be notified in advance. Phase 1 Partner interviews to be conducted during w/c 25th July
September – November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2 monitoring begins (w/c 26th September for four consecutive weeks) Phase 2 monitoring ends (w/c 24th October) All data to be sent to DT for analysis (w/c 31st October) Phase 2 Perception surveys (as described in table below) to be carried out by Dogs Trust (w/c 7th November). All partners will be notified in advance. Phase 2 Partner interviews to be conducted during w/c 14th November
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full analysis and report will be written of the project by Dogs Trust (date TBC) Promotion of results to local press and national press (date TBC)

Monitoring and evaluation framework

The monitoring and evaluation aspect of the project will be managed by Dogs Trust. All partners will receive a full summary of results following completion of the intervention.

Monitoring activity	Responsible organisation	Timings
<p>Dog fouling counts</p> <p>Partners will count all instances of dog fouling and littered bagged dog poo three times a week for 4 weeks before (baseline monitoring) and 4 weeks after (Phase 1 monitoring).</p> <p>Partners will be required to carry a second phase of monitoring (phase 2) 6 months after the materials have been installed over 4 consecutive weeks.</p> <p>Partners will record this data in a form provided by Dogs Trust and submit this by the dates indicated on the form. The aim of the dog fouling monitoring is to assess the impact of the intervention on dog fouling levels at the locations.</p>	Partners – all locations	<p>Counts to be conducted (three times a week) from w/c 2nd May to w/c 27th June (baseline and Phase 1 monitoring phases) – exact dates will be negotiated with partners.</p> <p>Counts to be conducted (three times a week) for phase 2 monitoring from w/c 26th September to w/c 24th October – exact dates will be negotiated with partners.</p>
<p>Perception Surveys</p> <p>In selected areas, and to assess the perceived effectiveness of the intervention, Dogs Trust will undertake market research across some sites.</p>	Dog's Trust	<p>Phase 1 perception surveys to be carried out by Dogs Trust (w/c 18th July). All partners will be notified in advance.</p> <p>Phase 2 perception surveys to be carried out by Dogs Trust (w/c 7th November). All partners will be notified in advance.</p>
<p>Partner interviews</p> <p>A short semi-structured telephone interview with all partners, conducted by Dogs Trust. The aim of interviews is to identify partners' views on what worked well in the project, what could be improved and their observations of impacts.</p>	Dog's Trust and all Partners	<p>Phase 1 Partner interviews will take place during w/c 25th July following submission of phase 1 monitoring data</p> <p>Phase 2 Partner interviews will take place during w/c 14th November following submission of phase 2 monitoring data</p>

		Dog's Trust will book the interviews in with each partner in advance.
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Partner Requirements:

To ensure your project runs successfully we need each partner to commit to:

1. At least 10 months for project lead-in time, intervention installation and monitoring
2. Provide a nominated contact to manage and monitor the project throughout the intervention period (additional monitoring staff may be required)
3. Provide communications contact to support the promotion of the intervention (all promotional materials will be provided)
4. To monitor dog fouling instances both before and after the installation of the intervention using the methodology and tools provided
5. To attend an online briefing session before the project commences
6. To bring together different stakeholders required to manage the project locally e.g. the Council, cleansing contractors, local business groups and encourage local support
7. To help create and define walking routes across your chosen location
8. To install Walk This Way installation materials and provide additional general waste bins along walking routes, ensuring ample and even distribution
9. To participate in a post intervention interview
10. One-off fee of £300 to cover the cost of site materials

What we will provide:

1. 'Walk this Way' intervention materials (route signage, sign, and markers)
2. Pre-intervention training
3. Guidance and support throughout the intervention
4. Monitoring and evaluation framework
5. PR and digital support (template press release and digital assets)
6. Evaluation report
7. Our passion and enthusiasm to eliminate dog poo from your chosen site!

Still undecided?

Walk this Way not only reduced dog fouling instances, but also increased the perceived value of the area. In fact, 63% of site users agreed that the site had become a more enjoyable place to be, and 60% became more aware how the local authority / site owner was trying to make improvements to the area.

And if you still need some convincing, we will finish on some lovely testimonials from our previous partners.

"The intervention exceeded my expectations as we had a lot of positives"

"Whilst I was out [at the site] one afternoon, one lady told me she was using the walks not only to get her dog fit, but to also get herself fit. Her friend is also doing the same."

"We're already thinking about running it in another area and seeing if it would work in different areas."

"We would be interested in running it in more locations because we have seen such a good reduction."

How do I get involved?

If you're committed to eliminating dog fouling instances and have a site in mind, we would love to hear from you! Please complete the Expression of Interest form to provide us with more information on your site suitability.

Dogs Trust in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful



Report on	1. Sperrins Partnership Project 2. Sperrins Walking Festival 3. Covid19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme 4. Consultation Response - Draft Investment Strategy NI 5. Covid Small Settlement Regeneration Programme 6. Sliabh Beagh Partnership – Request for Contribution Towards Scoping Study
Date of Meeting	6 April 2022
Reporting Officer	Assistant Director of Economy, Tourism & 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>Sperrins Partnership Project The Sperrins Future Search Conference entitled ‘The Sperrins – Reaching New Heights, Realising Our Potential’ was held in the Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown on 27th – 29th 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).</p> <p>The Sperrins Partnership Project is a joint collaboration between four Councils across the Sperrin area: Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council.</p> <p>Each Council in 2018 committed to an equal financial contribution towards the project delivery and have funded the Sperrins Future Search initiative.</p>
2.2	<p>Sperrins Walking Festival The Sperrins Partnership is a joint initiative involving the four Sperrins Councils, namely Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council. The Partnership deliver a number of agreed actions in a co-operative, co-ordinated manner under the themes of Tourism, Heritage, Infrastructure and Environment.</p>
2.3	<p>Covid19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme Council previously received a letter of offer from the Department for Communities for £1,452,000 to deliver Tranche 1 & Tranche 2 Business Support Grants and Active Travel Scheme. Tranche 1 & 2 Business Support Grants has all been allocated and the Active Travel element is ongoing.</p>
2.4	<p>Consultation Response- Draft Investment Strategy NI A public consultation on the draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland was launched in January 2022 and closes for responses on 20th April 2022.</p>
2.5	<p>Covid Small Settlement Regeneration Programme At the March 2022 Development Committee members approved a revised Covid Small Settlements Regeneration Plan, which was submitted, to DfC on 11th March 2022.</p> <p>A contract for funding (CFF) approving the Regeneration Plan was received by Council from DfC on 18th March 2022 for acceptance and return by 25th March 2022.</p> <p>Sliabh Beagh Partnership – Request for Contribution Towards Scoping Study</p>

2.6	<p>The Sliabh Beagh region stretches across 250 miles square, it spans from Monaghan in the south, across Fermanagh and Omagh and Mid Ulster in the north. Straddling the traditional County borders of Tyrone, Fermanagh and Monaghan. In Mid Ulster the region takes in the villages of Aughnacloy, Augher, Clogher and Fivemiletown and the surrounding Clogher Valley countryside.</p> <p>The Sliabh Beagh landscape is comprised of blanket bog, windswept moors, deep woodlands, lakes and rolling pastures. Shaped by centuries of cultivation, peat extraction and forestry (significant parts in the ownership of Forest Service NI), the area is home to an abundance of flora and fauna.</p> <p>Sliabh Beagh is sparsely populated, consisting of a network of small villages and hamlets connected by narrow winding roads. This includes inner gateways (Cooneen, Knocks, Knocktallon) and outer gateways (Aughnacloy, Clogher, Fivemiletown Brookeborough, Maguiresbridge, Newtownbutler, Rosslea, Magheraveely, Clones, Scotstown, Monaghan and Emyvale). This area has been identified through the Sliabh Beagh Masterplan as having tourism potential but in need of significant investment.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Sperrins Partnership Project</p> <p>A Sperrins Partnership Project Officer and part time Administrative Support were appointed and took up their respective roles in October 2021. Work completed or progressing since mid-October 2021 includes the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval and sign off of the Sperrins Partnership Agreement between the partners councils; • A Governance Structure for the project drawn up and agreed at Board level; The formation of a Sperrins Partnership Board; • The development and launch of a new website dedicated to the project www.sperrinspartnershipproject.com; • An official Launch of the Sperrins Future Search Report and Actions Plans; • A review and update of the Brand and Tourism Action Plan; • The formation of the Brand and Tourism Thematic group; • Engagement with Statutory Agencies; • Support, assistance and promotion of collaborative projects including, the Sperrins Sculpture Trail and IAT (International Appalachian Trail) projects, Sperrins Walking Festival and review of Scenic Driving Route. <p>A request for continued financial assistance has been received from Sperrins Partnership for the 2022/23 financial year, seeking a contribution of £22,000 from Mid Ulster District Council (Appendix 1A).</p> <p>The priority projects that Sperrins Partnership outline will be progressed during the 2022/23 financial year are as follows;</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencing work on the delivery of the short and long term actions contained within the Brand and Tourism Action Plan (Action Plan attached at Appendix 1B) • Identifying funding opportunities and creating the respective business cases (HLF, RDP, Peace Plus etc.) • Completing an audit of the tourism product of Sperrins Region • Forming strong cross boundary partnerships • Work has commenced to identify and deliver a Management Structure and associated Management Plans suitable for Sperrin AONB. Options to deliver this are currently being scoped out through active engagement with DAERA and the Sperrins Partnership Board. Consideration will be given to best practice delivery models in other AONB in NI. This piece of work will be a key focus for the Partnership over the coming months. • The formation and development of the remaining Thematic Groups. • Collaboration with partner councils on delivery of Sperrins Walking Festival and update and refresh exercise of the Sperrins Scenic Driving Routes.
3.2	<p>Sperrins Walking Festival</p> <p>The 4 Councils comprising the Sperrins Partnership Project wishes to develop a Sperrins Walking Festival during 2022/23 and seeks a financial contribution from each participating Council of £6,000.</p> <p>This funding would allow suitably qualified professional guides / organisation to be procured to deliver a two-day Walking Festival that will develop and co-ordinate outdoor recreation participation programmes for the local community and visitors, resulting in increased participation and ultimately improve physical and mental health.</p> <p>The successful organisation will consult with each Council's tourism team to develop the programme to showcase the local heritage and the walking/countryside experience, provide technical knowledge and applications, co-ordinate participation at each event, including health and safety, guide orientation, event monitoring and evaluation, marketing and promotion and overall delivery of the festival.</p> <p>The successful organisation will be responsible to seek permissions from landowners, statutory agencies, local community buy-in and consideration of other activities being undertaken. When developing the programme the successful organisation must consider the landscape topography, sensitivity of the environment and its biodiversity.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the two-day Sperrins Walking Festival will be spread over a number of weekends during the months of March/April 2022 and</p>

	<p>September/October 2022 and will focus on various locations throughout the Sperrins region, one programme delivered in each council area. (Other dates can be considered in and around this period if there is a strategic reason to do so i.e. and existing community event).</p> <p>Mid Ulster tourism team propose to hold their two-day Walking Festival on the weekend of the 24 -25 September 2022 consisting of easy, moderate and hard walks around Slieve Gallion.</p> <p>Following review and evaluation of the 2022 Festival it is anticipated this will be an annual event with potential to develop.</p> <p>It is recommended that Mid Ulster District Council provide £6,000 from its annual tourism budget in 2022/23 to contribute towards the Mid Ulster aspect of the Sperrins Walking Festival.</p> <p>Covid19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme</p> <p>3.3 The Active Travel schemes are progressing well but more time is required for the Clogher footpath scheme. This is still at design stage and completion date is projected around Autumn 2022. This is subject to all approvals being provided and therefore a request was made by Council to DfC seeking an extension of time to end of the year to give some flexibility.</p> <p>DfC has agreed to Council's request and furnished Council with a letter of variance granting an extension to the period of funding to 31 December 2022 as detailed on Appendix 2.</p> <p>Consultation Response - Draft Investment Strategy NI</p> <p>3.4 The Strategic Investment Board published a draft Investment Strategy for NI (Appendix 3A). The Framework has been developed to set out priority areas for investment in the years ahead attempting to help stakeholders in public, private and voluntary sector partners plan for the challenge of delivering the largest ever infrastructure programme for NI.</p> <p>The new Investment Strategy for NI will set key objectives for infrastructure investment in the region for the next thirty years. The draft strategy sets out five key objectives for infrastructure investment over this period.</p> <p>These five themes of the strategic framework are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decarbonise our economy and society • Strengthen our essential services • Enhance our communities and places • Build a strong, connected and competitive region • Maximise the benefits from new technology and innovation <p>Council's draft consultation response to the <i>Draft Investment Strategy for NI</i> is attached on Appendix 3B.</p> <p>The consultation period closes on 20th April 2022. If any Member wishes for additional comments to be submitted these should be forwarded to the Assistant</p>
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<p>3.5</p>	<p>Director of Economy, Tourism & Strategic Programmes by 13th April 2022 to allow time for the document to be finalised and submitted before the closing date for receipt of consultation responses.</p> <p>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</p> <p>The projects approved within Council's Covid Small Settlements Regeneration plan as submitted are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castlecaulfield Recreation Area • Castledawson (Riverside) • Manor Park, Money more • Coalisland Canal • Bellaghy - walking trail and recreational area • Clady recreational area landscaping and drainage of existing green space at Beechland Park for community use • Moy 4G multi use floodlight pitch <p>The funding award received is for 90% of the Regeneration Plan costs equal to £2,781,000 comprised of £2,590,000 for capital delivery and £191,000 for resource costs. Match funding of 10% by Council brings the overall level of investment within the Regeneration Plan to £3,090,000.</p> <p>Delegated approval was granted by the Committee in March 2022 for the Chief Executive to accept the Contract for Funding within the acceptance timescales of 25th March 2022. A signed accepted contract was submitted to DfC on 22nd March 2022 (see Appendix 4).</p> <p>The programme of works must be completed by 23 March 2023. To assist in the capital delivery of this programme, Council officers have been working with the Strategic Investment Board to develop a partnership arrangement and identify an experienced capital project manager from their Council Support Unit (CSU) to assist the Council to deliver this programme within the tight timescales identified. The resource would be an employee of SIB but would be located in the Council team to prepare briefs, procure and manage consultants / contractors, and organise and manage teams of multi-disciplinary staff and consultants. They would also assist with Growth Deal/Levelling Up Funds projects totalling over £30million.</p> <p>Without additional resources, there is a significant risk that the Council will not be able to deliver the programme within the stated timescales. The resource from SIB will be available within one month of approval and will have the experience and expertise, as well as access to SIB consultancy frameworks to ensure that projects are delivered as required by the funding.</p> <p>Sliabh Beagh Partnership – Request for Contribution Towards Scoping Study</p> <p>Sliabh Beagh Partnership is seeking a contribution of £5,000 from each of the respective Councils to progress a scoping study to identify priority recreational projects and associated infrastructure. This study would support the</p>
<p>3.6</p>	

	<p>identification and development of funding opportunities. There would be potential, within this study, to identify proposals for associated signage and interpretative art provision in conjunction with community and business partners from the area. If Members approve funding, representatives from Council's Outdoor Recreation and Tourism sections would engage with the Sliabh Beagh Partnership to ensure Mid Ulster's input is fed into the Scoping Study.</p> <p>The letter requesting a financial contribution of £5,000 from Mid Ulster District Council emanates from Monaghan County Council on behalf of Sliabh Beagh Partnership – see Appendix 5.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial:</p> <p>Sperrin Partnership Project The Sperrins Partnership Project is presently funded by 4 Councils at total annual cost of £88,000. Going forward it is anticipated that the annual operating cost will remain the same. Officers are currently looking at options to secure additional funding from external sources for relevant projects. Each Council committed c. £22,000 for the current financial year 2021-2022. Sperrins Partnership has made a request to Council for a contribution, which will include salary and running costs for £22,000 for financial year 2022 - 2023.</p> <p>Sperrins Walking Festival 2022 Recommended that Mid Ulster Council contribute up to £6,000 from it's annual tourism budget in 2022/23 towards the Mid Ulster aspect of the Sperrins Walking Festival 2022. The remaining 3 participant Sperrins Councils to contribute an equal financial contribution.</p> <p>Covid19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme Funding from DfC of £1,452,000 to be spent by March 2022. Letter of variance attached on Appendix 2 providing an extension to allow the Clogher footpath scheme to be completed by December 2022.</p> <p>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme 10% match funding from Council on an overall allocation of £2,781,000 (capital and resource) was approved by the P&R Committee on 3rd March 2022 subject to ratification at full Council on 24th March 2022.</p> <p>Project Management – The proposed support commissioned from SIB represents a 6% cost for the overall Small Settlement Programme. The support would be commissioned on a minimum 2 year basis, with an option to extend for 3 years.</p> <p>Sliabh Beagh Partnership – Request for Contribution Towards Scoping Study Funding of £5,000 could be provided from the Tourism budget towards a scoping study which will inform project development in relation to recreational provision and associated infrastructure, i.e., paths, wayfinding, signage/art. This</p>

	will support the development of applications for external funding support, which could include provision of interpretative public art. A potential funding source could be a future TRPSI application. (Each participating Council requested to provide £5,000).
	<p>Human:</p> <p>Sperrin Partnership Project: Support by Council officers to manage and deliver the project</p> <p>Sperrins Walking Festival 2022 Officers time to input and co-ordinate.</p> <p>Covid19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme Officers time managing projects that are funded.</p> <p>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme Officer time to implement and monitor delivery of the Regeneration Plan conjunction with the DfC. Additional resource is required to successfully deliver the programme within the tight timescales.</p> <p>Sliabh Beagh Partnership – Request for Contribution Towards Scoping Study The Sliabh Beagh Partnership is supported by the Tourism Manager and the Business Engagement Officer. Fermanagh & Omagh District Council and Monaghan County Council provide a similar level of Officer Support.</p>
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>Sperrins Walking Festival 2022 Council policies and procedures will be adhered to in the roll out of this scheme.</p> <p>Covid19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme Due to legal issues, one aspect of the Active Travel scheme (Clogher footpath) requires an extension of time to December 2022. DfC has issued Council with a letter of variance to accommodate this request.</p> <p>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme Considered in line with Council Policies and Procedures. If additional resources are not put in place, there is a risk that the programme will not be delivered within the timescale and funding requirements.</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>Sperrins Walking Festival 2022 Mid Ulster Council is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all its activities with a focus on all citizens living within the Mid Ulster.</p>

	Rural Needs Implications:
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <p>Sperrins Partnership Project</p> <p>5.1.1 Approve a continued financial contribution to Sperrins Partnership of up to £22,000 for the 2022/23 financial year towards salaries and running costs to enable delivery of the initiatives as outlined within the report, and further referenced within Appendices 1A and 1B.</p> <p>5.1.2 Approve that Council prepare and issue an SLA (once approved by Council's legal team) to Sperrins Partnership, and subject to their acceptance and return of the signed SLA, Council's recommended financial contribution of up to £22,000 be released.</p>
5.2	<p>Sperrins Walking Festival 2022</p> <p>Approve Council's participation in the 2022 Sperrins Walking Festival and contribute a maximum budget of up to £6,000 towards the Mid Ulster leg of the event.</p>
5.3	<p>Covid19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme</p> <p>Approve authority for Chief Executive to sign the Covid-19 Recovery Programme Letter of Variance on Appendix 2, dated 22 March 2022 which grants an extension to the period of funding to 31 December 2022. Approval also required to return the signed letter of variance to DfC immediately following the Development Committee in order to meet DfC's response timeframe.</p>
5.4	<p>Consultation Response – Draft Investment Strategy NI</p> <p>Approve Council's consultation response to the draft Investment Strategy for NI and submit the response before the consultation deadline closes on 20th April 2022. Should any Member wish to add further comments, these can be forwarded to the Assistant Director of Economy, Tourism & Strategic Programmes no later than 13th April 2022, to allow time for Council's response to be finalised and submitted in a timely manner.</p>
5.5	<p>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note Council's acceptance of the Contract for Funding received from DfC under the Covid Small Settlements Regeneration Programme for £2,781,000. • Approve the partnership arrangement with SIB, through the use of Project Management assistance from their Council Support Unit for a minimum of two years with an option to extend for 3 years.

5.6	<p>Sliabh Beagh Partnership – Request for Contribution Towards Scoping Study</p> <p>Approve a financial contribution of £5,000 from Council's tourism budget in 2022/23, towards Sliabh Beagh Partnership to assist the Partnership undertake a scoping exercise of potential outdoor recreation projects, subject to confirmation of similar commitments on the part of Monaghan County Council and Fermanagh & Omagh District Council.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix 1A – Letter re Sperrins Partnership Project – 24.2.22</p> <p>Appendix 1B - Sperrins Partnership Draft Brand and Tourism Action Plan</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Covid-19 Recovery Programme – Letter of Variance - March 2022</p> <p>Appendix 3A - Draft Investment Strategy for NI</p> <p>Appendix 3B – MUDC Response to Draft Investment Strategy for NI</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Covid Small Settlements Scheme Contract for Funding</p> <p>Appendix 5 - Letter from Monaghan County Council re Sliabh Beagh Scoping Study</p>

APPENDIX 1A



To: Mary McKeown (Tourism Manager and MUDC lead officer for the Sperrins Partnership Project)

Mid Ulster District Council

Via email: mary.mckeown@midulstercouncil.org

Date: 24th February 2022

Subject: MUDC Financial contribution to Sperrins Partnership Project for period 2022/2023

Dear Mary,

You will be aware that the Sperrins Partnership Project is a joint collaboration between four councils across the Sperrin area Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council.

Each Council in 2018 committed to equal financial contribution towards the project delivery and have also funded the Sperrins Future Search initiative. The funding was originally intended to be for the financial year 2019/2020 but due to delays in recruiting staff this support was not apportioned until the financial year 2020/2021.

A Sperrins Partnership Project Officer and part time Administrative Support have been appointed and took up their respective roles in October 2020. Work completed or progressing since mid-October 2021 includes:

- Approval and sign off of the Sperrins Partnership Agreement between the partners councils
- A Governance Structure for the project drawn up and agreed at Board level
- The formation of a Sperrins Partnership Board
- The development and launch of a new website dedicated to the project www.sperrinspartnershipproject.com and social media platforms
- An official Launch of the Sperrins Future Search Report and Actions Plans
- A review and update of the Brand and Tourism Action Plan
- The formation of the Brand and Tourism Thematic group
- Engagement with Statutory Agencies
- Support, assistance and promotion of collaborative projects including, the Sperrins Sculpture Trail and IAT (International Appalachian Trail) projects.
- There are several projects which each of the partners councils are leading on that will support the collaborative work of the partnership and enhance the product offering in the region.

The project has several priorities over the coming months which include:

- Commencing work on the delivery of the short- and long-term actions contained within the Brand and Tourism Action Plan (Action Plan attached at **APPENDIX 1**)
- Identifying funding opportunities and creating the respective business cases (HLF, RDP, Peace Plus etc)
- Completing an audit of the tourism product of Sperrins Region

- Forming strong cross boundary partnerships
- Work has commenced to identify and deliver a Management Structure and associated Management Plans suitable for Sperrin AONB. Options to deliver this are currently being scoped out through active engagement with DAERA and the Sperrins Partnership Board. Consideration will be given to best practice delivery models in other AONB in NI. This piece of work will be a key focus for the Partnership over the coming months.
- The formation and development of the remaining Thematic Groups.
- Collaboration with partner councils on delivery of Sperrins Walking Festival and update and refresh exercise of the Sperrins Scenic Driving Routes.

The total contribution across the 4 partner councils equates to £88k, ie, £22k per partner Council.

Mid Ulster Council's financial contribution for 2021/22 ends in March 2022, and Sperrins Partnership now request a continued contribution of £22k for the 2022/23 financial year. This further financial contribution will allow the work of Sperrins Partnership to be extended and continue the project's momentum building on early success and allow for effective forward planning and project management.

We would therefore invite Mid Ulster District Council to make arrangements for your contribution to be made to Derry City and Strabane District Council who are the lead council for the project. My colleague, Louise McDermott will be in touch to request a PO number to start this process.

Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below at any time.

Yours sincerely,

Ciara Toner
 Sperrins Partnership Project Officer
Reaching New Heights, Realising Our Potential
 Email: ciaratoner@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk
 Phone: 078 95 329 789

Appendix 1B

Sperrins Partnership Project – DRAFT Brand and Tourism Action Plan

*Reaching New Heights,
Realising Our Potential*

Updated January 2022 by PO

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.

Status Keys (RAG)		
Red	Action Required	
Amber	Ongoing	
Green	Complete	

Strategy/Task	Measure	Help from	Start Date	Target Completion Date	Responsible	Status (RAG)	Values (£)	Notes
1. Short Term								
1.1 Identify where major resources are coming from and how they will be utilised to design and develop and implement the strategies/ action plans developed.	Strategic plan/ structure required. AONB Management Plan as part of wider strategic plan and to gain recognition/ funding for protection. Management body in place.	Partnership Board Tourism NI NIEA E & H Thematic Group		1 – 2 years	Partnership Board Tourism NI NIEA 4 Councils			Sperrins Project Officer & Admin Support appointed in Oct 20' for 1 year period initially. External funding sources to be pursued HLF/RDP Peace Plus
1.2 Definition “The Sperrins” area	Previously agreed the AONB and neighbouring settlements (gateway towns) to be included.	Partnership Board NIEA Local Communities		3 months	Brand and Tourism Group			
1.3 Definition of the essence of the product What is it? Where is it?	Audit Of what constitutes the Sperrins required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider stakeholders Collaborate with other 		3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Councils Stakeholders Tourism NI 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI Largest Mountain Range by

What is the USP? Why would people visit? Current perception of the Sperrins?		Thematic Groups						geographic area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB • Outdoor Recreation • Local Economy • Environmental Sustainability • Unexplored wilderness
1.4 GIS Mapping Exercise of current product	Original map previously developed and currently being updated	4 Councils – excel spreadsheet shared and currently being populated.			Information being compiled across partner councils by George Bradshaw. Comparison of data held by TNI complete.			GB has requested trail/walking/cycle route information from ORNI (Jan 21) which will be combined with the data.
2. Short Term Initiatives								
2.1 Explore the creation provisional brand identity/ logo in short term Ensure TNI Embrace the Giant Spirit experience brand is considered in any marketing/ promotional activity	Pull together a short-term identity for the Sperrins for use in promotional activities	Partnership Board 4 councils TNI Stakeholders and Thematic Groups		3 – 6 months	Brand and Tourism Group			Wider than tourism focus/ multifunctional (to include themes from the 4 common ground statements)
2.2 Creation of a website and Social Media platforms	Building awareness. Promotional activity. Consolidation of existing information.	4 council leads	January 2021	2 months	Website and social media platforms launched August 2021. Website will be update and developed on an ongoing basis. Enquires being received through website.	COMPLETE ONGOING		www.sperrinspartnershipproject.com
2.3 Official Launch Event	Event planned to officially launch the project and the Sperrins Future Search Report.	4 council leads/ SPO	Originally planned January 21 however	Launch Event took place August 2021	4 council Leads SPO	COMPLETE		Launch Event can be viewed by clicking here .

			postponed due to tightening of Covid-19 restrictions					
2.4 Sperrins Partnership Project – Walking Festival	Using existing funding across the 4 councils	4 council leads Community Groups Local Guides SPO			Brand and Tourism Group			Working group set up and meeting regularly to progress. FO plan to host walking event in Spring 2022 under the umbrella of the Sperrins Partnership.
2.5 IAT (collaborative project)	A domestic and international promotional campaign planned for the IAT this year.	4 Sperrin council Mid & East Antrim Council Donegal Local Development Company RDP LAGs (Rural Development Programme Local Action Groups) Along IAT Route DAERA IAT Steering Group		Marketing Completion Date- 25/02/2022 Capital Worsk Dec 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IAT – ORNI contracted to deliver the marketing for the entire route ORNI awarded Marketing 		£141,000 Marketing £613,000 Capital Works Related	Capital works at various stages of delivery with most partners complete or nearing completion. ORNI Appointed to deliver marketing activity on behalf of partners commencing Feb 2022.
2.6 Sperrins Sculpture Trail (collaborative projects) Marketing piece	The installation of three iconic artworks at key sites – Sperin Heritage Centre (Glenelly Valley), Davagh Forest, and Mullaghcar (Gortin)	DCSDC/FODC/ MUDC DAERA		Capital Works Completion Date Sept 2022	DCSDC Lead		£283,000 - Marketing Plan £1.887m n-	Planning permission for 3 sites secured. Sculpture and design considerations agreed.

							Capital Works Related	At phase 2 – Construction and instalment.
2.7 Identify Collaborative Projects through DAERA rural tourism funding opportunities for Sperrins Experiences	Initial meeting of the 4 councils and funding officers to scope out if collaboration is possible and the practicalities around this.	4 Council			4 Councils			DCSDC: DAERA Rural Tourism Trail, should be in a position to appoint at end of April 2021
2.8 Refresh/revitalise the Sperrins Cycle Routes and Driving Routes	Each council update their area in terms of tourism product and information. Also carryout audit of route signage to assess condition/gaps etc.							Man of Sperrins Event
2.9 Mountain Biking Trails Promotion?	Gortin Glen/ Garvagh Forrest/ Davagh Forest Trails	4 Council			4 Councils			Joint promotion campaign
2.10 Heart of Ancient Ulster Project	Restoration and maintenance of over 25,000 hectares of blanket and raised bog, the recruitment of volunteers to help plant 100,000 native trees, the reduction of carbon emissions from the peatland and the creation of 10km of new heritage trails.							Revisit potential funding from Heritage Trust. Joint Project MU/FODC within Sperrins Is there potential to widen this out to include heritage projects in CCG and DCSDC?
2.11 Ancient Routes and Trails	Ancient pilgrimages/ trails/ railways/ religious routes/ monuments/ tombs	4 councils NIEA HED						Identify the heritage offering throughout the Sperrins. Engage with HLF. Eg. Glencolmcille Donegal
2.12 Local Fam Trips	VIC staff and FS groups tour of Sperrins to experience what is on offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Stakeholders 		1 year	4 Councils			Links with 1.3
2.13 50 years AONB Designation – Celebration Event	Develop a combined 50 year celebration of original AONB declaration across the Sperrins Region that showcases the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism NI 4 Councils NIEA 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Councils Tourism NI Stakeholders 			AONB Designation 1968 Date has passed – suggest work

	natural richness and promotes the area, tying in with established/ ongoing community events and encourage more positive action within the AONB than the previous 50 years.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIEA 			towards 60 year celebration event?
2.14 What's on Guide / Events Calendar	Incorporate current events across all 4 councils and local community groups etc into a whats on guide/ Events calendar specific to the Sperrins area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 councils VIC and tourism staff Tourism NI 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 councils Tourism NI 			Links with 1.3
2.15 Research – Internal and external, looking at the perceptions of people in relation to the Sperrins, both local and wider audiences	Report delivered – Research/ Statistics required for informing policy/plans	Tourism NI			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism NI Management Structures 			
2.16 Development of visitor experience plan – consider development of a wider strategic plan for the Sperrins area which incorporates V.E plan	Output and outcomes measures – strategic plan developed	4 councils		1 – 2 years?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sperrins Partnership Board Stakeholders TNI Brand & Tourism Group 			Links with 1.3
3. Long Term								
3.1 Identify strategic objectives over the next 5 years		Partnership Board 4 councils TNI Stakeholders and Thematic Groups		1 - 2 years				Growth deal (High proposition detailed asks)
3.2 Creation of a unified logo/branding/strapline	Identifiable brand that pulls together the identity of the Sperrins and its products/communities	Partnership Board 4 councils TNI Stakeholders and Thematic Groups		1 – 2 years	Brand and Tourism Group			Links with 2.1
3.3 Brand Development: Use visitor experience plan to develop current product offerings	Further development of area and additional literature and offerings	4 councils Tourism NI Tourism Ireland		2+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sperrins Partnership Board 4 councils 			

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism NI • Tourism Ireland 			
3.4 Trial new initiatives/pilots	KPI's: Holiday World stand with Sperrins branding and literature.	4 councils Tourism NI		2+ Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 councils • Tourism NI 			
3.5 Consultation/ engagement process	Tactical forward thinking	4 councils NIEA Tourism NI		2+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 councils • NIEA • Tourism NI 			
3.6 Brand Awareness: Marketing/ Communications campaigns Tactical plans Use of branding on own social media pages and website	Building relationships Trade Buy-in developed	4 councils NIEA Tourism NI		2+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 councils • NIEA • Tourism NI 			
3.7 Flagship events: “Undiscovered” international events	Visitor Numbers	4 councils NIEA Tourism NI			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 councils • NIEA • Tourism NI 			
3.8 Schools and Youth Outreach Programme	Pride, more awareness through upcoming generations and across NI	4 councils NIEA Tourism NI EA			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 councils • NIEA • Tourism NI 			

Appendix 2

From: Sharon McGowan (By email)



Mr Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council

North West Development Office/West Team
2nd Floor
Boaz House
19 Scarffes Entry
Omagh
Co Tyrone
BT78 1JG

Telephone: (028) 82 2555506

Email: Sharon.McGowan@communities-ni.gov.uk

Our reference: CO1-20-11980

Date: 22 March 2022

Project Reference No	CO1-20-11980
Project Applicant	MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL
Project Title	COVID-19 RECOVERY REVITALISATION PROGRAMME
Total Funding	£1,452,000
Period of Funding	27 July 2020 – 31 March 2021
Organisation's Financial Systems and Controls Rating	Robust

Dear Adrian,

1. Revised Approval

The purpose of this letter is to effect certain amendments and variations to the Contract for Funding constituted by the letter dated 28th October 2020, the Letter of Variance dated 2nd March 2021 and a Letter of Variance dated 26th August 2021 issued to Mid Ulster District Council for the COVID-19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme. I am pleased to confirm that the period of funding has been extended to

31 December 2022. Accordingly upon the Organisation's acceptance of this letter as hereinafter provided the said Contract for Funding shall be amended and have effect as follows:

(i) The contract detail table, as above, is substituted to:

Project Reference No	CO1-20-11980
Project Applicant	MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL
Project Title	COVID-19 RECOVERY REVITALISATION PROGRAMME
Total Funding	£1,452,000
Period of Funding	27 July 2020 to 31 December 2022 (as per letter issued by G. Murray Director of Regional Development Office 15 March 2022)
Organisation's Financial Systems and Controls Rating	Robust

(ii) Annex B (2) is attached which updates projects and costs following agreement on active travel schemes with DfI. It is noted some re-profiling will be required as per monitoring report received 11/1/22.

(iii) A revised Annex E (2) is attached which changes the target dates for the key objectives from March 2023 to December 2023.

2. Acceptance

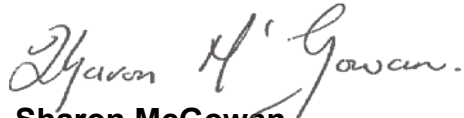
This letter is issued electronically by e-mail and, accordingly, if the Organisation is prepared to accept the variance to the original Contract for Funding, please return a scanned PDF copy of this letter duly signed and dated on behalf of the Organisation within one week from the date of this letter. Failure to return the acceptance within this period shall result in the offer being deemed as withdrawn.

3. Availability

The foregoing offer shall remain open a period of four weeks from the date of this letter. Failure to return a scanned PDF copy of this letter duly signed and dated on

behalf of the Organisation within this period shall result in the offer being deemed as withdrawn.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sharon McGowan".

Sharon McGowan
Deputy Director NWDO/West

4. OFFICIAL FUNDING ACCEPTANCE

Project Reference No	CO1-20-11980
Project Applicant	MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL
Project Title	COVID-19 RECOVERY REVITALISATION PROGRAMME
Amount of Funding	£1,452,000
Period of Funding	27 July 2020 – 31 December 2022 (as per letter issued by G. Murray 15 March 2022)

I _____ have authority **on behalf of**
(Name of Chief Executive in Block Capitals)

Name of Council

to accept the offer of funding set out in the letter dated 22 March 2022 and agree to deliver the above project on the terms and conditions therein.

Signed by
(Chief Executive)

Name in Block Capitals

Date

Witnessed by
(Registered Office Bearer)

Name in Block Capitals

Date

5. BANK DETAILS

Project Reference No	CO1-20-11980
Project Applicant	MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL
Project Title	COVID-19 RECOVERY REVITALISATION PROGRAMME
Amount of Funding	£1,452,000
Period of Funding	27 July 2020 – 31 December 2022 (as per letter issued by G. Murray 15 March 2022)

Please complete Bank details below.

Name of Organisation: _____

Name of Account: _____

Bank Name: _____

Bank Address: _____

Sort Code: _____ **Account Number:** _____

Signed by
(Chief Executive)

Witnessed by
(Registered Office Bearer)

Name in Block Capitals

Name in Block Capitals

Date

Date

ANNEX A

AREAS TO BE FUNDED UNDER TRANCHE 1 OF THE PROGRAMME

[illegible]

ANNEX B (2)

AREAS TO BE FUNDED UNDER TRANCHE 2 & 3 OF THE PROGRAMME

Item	Cost	Funding Stream (DfC, DAERA, DFI, Revenue)
COVID-19 Business Support Grant – Urban (PH2 & 3)	£376,000	DfC
Subtotal DfC	£376,000	
COVID-19 Business Support Grant – Rural (PH2)	£148,000	DAERA
Subtotal DAERA	£148,000	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalisland Lighting scheme • Maghera Lighting scheme • Eglish Footpath • Clonoe Footpath • Clogher Footpath • Bellaghy Footpath (Design Brief) • OB 	£127,000 £42,5000 £117,000 £40,000 £85,000 £18,000 £35,500	DFI DFI DFI DFI DFI DFI DFI
Subtotal DFI	£465,000	
Professional Fees etc...	£34,000	DfC Revenue
Subtotal DfC Revenue	£34,000	
Total Capital Funding - Tranche 2 & 3	£989,000	
Total Revenue Funding - Tranche 2	£34,000	
Tranche 2 Total	£1,023,000	

COVID-19 RECOVERY REVITALISATION PROGRAMME

OBJECTIVES, OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES

Objectives

1. To support each district council to develop a costed Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Plan by September 2020. **This objective has now been met.**
2. By August 2020, each district council will have established or identified a suitable stakeholder engagement forum to support the delivery of its Covid-19 Revitalisation Plan. **This objective has now been met.**
3. To support each district council to deliver its Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Plan by December 2022.
4. By December 2023, 80% of businesses in scheme areas agree that the improvements to their businesses and other Capital purchase projects would encourage people to live, work, visit and invest in the area (by council).
5. By December 2023, 80% of people using the scheme areas agree that the improvements to the area would encourage people to live, work, visit and invest in the area (by council).
6. By December 2023, council schemes funded through this Programme will have positively impacted on efforts to see footfall levels returning to a level which is at least 70% of levels recorded prior to the public health crisis.
7. By December 2023, surveys completed by traders indicate that council schemes funded through this Programme will have positively impacted on efforts to see sales figures returning to a level which is at least 70% of levels recorded prior to the public health crisis.
8. By December 2023, attitudinal surveys indicate 80% of the public are satisfied with the measures taken in the Scheme areas to respond to safety issues raised by the Covid-19 pandemic.

9. By December 2023, attitudinal surveys indicate 70% of the public are satisfied with walking facilities in the Scheme area.
10. By December 2023, attitudinal surveys indicate 60% of the public agree that they are satisfied with cycling facilities in the Scheme area.
11. By December 2023, attitudinal surveys indicate 40% of the public agree that measures taken in the Scheme area would encourage people to change from car use to more environmentally friendly choices such as walking and cycling for journeys of under two miles.
12. By December 2023, grant fund measures in the Scheme area to demonstrate the benefits of low-emission fuel options.
13. By December 2023 the scheme area will have an increase in land used for active travel (i.e. extended footways, cycle ways, and connecting pathways) which connects people with key services and ensures accessibility for all including those with disabilities.

Outputs

Council Revitalisation Plans.

- Each council will provide a quantification of the outputs associated with their plan.

Outcomes

Outcome Delivery Plan - Outcome 10: We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest.

- New and improved physical infrastructure and environment in which opportunity can flourish in economic, social and cultural terms to develop our attractiveness as a home, place of business, and tourist destination.

- Bring communities together and deliver programmes that target social need through social, economic and physical regeneration of cities, towns and villages.
- Complete a range of Urban Regeneration Schemes in towns and cities across Northern Ireland to enhance our attractiveness as a home, place of business, and tourist destination.
- Develop strategic sites across Northern Ireland to provide new and improved physical infrastructure and environment.

Outcome Delivery Plan - Outcome 11: We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure

- Achieve a shift from the private car to active travel modes such as walking and cycling
- Protect and enhance our 'green' and 'blue' infrastructure (parks, green spaces and street trees; ponds, streams and lakes) to define a sense of place and character within our communities, making it more attractive to walk and cycle to access key services n with associated health and wellbeing outcomes and strengthening the resilience of our natural environment.
- Develop integrated sustainable drainage solutions to manage rainwater on the surface to protect against flooding.

INFRASTRUCTURE 2050

The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland

Draft Consultation Document

isni.gov.uk



Northern Ireland
Executive

www.northernireland.gov.uk



Investment
Strategy
Northern Ireland



INFRASTRUCTURE 2050

DRAFT INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

JANUARY 2022

STATUS: DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	8
RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION	11
Why we are consulting	11
How to respond to the consultation	11
What happens after the public consultation	12
PART A: OUR VISION.....	13
The Role and Importance of Infrastructure	13
The Executive’s Vision for Infrastructure	14
Supporting the Executive’s Priorities.....	15
Question 1	15
PART B: STRATEGIC CONTEXT.....	16
Our Investment in Infrastructure	16
The Strategic Context	17
Development of the Investment Strategy: Stakeholder Engagement.....	19
Structure of the Strategy	21
Question 2	21
PART C: OUR INVESTMENT NEEDS, OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES.....	22
Question 3	22
OBJECTIVE 1: TO DECARBONISE OUR ECONOMY, ASSETS AND SOCIETY	23
Where We Are Now.....	23
Where We Need To Be	24
What We Need to Do	25

Question 4	27
Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Decarbonise Our Economy, Assets and Society	28
OBJECTIVE 2: TO STRENGTHEN OUR ESSENTIAL SERVICES	29
Where We Are Now.....	29
Where We Need To Be	31
What We Need to Do	31
Question 5	34
Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Strengthen Our Essential Services.....	35
OBJECTIVE 3: TO ENHANCE OUR COMMUNITIES AND PLACES	36
Where We Are Now.....	36
Where We Need To Be	36
What We Need to Do	37
CASE STUDY: A New Future for Scotland’s Town Centres / Town Centre First	37
CASE STUDY: 15-Minute City	39
CASE STUDY: Path of Health	40
CASE STUDY: Quiet Lanes	41
Question 6	42
Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Enhance Our Communities and Places	43
OBJECTIVE 4: TO BUILD A STRONG, CONNECTED AND COMPETITIVE REGION	44
Where We Are Now.....	44
Where We Need To Be	44
What We Need to Do	45

CASE STUDY: Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee (GCSC) – Øresund Region	46
Question 7	49
Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Build a Strong, Competitive and Connected Region	50
OBJECTIVE 5: TO MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS FROM EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES	51
Where we are now	51
Where We Need To Be	52
What We Need to Do	53
Question 8	55
Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Maximise The Benefits From Emerging Technologies	56
PART D: OUR APPROACH TO STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT	57
Introduction	57
Embedding infrastructure into Government approval and delivery processes	57
Funding and financing	59
The Executive's 10-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan	63
Information Portal and Contracts Pipeline	64
Question 9	64
Question 10	64
Question 11	64
Question 12	64
Improving Delivery	65
CASE STUDY: Social Value	67
Measuring Progress and Impact	68
Question 13	69

Accountability and Oversight	70
Question 14	73
Question 15	73
Question 16	73
Question 17	73
Glossary	74
Freedom of Information Act 2000: Confidentiality of Consultations	76

FOREWORD

Investment in infrastructure will play a key part in enabling us to achieve our ambition of a greener and fairer society. Our vision is that we will have the infrastructure that enables everyone to lead a healthy, productive and fulfilling life; supports sustainable economic development; and protects our environment. Infrastructure, such as roads, hospitals, schools and colleges, energy, water, digital and transport networks, requires careful planning, takes time to deliver and is used for many years. We need to consider our current needs as well as the needs of our children. We also need to make best use of our existing infrastructure and maintain it for the future.

Climate change, the consequences of rapid technological change and an ageing population are the most important issues facing our generation. We must innovate in the ways we design, build and operate our infrastructure systems if we are to solve these problems, while taking advantage of the opportunities they present.

The strategy takes a long-term view, looking forward to 2050. It sets out the current state of our infrastructure, identifies where we need to be and explains what we need to do to get there. It defines our strategic investment priorities and demonstrates how we will make best use of our resources.

The strategy is aligned with the principles of the Executive's other key strategies, some of which are currently in development such as 10x Economic Strategy, Green Growth Strategy, the Energy Strategy, the Environment Strategy and the Housing Supply Strategy. It embodies an approach to coordination that will ensure government policies and plans are consistent and complementary at every level.

The strategy describes the outcomes we intend to achieve. It will be implemented through a rolling 10-year investment plan that will define and prioritise the individual programmes and projects we need to deliver and will be matched to a financial plan that will show how these will be funded.

The strategy is ambitious. Pressing challenges such as decarbonisation mean that we need to do more, in new ways and quickly. That is why the Executive is focused on delivery – getting things done.

Engagement has been central to the development of this strategy. Many people inside and outside government have already helped in its formation. We want this dialogue to continue, so please review the strategy carefully and contribute your views and ideas.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, reading "Paul Givan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'P' and a long, sweeping underline.

PAUL GIVAN MLA

First Minister

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Michelle O'Neill". The signature is cursive and elegant, with a large initial 'M' and a long, flowing underline.

MICHELLE O'NEILL MLA

deputy First Minister

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

High-quality physical and digital infrastructure is the foundation of all modern economies and is required for a fair and just society. Infrastructure is used by everyone every day. It enables the provision of healthcare, education, housing and transport. It delivers the water we drink and the energy that heats and powers our homes. It is needed to protect our environment, support our jobs and connect us to the rest of the world. It touches all our lives and will form our legacy to our children.

The Executive's vision for infrastructure is that it will enable everyone to lead a healthy, productive and fulfilling life, and that it will support sustainable economic development and protect our environment.

This strategy sets out how the Executive will achieve this vision. It provides a clear framework for planning and prioritising infrastructure investment, defining the outcomes required of that investment and setting out the mechanisms, including greater collaboration that will ensure its efficient and effective delivery.

Over the last ten years, government has invested £14.9 billion in maintaining, upgrading and extending our regional infrastructure – an average of £1.48 billion per year, or £8,000 per person. Nearly three-quarters of this has been directed to the major infrastructure areas of roads, housing, water and wastewater, schools, public transport and hospitals. Over 400 projects have been completed, thirty with a value of more than £100 million. Although this is a record to be proud of, some projects have been delivered late or over budget, and this strategy includes actions to accelerate and improve infrastructure delivery.

Despite this investment, there are significant deficiencies in our existing infrastructure, particularly in health, social and intermediate housing, water and wastewater, roads maintenance and the rail network. Addressing these existing problems is a key element of the strategy. Coupled with this is a recognised need to invest in the increased capacity and skills required to deliver such an ambitious investment strategy.

The region will face significant new challenges in the coming decade and beyond. These include:

- the immediate need to respond to the climate emergency and achieve net zero
- the changing requirements of an ageing population
- our evolving trading relationships with our neighbours in Europe and elsewhere
- the speed of technological innovation and the increasing risks to cyber-security
- the need to invest both capital and resource funding to address historic underinvestment in our current infrastructure
- the need to innovate at pace and develop our approach to delivery.

Our objectives and priorities for infrastructure investment are based on a dispassionate and impartial assessment of where we are now, where we need to be and what we need to do.

We know that our investment must:

- decarbonise our economy and society
- strengthen our essential services
- build a strong, connected and competitive region
- enhance our communities and places
- maximise the benefits from new technology and innovation
- protect and strengthen our natural infrastructure.

Our investment must be prioritised to address proven needs and make the most effective use of the available resources. We will achieve this through the development of a 10-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan and a Medium-Term Financial Plan that will together result in a pipeline of individual projects.

We recognise that the investment needed to achieve the outcomes set out in this strategy will require significantly greater capital and revenue funding than has previously been available. We will explore all possible sources of finance and develop and use innovative funding approaches where these are needed and appropriate.

We will continue to take steps to improve our capacity and capability to deliver projects on time and to budget. We will ensure that those responsible for projects have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources necessary to be successful. We will collect, analyse and publish data on our performance, using it to manage our projects better and informing actions to address the root causes of delay and cost overruns.

We will ensure that when procuring from the private sector, we derive the best possible social value from our purchasing power.

The entire region will benefit from the implementation of this strategy. Infrastructure investment will drive inclusive growth and increase resilience to climate change and economic shocks. It will safeguard jobs, promote skills development and encourage innovation. It will help build a green economy, protecting our heritage and environment. It will help us all to achieve our full potential.

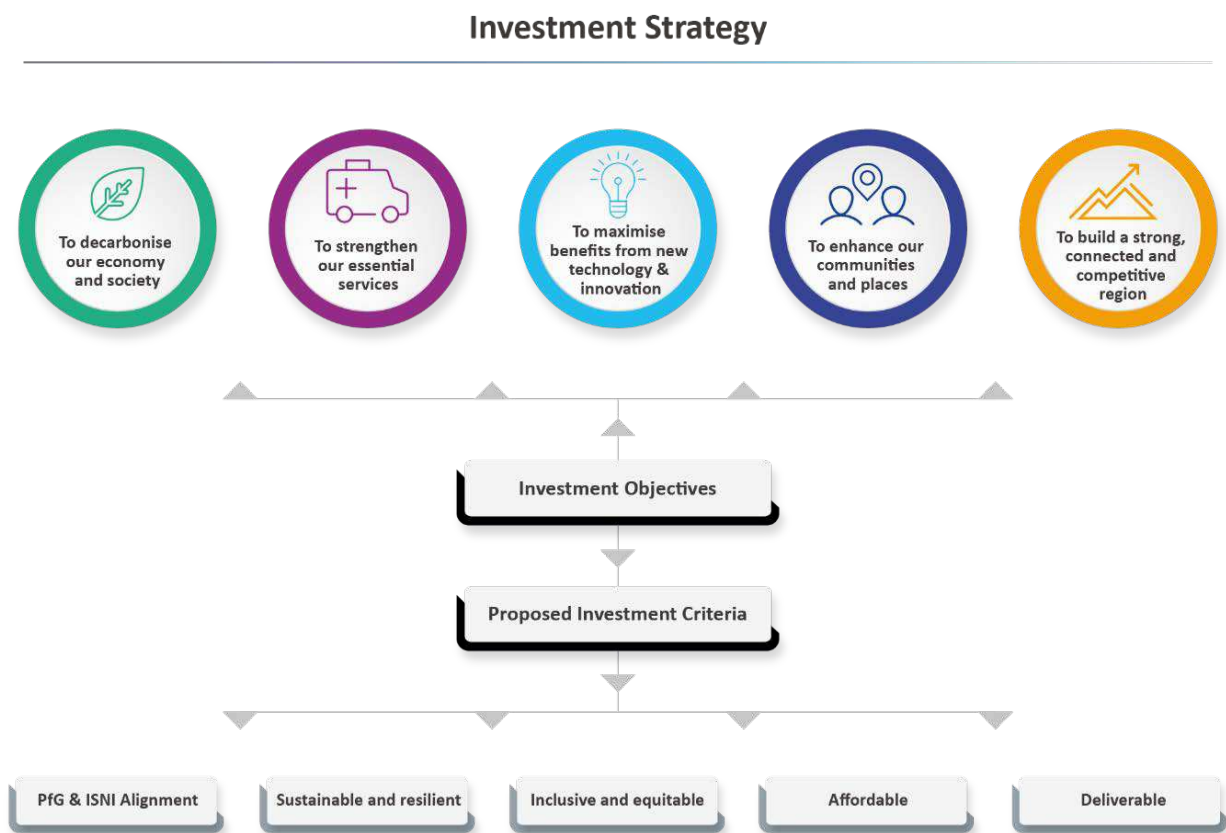


Fig 1: Proposed Investment Objectives and Criteria

RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

Why we are consulting

Our infrastructure is critical to our well-being, our success, our prosperity and our future. If we are to invest in infrastructure successfully to address the long-term issues we will face in the coming decades, government must work with citizens and organisations to use their knowledge and expertise to help guide and develop an Infrastructure Strategy that benefits us all.

The ISNI team would like to thank those organisations and individuals who contributed to the extensive engagement during the scoping phase. To ensure our thinking is sound, we want you to tell us what you think of our assessment of the infrastructure needs, and priorities going forward.

How to respond to the consultation

To make this consultation as accessible as possible, we are using NI Direct's Citizen Space as our response route for collating responses.

You can respond to this consultation online through our survey on Citizen Space (<https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/dof/infrastructure-2050-consultation-document>).

The survey is straightforward to complete and seeks views on our investment objectives, proposed governance structure and proposed infrastructure planning process.

If you are unable to respond online please contact the ISNI team by email: consult.isni@sibni.org. An easy read version of the consultation document will be available online and if you need documents to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know. Responses to this consultation are invited until 11.59pm on 20th April 2022.

Written responses can be sent to us by e-mail at: consult.isni@sibni.org or by post at: **Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, Strategic Investment Board, 5th Floor, 9 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3LP.**

Please note, the Strategic Investment Board will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Please refer to the final section of this document (page 76) which outlines our responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act.

What happens after the public consultation

The consultation on the draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland closes on 20th April 2022. Following consideration of all responses, including the draft EQIA and Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA), a full analysis report will be prepared for Executive consideration.

PART A: OUR VISION

The Role and Importance of Infrastructure

High-quality physical and digital infrastructure provides the vital foundation for a modern, high-performing competitive economy and a fair and just society. It underpins our quality of life, promotes economic and social prosperity and regional balance, and helps to protect our environment for the future. Our transport networks, our healthcare facilities, our schools and colleges, our homes and community facilities, our water and utilities, our communications networks, our justice and community safety facilities and our environmental and heritage assets: these are some of the essential components of our infrastructure that touch on all our lives.

As an Executive, we understand the importance of infrastructure. We are determined to invest in maintaining, upgrading and expanding it to support sustainable economic development and enhance Northern Ireland's attractiveness as a place to live, work, visit and invest for the years ahead.

Although this Investment Strategy primarily relates to the infrastructure that is owned and operated by the public sector, it recognises there is often considerable synergy and integration between public and private infrastructure. For example, key assets such as our airports, ports and the electricity and communications networks are privately/ independently owned or operated, or partly funded by charges levied on users. This Investment Strategy recognises that, as an Executive, we have a significant role too in encouraging and facilitating investment into these sectors from a wide range of sources.

Building and maintaining our infrastructure requires long-term commitment, financial planning (for both capital and revenue) and certainty. This Investment Strategy sets out our long-term vision for high quality infrastructure across the region, our investment priorities and recommends a process for identifying the optimum financing and delivery for all of our people. It also describes how we will address the significant challenges of transitioning our

economy and society to a future based on clean energy, while taking advantage of the opportunities arising from rapid technological advancement.

The Executive's Vision for Infrastructure

This new Investment Strategy sets out our ambitious vision:

***"We have the infrastructure that
enables everyone to lead a healthy, productive and fulfilling life;
that supports sustainable economic development and
protects our environment."***

It provides:

- a clear framework for planning and prioritising our future infrastructure investments
- a commitment to maximise the capital and revenue available to finance our investment needs and accelerate delivery
- a thematic, cross-cutting and coherent approach to enable more responsive, efficient and effective delivery of public infrastructure
- a clear signal to the private sector to enable and encourage infrastructure investment.

The challenges for our current and future infrastructure are fundamental and structural: demographic shifts, digitalisation, new technologies, climate change and the commitment to maintain our current infrastructure. The Investment Strategy provides the longer-term framework needed to prioritise investment to address these challenges and make the most of our opportunities. It sets out clear funding mechanisms and the strong governance and monitoring arrangements needed to manage delivery and assess the impact of our investment over the coming 30 years.

The strategy shows how, as the Executive, we will make the best use of our capital and revenue budgets to meet immediate priorities as we deal with the outworkings of Covid and in light of the UK's withdrawal from the EU and how we will invest for the longer term.

Supporting the Executive's Priorities

The Investment Strategy is one of the Executive's key strategies that will support the delivery of the Programme for Government (PfG). It is consistent with and complements the principles of the 10x Economic Strategy, Green Growth Strategy, the Energy Strategy, the Environment Strategy, the Housing Supply Strategy and the spatial planning framework set out in the Regional Development Strategy 2035.

The proposed Climate Change Act for Northern Ireland will place targets at a macro level and Climate Action Plans will set out how these will be delivered at a sectoral level. This will require our future investment plans to support these statutory commitments on emissions and our environment.

QUESTION 1

Do you agree with our vision for infrastructure? If not, what would you change?

PART B: STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Our Investment in Infrastructure

This strategy encompasses all areas of public infrastructure, including health, housing, education, justice, communities, transport, water and wastewater treatment and the environment. As such, the condition, efficiency, effectiveness and safety of this infrastructure affects most aspects of our daily lives.

Over the last 10 years, we invested nearly £15 billion in maintaining, upgrading and extending our regional infrastructure – an average of £1.48 billion per year. This is the equivalent of more than £8,000 per person. Nearly three-quarters of our investment has been in the major infrastructure areas: roads, housing, water and wastewater, schools, public transport and hospitals.

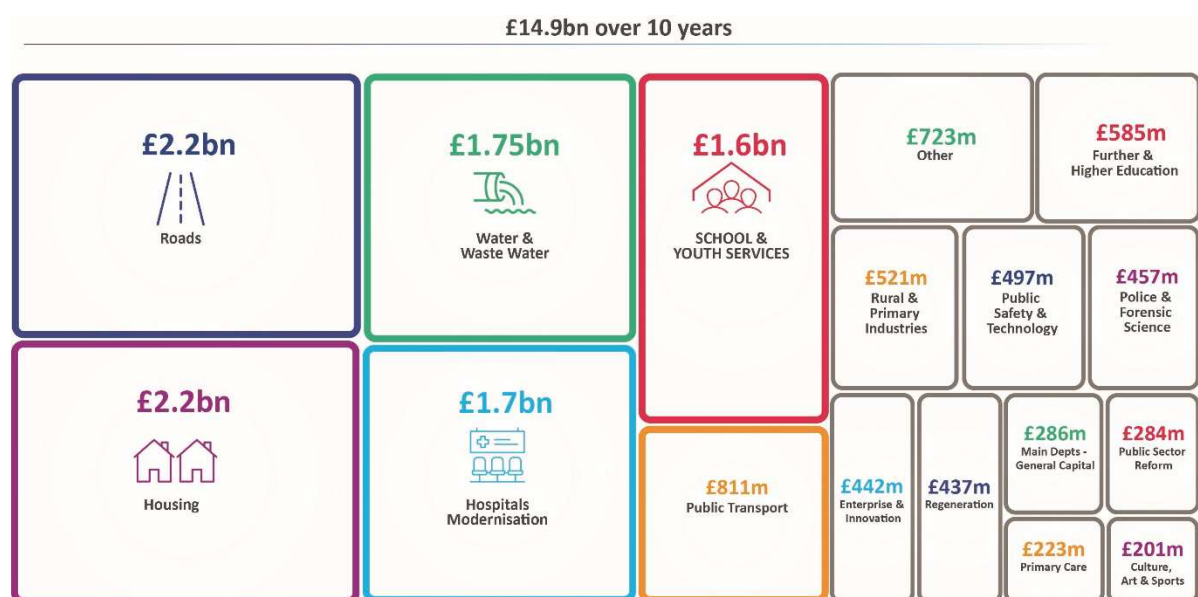


Fig 2: Infrastructure Spend 2011 – 2021

We have also invested in prisons, tourism, flood risk management, telecoms, courts, libraries, heritage, the environment and the arts and tourism.

During this period, more than 400 projects have been delivered across the region. Thirty of these have had a value of £100 million or more. Among these are investments such as the

Belfast Rapid Transit (The Glider), which has transformed public transport within Belfast; and the NI Water Dunore Water Treatment Works Solar Farm, which is saving 2,000 tonnes of carbon per year.

Some projects have, however, been delivered late or over-budget, or in some cases postponed in response to adverse budgetary situations. This strategy takes account of the lessons we have learned from these and sets out actions to improve the way we plan, fund, deliver and manage both our built and natural infrastructure to make smarter, more sustainable and more efficient use of our resources.

The Strategic Context

Our region faces significant challenges in the coming decades. At present, we are focused on supporting economic and social recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. But there is an urgent and growing need for us to address global climate change, to meet the needs of a growing and ageing population and to harness technological and digital change to improve lives, protect our environment and to secure jobs for the future. These present major challenges, but also opportunities, particularly as we invest to develop the green economy. The Investment Strategy provides a framework to address these generational challenges.

Responding to the climate emergency

Mitigating and adapting to global climate change will be the defining challenge for the 30-year period covered by the Investment Strategy. In 2019, the UK Government committed to achieving net zero greenhouse-gas emissions by 2050. The Climate Change Committee has indicated that we will need to make at least an 82% reduction in our emissions from the 1990 base level. Whichever target is ultimately adopted, the journey to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions must start now and will mean fundamental changes to how we design, build, use and fund our infrastructure, including how we generate energy; the design of, and standards for, our houses and our service delivery assets; our transport networks and vehicle fleets; and how we manage flood risk, coastal erosion and surface water. We will need to adopt a joined-up, whole-of-society approach to deliver integrated solutions, for

example by investing to update our electricity transmission and distribution grid to support mass electrification of transport systems.

Our changing population

Our population has risen consistently over the past century and is projected to continue to grow, although more slowly, to reach a peak of almost 2 million citizens by 2050. However, more than 3,500 new households are being formed each year – a rate that is higher than the rate of population growth and which reflects the trend towards smaller households. Although we have a relatively young population, it is ageing. The number of people over 65 is expected to increase by more than 200,000, and the number over 85 will more than double, requiring our infrastructure to adapt to support healthier, active lives for longer.

Our changing trade relationships

Our trading relationships with neighbouring countries are changing as we adjust to the UK's withdrawal from the EU and implement the new arrangements agreed by the UK Government and the European Commission. As yet, it is unclear what the long-term impact of these changes will be, but it is likely our trade patterns will continue to evolve, a factor that emphasises the need to improve connectivity for people and goods across the island of Ireland, with Great Britain, and to and from continental Europe and beyond.

Pace of technological innovation and increasing cyber-risks

We have experienced significant technological change over recent years, including the rapid development of 4G and 5G communication technologies; improved construction materials; the rise of artificial intelligence; and the increasing proliferation of smart sensor technology. Our ability to take advantage of the opportunities of digital infrastructure and new technology will depend on us having sufficient relevant skills and ensuring all our citizens have access to the technology they need. However, an increasingly digital future brings new and increased risks. As services become ever more interconnected, protecting our data is a priority, drawing on the world-class expertise of our universities and cybersecurity companies.

Over the past 10 years, just over half (54%) of our infrastructure investment has been in new assets. Although we are ambitious to continue to develop our infrastructure, the Investment Strategy recognises that much of the infrastructure we will use in the coming decades has already been built. We know we face challenges as a result of historic underinvestment in maintenance, with backlogs in services such as housing, roads, wastewater¹ and health², even though one-third of our annual capital investment is allocated to these existing assets, for example resurfacing roads or replacing street lighting. These maintenance liabilities require significant revenue as well as capital investment to maintain their condition, safety and effectiveness. Simultaneously, investment requirements driven by ever increasing safety, consumer and environmental requirements, drive a requirement for improvement across our existing assets. These improvement liabilities require additional revenue and capital investment to ensure they remain fit for the future. Over the next 30 years, we will maintain and improve existing assets, adapt them for new socially valuable uses or, where they are no longer required, ensure their timely decommissioning or disposal.

We are determined to get the balance right between investment in new and existing infrastructure. We will only build new infrastructure that we can afford to maintain, and consider not only the cost of construction but also the ongoing costs – much of which is revenue rather than capital expenditure – associated with operating and maintaining new assets.

Development of the Investment Strategy: Stakeholder Engagement

This Investment Strategy consultation document was developed between the autumn of 2020 and summer 2021. Building on extensive research and analysis, and detailed equality and rural needs impact assessments, it has involved extensive engagement with:

- community organisations, including the Youth Forum and Age NI
- business and industry organisations and representative bodies

¹ DFI estimates a backlog in structural maintenance for road of in excess of £1bn (NIAO 2019)

² The backlog maintenance across the Health Estate is currently £1.2bn (DoH 2021)

- government departments and agencies, their arm's length bodies and public corporations
- Local Authorities and their representative organisations.



Fig 3: Stakeholder Engagement

Much of this engagement was undertaken online due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Overall, 97 organisations were part of the process, which included one-to-one and 'town hall' meetings, workshops and discussions. Many organisations sought the views of their wider membership and 36 supplemented their meetings with written submissions. Others provided additional supplementary research or evidence.

This engagement has been central to identifying the **key strategic investment objectives, needs and priorities** that we will focus on for the coming decades. Our engagement has emphasised the need for the Investment Strategy to take a holistic and cross-cutting

approach – working across traditional departmental and sector boundaries – to reflect the increasingly interconnected way in which services will need to be delivered.

Structure of the Strategy

Part C of the strategy sets out our objectives and priorities, based on:

- where we are now
- where we need to be
- what we need to do.

Stakeholder engagement made clear that infrastructure investment must be based on principles of fairness and sustainability. These are set out in Part D of the strategy. This section also explains the new processes, structures and governance arrangements that will strengthen our delivery capacity and capability. We will also establish improved governance and monitoring arrangements to ensure we deliver value for money and can demonstrate the positive impact our investment is making.

QUESTION 2

Do you agree with our assessment of the challenges that we will face with our infrastructure over the next 30 years? If you disagree, why? And what do you think are the challenges and why?

PART C: OUR INVESTMENT NEEDS, OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

In developing this strategy, we have set five key objectives for our investment in infrastructure over the coming decades. To achieve our vision, we must:

1. decarbonise our economy and society
2. strengthen and protect our essential services
3. build a strong, connected and competitive region
4. enhance our communities and places
5. maximise the benefits from new technology and innovation.



Fig 4: ISNI Investment Objectives

QUESTION 3

Do you agree that these five key investment objectives address the challenges? If not, what would you consider to be the key investment objectives?

OBJECTIVE 1: TO DECARBONISE OUR ECONOMY, ASSETS AND SOCIETY

Where We Are Now

We have made significant progress in reducing our greenhouse gas emissions – more than the Republic of Ireland but not as much as Scotland, Wales, England or other countries in Europe. And we need to do much more.

Our society remains heavily dependent upon fossil fuels. In 2020, for example, less than 1% of our vehicles were electric-powered, compared to nearly 25% in the Netherlands and 74% in Norway. Currently, the majority of our homes meet only Category D or E (the lowest) in terms of Energy Performance, and our extensive public sector estate needs to improve its carbon footprint. Too many of our journeys are taken by private car rather than using sustainable public transport or active travel.

We have a strong record in the development of renewable energy. Around 42% of our energy is generated from renewable sources, which exceeds the 40% target we set for 2020. More than 65,000 homes, however, remain reliant on oil heating. Although the roll-out of the natural gas network over recent years has been a notable achievement, this has been mainly in urban areas. More properties need to be linked to the grid and we must decarbonise the system using bio-gas or natural gas blending with hydrogen. Our gas transmission and distribution infrastructure is relatively new compared to networks in GB, which means we are relatively better placed to manage the transition to a low-carbon gas mix. Net zero choices should be available for all our citizens, and while utilising the gas grid is a key part of this, for those premises off the gas grid then solutions such as heat pumps and hybrid heat pumps will be critical to deliver on our emissions reductions ambitions.

Our recycling rates have steadily increased from 2010, reaching a peak of over 50% in 2020. Waste arisings have also increased, with 2020/21 representing the most significant increase to date, of 3.2%. We have the capacity to reprocess some of the recycling we collect. That which cannot be dealt with here is exported to the Republic of Ireland, Great Britain, Europe and in some cases, to the rest of the world. Too much of our waste is exported each year to

become someone else's opportunity to recycle into higher-value material, generate energy; or unfortunately in some cases, to become someone else's disposal problem.

Where We Need To Be

We will need to make significant changes to the way we live to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. It is anticipated that the proposed Climate Change Act for Northern Ireland will set ambitious targets for the reduction in our emissions of carbon and other greenhouse gases. This will require change across every sector of our economy such as transport (land, air and sea), agriculture, energy, housing, and land use. The Executive's Green Growth Strategy and its supporting Green Growth and Climate Action Plans will set out the interim targets and how these can be achieved. Alongside decarbonisation, we need to ensure that other environmental issues which have the potential to adversely affect human health – such as noise, biodiversity and air quality – are addressed. These documents will identify the funding required and show how progress will be measured.

A key aspect for meeting our climate change targets will be decarbonisation – reducing greenhouse gas emissions in all sectors. Transport and agriculture are particularly important because together they account for more than half of the region's emissions. To achieve decarbonisation of our economy and society by 2050 will require the use of new technologies, behavioural change and regulation.

However, reducing future emissions will not be sufficient. We will have to build in greater resilience to our existing and future infrastructure and, in some places, constrain building to reduce the potential for harm to people and property, for example where the risk of flooding or coastal erosion has increased substantially.

The draft Green Growth Strategy aspires to a just transition to a greener economy. We need to ensure that this is regionally balanced and provides significant local employment and skills development opportunities across the region.

What We Need to Do

Energy Generation & Distribution

We will need to reduce the amount of energy we require and change how we produce, store and use it in order to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. For many sectors, including transport, moving towards electrification will be essential to decarbonising. Low-carbon electricity will also be required to play a central role in meeting our heating needs in the next decade and beyond. We will therefore need to invest in our electricity-generating capacity; improve the transmission and distribution network; and develop new storage systems. In the case of marine-based projects, the draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland and the UK Marine Policy Statement must be considered. Clear direction and policies will be required to ensure investment supports such new renewable generation, providing both large-scale and community-based project promoters with greater certainty to take forward projects.

Sustainable Travel

Our dependence on petrol and diesel vehicles will have to end. We need to reduce our journeys and ensure many more of them are taken by sustainable public transport or active travel. More than 40% of vehicles here will need to be electric by 2035 if we are to be on track to meet our transport emissions targets. This will require significant investment across urban and rural areas in rapid charging stations, electricity generation, storage, distribution and battery recycling, plus engagement with consumers and the manufacturing sector.

The public sector can set an example by transitioning its fleet of more than 12,000 vehicles to alternative fuels. Translink has already signed the Climate Action Pledge and committed to halving its emissions by 2030. It intends to provide zero-emission bus and rail services by 2040, and go beyond net zero by 2050. To deliver this will require significant additional investment in rail infrastructure.

Decarbonise our Assets

Investment in housing, water and wastewater treatment facilities and buildings will be needed to improve energy efficiency. However, a significant proportion of the assets we already have will last for many years to come. For example, improved building thermal efficiency and retrofitting will be needed throughout much of our housing and building stock. We will need to exploit opportunities to further decarbonise – by using bio-gas or gas blended with hydrogen. Similarly, we will need to consider how existing assets, which are no longer needed, can be repurposed to meet new and emerging patterns of demand, thereby ensuring the impact of embodied carbon is minimised. Our leadership in energy efficiency should act as a catalyst for new supply chain and job opportunities so that all sectors can deliver.

Develop a Circular Economy

The principles of a circular economy are that we should:

- design out the generation of waste and pollution
- keep products and materials in use
- implement measures to sequester carbon.

Although there is already a commitment to achieve recycling levels of 65% by 2035, we will need to invest in and develop a more coherent, robust and resilient waste management system for the whole of the region.

Adaptation and Mitigation

The Climate Change Committee's assessment for Northern Ireland identifies flooding as the most significant risk we face, requiring investment in flood mitigation and flood alleviation measures. Over the next decade, more than £155m will be required for new flood alleviation capital works. There will need to be greater emphasis on habitat and green space protection and flood prevention, with a focus on upstream and natural solutions, for example building on the 'Living with Water' approach to improve capacity in our drainage and wastewater management systems.

QUESTION 4

Are these the investment priority areas we need to focus on to decarbonise our economy and society? If not, what are the investment priority areas that will help decarbonise our economy?

Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Decarbonise Our Economy, Assets and Society

We will:

Decarbonise our utilities	by improving energy efficiency and diversified renewable energy generation, storage and distribution, including solar, hydrogen, off- and on-shore wind
Develop a circular economy	by establishing a coherent, resilient and robust waste management system and investing in facilities to reduce waste generation, increase recycling and reduce landfill and the export of waste
Transition to sustainable homes	by ensuring new-build properties are heated sustainably and retrofitting existing properties to ensure as many of them as possible over time reach Energy Performance Category A or better
Decarbonise the transport sector	by expanding the public rapid EV charging network for cars and other vehicles; investing in public transport and active travel; and transitioning the public sector fleet(s) to alternative fuels
Improve our resilience to climate change	by continuing to invest in flood prevention, alleviation and mitigation measures to improve the resilience of our critical infrastructure and to invest in coastal erosion adaptation

OBJECTIVE 2: TO STRENGTHEN OUR ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Where We Are Now

Strong, efficient and effective public services that are responsive to needs are essential to deliver our ambitions for the region and to meet the expectations of our citizens. Infrastructure such as modern schools and healthcare facilities, social and intermediate housing, digital connectivity, accessible court facilities and good community infrastructure underpin a fair and prosperous society for all.

Good quality infrastructure helps us to promote equality and good relations. It is also essential for our businesses and to support our economy. Transport networks, communications and energy infrastructure and water and wastewater treatment services all need to be fit for purpose.

Water and Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater treatment facilities are a critical part of our public infrastructure. They treat domestic, commercial and industrial effluents efficiently to make them safe to return to our environment. Across the region, some of our combined wastewater plants that collect rainwater runoff, domestic sewage and industrial wastewater into one pipe are nearing or at capacity – especially at times of high demand due to adverse weather. This is now acting as a brake on the planned development of the new homes and businesses we need. The lack of wastewater treatment capacity has also resulted in an excess of small legacy treatment works, often developed privately to enable small-scale housing developments to proceed. This approach is inefficient and costly, with more than 70% of wastewater treatment works serving only 10% of the population. Such a fragmented approach to critical infrastructure is environmentally and financially unsustainable.

Health and Social Care

We have unacceptably wide variations in health outcomes. Poverty and deprivation have a significant impact on the demand for primary and secondary health and social care services. For example, emergency hospital admissions are 60% higher in our most deprived

communities compared with the least deprived communities. The level of demand for primary care is already higher than in comparable countries. This emphasises the urgent need to plan infrastructure, such as leisure facilities, that enable us all to live longer, healthier lives.

The demands of the Covid pandemic have tested our health and social services as never before. There is now a significant backlog of demand for medical care and treatment. During this period our health and social care services have sought to accelerate transformation, innovating and adopting new technology to improve the way in which care is planned and delivered. The momentum of this change must be maintained and the pace of improvement increased, all of which will require significant investment.

Education and Skills

Our schools, colleges and universities are at the heart of our local communities and are valuable community assets. They provide learning, sports and leisure facilities for adults in addition to being places of education for our children. But our school population is expected to fall over the coming years and there are already more than 40,000 surplus places in our school system. Our schools, on average, tend to be smaller than in other regions, meaning that spending per pupil is below what is typical in the UK. In 2021, more than 30% of schools had enrolments that are below the threshold of what is deemed sustainable by the Education Authority.

Justice and Community Safety

Our justice system is too slow and is delivered from facilities that are often antiquated and use outdated technology. This needs to change, as our communities deserve a justice system in which every element, from preventative services to our courts and prisons, is more accessible, responsive and efficient. The PSNI estate needs to be transformed alongside new approaches to the deployment of people and technology to improve services for victims and criminal justice outcomes.

Where We Need To Be

How we use our public services will continue to change and we will need to be able to respond to reflect the needs of an ageing population. This will affect the ways in which we will live and work. Our services will need to be fit for the future, meeting citizens' aspirations and able to handle the demands of a rapidly changing climate.

Over the coming 30 years, some of our public sector assets will have to be renewed, some will be repurposed and some will no longer be required. Ensuring the efficient and effective use of the assets we have is understandably less eye-catching than focusing on new developments, but a "right size" of public sector, one that is fit for purpose, will be a key element in the successful delivery of essential public services. This is particularly relevant to Health where 45% of the current estate does not meet Statutory Standards and no significant in-roads are being made to address the estimated £1,241 million backlog maintenance liability. It is cheaper to maintain our assets well today rather than catch up on a backlog of maintenance tomorrow.

What We Need to Do

The long term strategic plan for health and social care is to provide modern, fit for purpose facilities through the creation or maintenance of sustainable models of care that support communities and contribute to improved health, well-being and quality of life for the people of Northern Ireland.

Over the next 30 years, we will invest in our acute hospitals to provide a better patient environment, improved clinical outcomes for patients and to maintain service delivery. We will do this by strategically analysing data to provide suitable hospital accommodation, emergency departments that are right sized to meet demand and new maternity and children's hospitals.

Now more than ever we need to provide investment to deliver new mental health inpatient units as many of the existing facilities are in poor condition and provide a very unhelpful environment for therapy for patients facing the challenges of mental illness. Similarly, investment is required to provide appropriate support, therapies and a range of

accommodation options for the most vulnerable adults and children in society and their families. Investment in a range of residential respite facilities providing short and long term breaks to support families to meet their caring duties, in new day care facilities to ensure the care is focused to meet the needs of the most complex service users with a learning disability, and in residential care facilities for children and young people who are looked after.

With an ageing society, we will also continue with the Primary Care Infrastructure Development Programme which will provide primary-care hubs as key community facilities going forward, strengthening prevention, social/domiciliary care and outpatient treatment to support our population well within the community. The Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex – which opened in 2017 – provides one example of this, offering a central health hub that has reduced demand on A&E departments.

However, investment in health is much more than delivering new health facilities, it includes investment in new strategies such as the Elective Care Framework and the Cancer Recovery Plan, in research and development which has been vital in the fight against Covid 19 and the specialist equipment required by modern medicine. However, we will still need our acute facilities, and will focus investment on the specialist equipment and facilities modern medicine requires.

We will need to continue to transform our healthcare delivery through investment in digital technology. The Encompass programme will transform patient records management and administration across all our health and social care services, encompassing acute care, community care and eventually extending to cover primary care service delivery. A modern unified and integrated clinical information system will provide more joined-up care for patients and more efficient use of staff time and resources.

Alongside the physical and technical infrastructure there is a drive to understand and exploit the wealth of information collected in the course of delivering health and social care to citizens. This will be used to inform service improvements, drive innovation and inform policy decision making. The work will result in the development of a modern, responsive skills base with the potential to promote growth in the wider economy.

Investment is required to modernise and reform the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service if we are to maintain the high standards of service and improve performance through better facilities, fleet, equipment and technology.

Our schools, colleges and universities must be sustainable – financially, environmentally and educationally. This means each institution must have sufficient numbers of pupils and students to enable the delivery of a wide and balanced curriculum and to get value for money from investment in equipment and facilities. For our universities, delivering on existing commitments such as the innovation investments in our City Deals and the expansion of Magee, will not only support the growth of these institutions but also act as an economic catalyst for the region. Further rationalisation of the education estate will be required. We will focus investment on schools and colleges that are sustainable, ensuring they are well equipped and well-maintained and ensuring that all educational provision available is taken into account when considering the need for new buildings. This will be balanced by our strong commitment to ensuring equality, providing for the differing needs of individual learners, facilitating pupil and parental choice and ensuring adequate access in rural and remote areas.

Investment in IT for the justice system is needed to enable the greater use of remote hearings, improve the online submissions of documents and speed up the payment of fines. For cases that go to court, we need improved buildings that meet the needs of vulnerable witnesses and defendants. The NI Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) will target investment to deliver a more consistent standard of accommodation, facilities and services for all court and tribunal users. For those in the care of the NI Prison Service, there will be a focus on using digitalisation to improve staff and prisoner safety, enhance prisoner independence and family connectivity and maximise efficiency.

Policing is changing as we move away from the legacy of the past, resulting in the sale of surplus assets such as redundant police stations and housing. New police training facilities are needed to enable and support new policing models and technology. Police headquarters will be rationalised, shared administration systems implemented, and new analytic capabilities developed to meet the needs of policing in the twenty-first century. A major upgrade is planned for the regional communications network, shared across the 'blue light' services and other critical public sector services.

To achieve all of this we will need other essential infrastructure such as public transport and water and wastewater facilities to be fit for purpose. This will require a more collaborative and joined-up approach to planning and investment to avoid sub-optimal or ad hoc outcomes.

QUESTION 5

Are these the priority areas we need to focus on to strengthen our essential services? If not, what do you think are the investment priorities that will strengthen our essential services?

Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Strengthen Our Essential Services

We will:

Strengthen secondary, primary and mental health care	by investing in acute hospitals, in mental health and social care facilities and in the continued development of primary care hubs to provide high-quality, effective and efficient physical and mental healthcare
Increase the efficiency and responsiveness of our health service	by continuing to invest in the digital transformation of our health services and in our emergency services to improve their efficiency and effectiveness
Invest in sustainable facilities for learning and education	by a whole-system approach to rationalising and modernising our education estate to provide fit-for-purpose facilities for learning and skills that take account of the needs of our pupils, our businesses and the economy
Increase our wastewater treatment capacity	by investing in high-quality wastewater treatment facilities to ensure they are fit for purpose, support sustainable development, are efficient and meet rigorous environmental standards
Invest in the transformation of our justice system	by investing in technology and facilities that support the delivery of a modern, responsive justice system

OBJECTIVE 3: TO ENHANCE OUR COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

Where We Are Now

Our towns and villages are the fabric of our communities and our way of life. They provide a focal point for employment, leisure and the public and community services on which many people depend. They also provide a sense of identity for local people and places.

Too many towns and villages have experienced decline in recent years, with rising retail vacancy rates and under-utilised high streets. The reasons for this are complex. They include an increasing reliance on out-of-town shopping centres; the rise of online retail and services; low levels of residential accommodation; and discrepancies in business rates for high street shops. All these factors have been aggravated by Covid-19 restrictions, which reduced the number of people working in urban areas.

Where We Need To Be

Our towns and villages need to regain and then retain their vibrancy, purpose and sense of place. High streets of the future should be safe and attractive gathering points for whole communities, where people can live, work, shop, learn, do business, use public services and enjoy their leisure time.

The value of open space, community, leisure and recreation facilities has been highlighted clearly throughout the Covid pandemic. We need to restore and improve the quality of our natural environment for the benefit of all.

Significant intervention will be required to help our towns and villages. In cases of market failure, the public sector may need to re-think the location of service delivery and administration investment or pump-prime regeneration, at least in the short term, to encourage private and community investment. This can support the long-term evolution of our high streets from retail centres, helping them to redefine their purpose, to embrace a broader role servicing local social, environmental, housing and economic needs.

What We Need to Do

Regenerate Our High Streets

Our high streets need to be redefined for their future role. They will be anchored with public-sector tenants, providing multi-functional hubs such as libraries, community services, police stations, healthcare, leisure, education, open spaces, housing and sports facilities. We will increase housing in our urban areas – recognising that this will require us to address outdated attitudes to town centre living – as well as ensuring accommodation complies with high standards for space and amenities. Working with private-sector and community organisations also presents opportunities to focus on the reuse, repurposing and refurbishment of existing urban buildings instead of new developments. People rather than vehicles should be the priority to encourage our high streets to be community-focused, attractive environments.

CASE STUDY: A New Future for Scotland's Town Centres / Town Centre First

In response to the challenges facing their town centres, Scotland's communities, local government, businesses and third-sector partners took a collaborative 'town centre first' approach, guided by the internationally recognised 2013 Town Centre Action Plan. This plan emphasised the role of town centres and the need to prioritise and support them. Six themes (town centre living; accessible public services; proactive planning; digital towns; enterprising communities; and vibrant local economies) provided the framework to focus activities to improve town centres. COSLA and the Scottish Government signed an agreement on Town Centre First, promoting town centre development as the primary place of development, and in 2019 adopted the Place Principle (to provide a shared context for place-based work).

In June 2020, the Scottish Government launched an independent collaborative review of the progress and scope of the 2013 Action Plan, to build on the town centre-first approach and develop a refreshed vision for towns and the means to achieve it. A key element of the review was to ensure the right measures were put in place to enable towns to emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic with more resilience. The Review Group adopted the following vision to guide their work.

"Towns and town centres are for the well-being of people, planet and the economy. Towns are for everyone, and everyone has a role to play in making their own town and town centre successful."

The review recognised the Place Principle and town centre planning and visioning has helped generate investment and build a sense of place. It also noted that concepts such as Community Wealth Building including community asset ownership were gaining ground. These and Community Empowerment legislation were recognised as exciting ways to deliver on the growing appetite for localism. The review acknowledged the changing context in the development of the National Outcomes and their linkage to the UN SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), which positioned Scotland as focusing on well-being, inclusive development, climate emergency responses and health and inequalities. It concluded that the approach from the 2013 Action Plan remained sound, but more consistent and rapid progress was needed. The review proposed strengthening the position of town centres to ensure a local embeddedness and focus on working the local community by:

- *strengthening the formal positions of town in National Planning*
- *reviewing the current tax, funding and development systems to ensure well-being, economy and climate outcomes, fairness and equality are at their heart*
- *expanding and aligning funding of town and town centre demonstration projects.*

The plans in Scotland have informed the work of the NI Executive's High Street Task Force, which met for the first time in February 2021.

The town centre-first approach taken in Scotland and Wales provides a good model for future decisions. This approach places town centre health at the heart of decision-making processes, driving public sector investment decisions, aligning policies and targeting resources to prioritise the regeneration of town centre sites.

Sustainable and Active Transport

We are a highly car-dependent society. We must rethink how and when we travel, creating more sustainable, accessible and safer communities through improvements for pedestrians and cyclists and prioritising our public transport. Electric and zero-emissions vehicles (EV/ZEV) will play an important part, especially for longer and rural journeys if public transport is not available. However, the design of our town and city centres will need to encourage and reflect a determined move to sustainable and active travel. Our infrastructure will also have to adapt to meet the needs and aspirations of an ageing population.

CASE STUDY: 15-Minute City

The concept of the '15-minute city' is one in which urban residents can fulfil six essential functions – living, working, commerce, healthcare, education and entertainment – within a 15-minute walk or bike ride from their home. Developed in 2016 by Professor Carlos Moreno, a leading urbanist at the Sorbonne in Paris, there are three core tenets to the concept:

- *the rhythm of a city should follow humans, not cars*
- *each square metre of urban fabric/space should serve multiple purposes through the day*
- *neighbourhoods should be designed so inhabitants can live, work and thrive in them, without having to commute elsewhere.*



Whilst acknowledging cities are places of economic dynamism and innovation, the '15-minute city' concept recognises that urban life needs to be pleasant, agile, healthy and flexible. The purpose is, therefore, to create an urban environment based on:

<i>Ecology</i>	<i>Proximity</i>	<i>Solidarity</i>	<i>Participation</i>
<i>...for a green and sustainable city</i>	<i>...living with reduced distance to other activities</i>	<i>...to create links between people</i>	<i>...involving citizens in the transformation of their neighbourhood</i>

Paris is leading the way, with an all-embracing vision of the model. Under Mayor Anne Hidalgo's aim for 'La Ville Du Quart d'Heure', Paris is focusing on a new economic model for local businesses. Reducing traffic and reclaiming streets as bike lanes and areas for leisure, and transforming existing infrastructure are all priority areas of focus.

Other cities around the world are now exploring the potential of this vision of urban living to deliver more resilient and vibrant communities. Many including the C40 cities are also promoting the '15-minute city' idea as a blueprint for post Covid-19 recovery, with the 15-Minute City Project established in 2020 as an information resource and platform to promote relevant and inspiring efforts around the world.

Active travel will need to be attractive and practical in both rural and urban areas, not just for leisure travel but for daily mobility and for children to get to school. This will mean investment in footways, and in safe and separate cycle facilities, such as Greenways for leisure and the reallocation and sharing of road space to create Quiet Lanes and Healthy Ways. In urban areas, pedestrianisation and pedestrian priority will have a key part to play.

CASE STUDY: Path of Health

Slí na Sláinte (SnaS) meaning "path of health", is an initiative developed by the Irish Heart Foundation and supported by the HSE to encourage people of all ages and abilities to walk for leisure and health.



Slí na Sláinte routes are signposted walkways providing an accessible and inexpensive environment for regular exercise. Yellow signs on blue poles are placed at one-kilometre intervals, allowing walkers to keep track of how far they walk. Signs are not numbered so walkers can start and finish at whatever point they like. International research has confirmed that the development of such community walking trails can boost exercise and improve health at low cost.

Trained leaders promote and lead walks in their area and run the "Slí Challenge", helping people calculate their time and distance walked to meet their personal targets. With 230 Slí na Sláinte routes all over Ireland, the programme has expanded internationally with Heart Foundations in ten countries implementing the scheme to date.

Each is developed locally by the relevant Local Authority in partnership with the community and (optional) other appropriate commercial organisations. It then becomes part of the approved list of Slí routes. All routes are on Local Authority land or Coillte property, with management and maintenance the responsibility of the Local Authority.

CASE STUDY: Quiet Lanes

The Transport Act 2000 gave Local Authorities in England the ability to designate country lanes as 'Quiet Lanes'. These are defined as minor rural roads or networks of minor rural roads appropriate for shared use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and other vehicles. The aim is to maintain the character of minor rural roads by seeking to contain widespread, rising traffic growth. They are a sustainable initiative aimed at opening up more of the countryside for leisure and recreation activities and active travel.



Quiet Lanes must be rural in character (though not necessarily in a rural area), carry fewer than 1,000 vehicles per day and the 85th percentile traffic speed should be less than 35mph. Narrow, single-track roads are the most suitable for the designation. Community involvement is essential to define which lanes should be considered and encourage a change in behaviour of road users.

Typically, a Quiet Lane is hosted by a local, rural community, such as a parish or village group, who recognises that designation can bring benefits to their local quality of life.

There are three key elements to a Quiet Lanes scheme:

- *community involvement to encourage a change in user behaviour*
- *area-wide direction signing to discourage through traffic*
- *nationally prescribed signs to remind drivers that they are entering or exiting a Quiet Lane, a place where they may expect people to be using the whole of the road space for a range of activities.*

Designation does not bring any enforceable restrictions or prohibit use by any type of vehicles or regulate their speed. However, signage reminds users of the types of traffic they will be expected to see and encourages them to respect each other.

Quiet Lanes were initially introduced as demonstration projects in Kent, Essex and Norfolk, and are now widespread across England. There is a growing interest in their further development to support more active forms of travel as the country lives with the Covid-19 virus, as well as contributing to local responses to the climate emergency.

Investing in Housing

The location and design of new housing and the maintenance and improvement of existing housing will be critical to building sustainable communities. Too often we permit significant housing development on greenfield sites or single dwellings in the countryside, often poorly supported by existing infrastructure and leading to car-dependent lifestyles. This must change to support a sustainable future and alternative sites must be found that are better suited to meeting our needs. We must equally find a way to align long-term supply with demand, repurposing non-residential buildings that are no longer used.

We will prioritise our investment in sustainable housing, maintaining or locating it close to services, where it contributes to tackling climate change, can meet the needs of communities and an increasingly elderly population who require easy and independent access to services including health and social care. Good quality and well-located private and public housing will also be central to place-making and integration, and to addressing well-being, mental health and loneliness.

Enhancing Cultural, Arts and Leisure Infrastructure and the Natural Environment

Our leisure and cultural projects are vital social infrastructure, supporting economic development and contributing to our sense of place. Our creative industry sector is strong and growing. But our museums need ongoing investment in their storage and exhibition spaces to upgrade their attractiveness to citizens and visitors alike.

We need to ensure continued access for all to high-quality and local open spaces, as well as to sporting and leisure facilities.

QUESTION 6

Are these the investment priority areas we need to focus on to enhance our communities and places? If not, what do you think are the investment priorities that will enhance our communities and places?

Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Enhance Our Communities and Places

We will:

Redefine the purpose of our high streets/urban centres	by regenerating our key urban and rural towns and villages, building on the work of the Northern Ireland High Street Task Force to ensure they are vibrant and thriving
Promote active travel, prioritising walking, cycling and wheeling for leisure and mobility	by encouraging active travel through the reallocation of funding and road space to prioritise safe and accessible walking and cycling for leisure and commuting; this will include the further development of Greenways, Quiet Lanes/Healthy Ways, and segregated pedestrian/cycle facilities
Expand social and intermediate housing	by continuing to invest in the building of additional high-quality housing and the refurbishment of existing social homes to meet the needs of communities, including those relating to an ageing population; and reducing the waiting times for social housing
Develop our sports, culture, arts and leisure facilities and enhance our natural environment	by expanding the provision of high-quality, accessible green space, leisure and sporting facilities; by supporting and enhancing our natural environment and by maintaining our arts and cultural venues

OBJECTIVE 4: TO BUILD A STRONG, CONNECTED AND COMPETITIVE REGION

Where We Are Now

Our economy has shown great resilience in dealing with the Covid pandemic. We have numerous strong, world-class, indigenous companies, particularly in advanced manufacturing, agri-food and the creative industries. We are a recognised leader in many specialist areas such as cyber security, data analytics, life and health sciences, and fintech. We are Europe's leading foreign direct investment destination for new software development.

However, our economy has been characterised by long-term structural weaknesses and inequalities, further exacerbated by the pandemic. It suffers from poor productivity, relatively low wages, with too many lacking high-level skills or in need of reskilling; high rates of economic inactivity; and relatively low levels of investment in research, development and innovation.

Where We Need To Be

Investment in the right physical and skills infrastructure will need to encourage stronger, more balanced and consistent economic growth and enable us to build on our strengths. The Covid pandemic has underlined the importance of improving our resilience against economic shocks, and enable us to achieve greater prosperity, whilst addressing the imbalances and inequalities that have persisted for too long.

Given our geographical location, we need to maintain strong connectivity internationally, nationally and locally. This is critical for our economy to survive and thrive to 2050. With changing working patterns, the need for physical connectivity is also evolving. We must rethink the traditional models of focusing investment primarily on supporting daily peak-hour car travel to work and deliveries into major centres. Instead, we must address the new disparate and dispersed patterns of travel for work, leisure and deliveries.

Rapid changes in working and service delivery prompted by Covid have also emphasised the need to maintain and strengthen our digital connectivity – providing fast, reliable broadband and advances in mobile connectivity for all our citizens and businesses.

For a small, advanced economy such as ours to be competitive, we must overcome the physical barriers and infrastructure constraints that limit our competitiveness. Two critical examples are strengthening our wastewater network and overcoming shortages in the land available for commercial and residential development.

What We Need to Do

Our Strategic Road Network

Our strategic road network is vital for the effective transport of people and goods within our region, across the island of Ireland and to ensure good and reliable connectivity with Great Britain. The development of the Investment Strategy has coincided with the UK's Union Connectivity Review. An emerging recommendation of the Review is the development of a new UK Strategic Transport Network. This will achieve better management of the flow of people and goods between UK regions and improve the partnership working between the UK government and devolved administrations. As well as strategic links within our region, the Review recognises the importance of the port of Cairnryan and the A75 and A77 in Scotland for our companies taking goods to UK markets and their onward transport to customers in mainland Europe.

There is much potential for further investment in cross-border strategic networks, for example the completion of the A5 Western Transport Corridor as a strategic corridor to the northwest; the Narrow Water Bridge, and the promotion of leisure routes and trails to support our tourism sector.

Public Transport Services: We have a relatively small rail network, although there is growing interest in understanding the potential for its expansion and improvement. In particular, the All-Island Strategic Rail Review, when complete, will help to articulate this potential, but only where demand supports such investment and value for money can be demonstrated. The electrification and upgrading of the Belfast-Dublin rail corridor are recognised as being future

developments of strategic importance. 40% of the population on the island lives within 30 minutes of this economic corridor. Focus on such key corridors elsewhere has been shown to encourage economic growth.

Investing in our bus network and developing multi-modal hubs will help create a more connected and accessible sustainable public transport network.

CASE STUDY: Greater Copenhagen & Skåne Committee (GCSC) – Øresund Region

Founded in 2015, Greater Copenhagen is a collaboration between local authorities and regions in Southern Sweden and Eastern Denmark, encompassing 4.4m citizens and focused on generating growth.

The initiative involved the creation of a cross-border functional economy with a new regional brand/name. It builds on the metropolitan area around Copenhagen and, across the sound, southern Sweden following the opening of a fixed-link bridge/tunnel in 2000. The link provides agglomeration benefits, creating a larger metropolitan region with an integrated labour market, helping to overcome the drawbacks of the area's peripheral location in global terms. The Øresund Region is a technology hub with innovation potential, world-class scientific infrastructure and a good environment for start-ups. Wider policy efforts were needed to connect the assets and capabilities in the enlarged region. Many of the Øresund initiatives have prioritised the creation of business and knowledge networks and collaborative platforms.



It believes a successfully integrated labour market will secure more jobs and bring new businesses to Greater Copenhagen. In 2017 the European Commission (EC) named Greater Copenhagen a model metropolis for collaboration across borders, partly linked to the improved integration of the labour market and economy that was kickstarted in 2000 by the completion of the Øresund Bridge. However, the EC also pointed out that this could be improved by expanding public transportation across borders, as a more efficient traffic infrastructure would strengthen the region's reputation as an integrated and functional metropolis. In response, Greater Copenhagen developed a Traffic Charter which features both regional and cross-border infrastructure projects, including accessibility to cities from rural areas. Using public transport, it should take no longer than an hour to reach Copenhagen or Malmö, no matter from where in the region people are travelling.

Greater Copenhagen is building on this work (in 2021) with its vision to “be a global hub for growth, sustainable solutions and innovation”. It promotes cooperation between its members and creates alliances at both regional and international levels, connecting knowledge hubs, businesses

and public institutions. It is about breaking down barriers between local authorities, regions and countries and creating a partnership where everyone pulls in the same direction and invests in shared solutions to shared challenges. The area is a hub for knowledge and excellence, boasting approximately 14,000 researchers, 19 research parks and innovation centres and 17 universities. It will focus on five key areas, which it believes are essential to its future growth and welfare.

Greater Copenhagen recognised that infrastructural improvements are an essential driver for regional integration and competitiveness. However, these improvements are not sufficient on their own. Wider policy efforts were needed to connect the assets and capabilities in the enlarged region. Many of the initiatives in the Øresund have been to create networks and collaborative platforms.

In Belfast the Belfast Rapid Transit Glider service, introduced in September 2018, uses hybrid high-capacity tram-style vehicles and has been highly successful in increasing public transport use at a time of decline elsewhere in the UK. Further enhancement and strengthening of our rural and urban public transport network and services, including a north-south Glider link across Belfast and potentially similar services elsewhere, will be key to developing a more sustainable approach to transport and ensuring easier access to services, especially for the young and older people.

Ports, Harbours & Airports

Our ports, harbours and airports provide vital links for travellers, freight and trade. Each of our three airports serves a distinct market, but between them they offer a strong network of business, cargo and leisure flights. Our ports, harbours and airports need an overall coherent air and port strategy, including investment plans that encourage and enable greater accessibility.

Brexit and the Covid pandemic have demonstrated clearly the importance of ensuring the smooth flow of cargo for imports and exports. Our ports serve freight and passengers, and also increasingly the cruise/leisure travel market in Belfast and Derry. Ongoing investment will be required to meet these demands. Belfast Harbour plans considerable investment in its marine and estate infrastructure, including schemes to deepen the shipping channels and create deep-water quays. We will encourage further investment in our key gateways and provide assistance where there is a need to do so.

Efficient Utility and Digital Networks

Resilient and efficient utility networks are essential to support businesses and citizens. The north-south interconnector, for example, will ensure security of supply and the achievement of strategic renewable energy and decarbonisation targets.

We have a strong communications infrastructure reflecting past and current investments by both public and private sectors. This has provided vital foundations for our thriving digital economy. We will continue to encourage and support investment, as we could quickly fall behind other regions, given the fast pace of technology development and new demands for speed and bandwidth arising from a more connected world. We are determined to maximise the benefits that digital networks offer to create a more regionally balanced, sustainable economy based on the principles of Green Growth. The Shared Rural Network – a joint venture between commercial operators and the UK Government – aims to increase mobile broadband coverage to a minimum of 95% by 2025, addressing the many ‘not spots’ and allowing rural business to prosper and rural communities to thrive.

5G networks will provide the much-needed capacity to underpin increased mobile traffic. This technology will also be a crucial foundation for our post-Covid-19 recovery and future growth in innovation, especially as we adapt to increased home/remote working, smart cities and the growth of the Internet of Things. 5G will also support the proliferation of connected devices and open up new opportunities for business and jobs. Productivity gains to business, equality gains for regions and economic gains for the region as a whole are only as achievable as the networks they can access. Belfast Harbour is already seeing the tangible benefits that disruptive digital technologies can deliver for business and industry, with plans for 5G-enabled applications part of its vision for creating a ‘Smart Port’.

Unlock Our Strategic Sites

There is a legacy of former military or defence and other industrial sites being left vacant. These provide potentially valuable large-scale and usually well-connected brownfield sites in locations where there are often shortages of development land for business and housing – shortages which constrain economic growth. Ensuring the planning regime enables us to unlock these sites for investment should be a key priority, allowing for well planned, sustainable economic development.

QUESTION 7

Are these the investment priority areas we need to focus on to build a strong, competitive and connected region? If not, what do you think are the investment priorities that will help build a strong, competitive and connected region?

Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Build a Strong, Competitive and Connected Region

We will:

Improve connectivity on strategic corridors	by continuing to invest in our strategic transport networks to ensure effective and efficient connectivity within and between regions (rail, road, air, port, active travel and digital/utility) and within key economic corridors such as the Belfast–Dublin corridor
Strengthen our public transport networks	by maintaining and strengthening our inter-urban, urban and rural public transport networks, including the expansion of the rapid transit system within Belfast
Maintain strong utility and digital connectivity	by encouraging and supporting investment in our utility and digital networks to ensure individuals, communities and businesses throughout the region can maximise the benefits networks can offer with world class digital and telecom connectivity
Leverage key strategic development sites	by facilitating the development of strategic sites, such as Maze/Long Kesh, to maximise economic opportunities and act as exemplars for sustainable, multi-use developments

OBJECTIVE 5: TO MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS FROM EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Where we are now

Although we have already made a start on transforming and modernising our public services, too much of our public sector is still reliant on paper-based or ageing IT systems that are often fragmented and hard to use. However, our response to Covid-19 has shown that we can use technology to deliver many services more efficiently and effectively.

Our region benefits from a strong communications infrastructure base and is the UK's best digitally connected region, with 65% of homes and businesses (530,000 premises) – including 75% within Belfast – having access to full fibre broadband. Project Stratum is improving this further for the 10% of premises currently unable to access broadband speeds of 30 Mbps primarily in rural areas, which to date have not benefited from commercial investment.

We are starting from a strong base. Our academic institutions and industry partners are recognised leaders in research, development and commercialisation in key technology domains – particularly in cybersecurity, advanced manufacturing, and software development focused on financial services, insurance, agri-food, medical/pharmaceutical applications and green technologies. The NI Digital Catapult leads the UK catapult network in areas of artificial intelligence, machine learning, virtual reality and augmented reality – helping our companies to grow by harnessing the power and potential of these new technologies.

Already, in the public sector, we are investing in 'smart technologies' to improve accessibility, drive up the quality of our public services, and drive down costs. For example, we are utilising sensors on road surfaces to identify and respond quicker to defects that affect drivers. We are also monitoring livestock using satellite imagery to improve services to farmers and response to disease outbreaks. These are some of many applications that indicate the potential for the future.

Where We Need To Be

However, technology is continuing to develop rapidly and will profoundly change infrastructure in terms of:

- **embedding technology** into infrastructure assets so that we can monitor and improve their performance
- **system integration and management** – optimising infrastructure networks so that we can improve their utilisation
- **technology affecting how people and businesses use current infrastructure**
- **innovative technology** that will change future demand for and supply of infrastructure, in some cases make existing infrastructure obsolete, in others changing the way infrastructure is designed, built and operated.

To guide our future investment in data and digital infrastructure, we need to ensure:

- no-one will be left behind in the transition to a more digital-focused future. Equality of access to digital technology is an important issue of social equity and fairness. This was demonstrated clearly during the Covid pandemic when a rise in schooling and working from home highlighted the need for affordable, reliable broadband connectivity and access to devices.
- our systems are secured from attack, and that users' data and privacy is protected. Increasingly, our critical infrastructure is connected by digital networks that are themselves interconnected. This raises the level of vulnerability and contingent risks – and necessitates vigilance and investment.
- we adopt a 'digital by default' approach to improve access for all public service users. Our systems will be developed – in ways that ensure ease of use and accessibility for users with different needs.
- we adopt an approach that fully recognises that public sector data is now a strategic asset. Managed in the right way, it will provide a significant return on investment. To this end, we intend to bring forward a NI Public Sector Data Strategy as a priority.

- our investments in data and digital systems will be procured in ways that ensure all our data are fully owned and accessible to the public sector and that new systems do not lock us in and prevent the use of better alternatives in the future.
- that citizens are able to use their own devices when accessing public systems and services. Ensuring sensitive data remains secure will be essential.

What We Need to Do

Digitisation of Public Service Interfaces

We will continue to invest in upgrading our digital infrastructure and systems to enable citizens to engage and transact effectively with public services – building on the success of NI Direct. Getting information about public services and getting business done will be faster and easier – whether it’s applying for a school place, renewing a license, paying fees or fines. In the future it is likely there will be greater acceptance of technology for more patient/clinician interactions, and these will provide substantial opportunities for efficiencies within the health service.

Under this strategy, investment will be targeted on the digitisation of our public services.

Upgrade of Public Sector Data/Digital Infrastructure

Investment in our public service digital infrastructure will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our public services by reducing processing times, driving up data quality and ensuring that decisions can be made on the basis of accurate, timely and comprehensive information.

Encompass, a Health and Social Care (HSC) initiative, will introduce digitally integrated care records to improve patient safety and health outcomes through regional standardisation and best practice. Major investment is also planned to transform education and justice information systems.

New Analytics to Maximise the Value of Data

The public sector handles vast quantities of data, which could be used better to target services more effectively and make them more responsive to the needs of citizens. Examples of these applications include the deployment of emergency services based on predictive analytics and using usage data to optimise the treatment of drinking water.

In the Belfast Region City Deal, iREACH is an NHS, industry and academic facility, focusing on the innovative design and delivery of clinical trials. Extending this capacity within the Belfast Region will enable the facility to take on larger and more complex trial studies. Building on an established electronic patient record, iREACH will increase access to treatments for patients and signal to industry the expansion of healthcare capability in Northern Ireland, enabling access to growing global markets and creating investment opportunities.

Smart Cities/Sensors

The emergence of Smart Cities and the Internet of Things must be fully integrated across policy areas, ensuring smart technologies play a central role in enabling connected regional and national infrastructure such as transport, energy and water, and linking these technologies and data sets to deliver improved city, region and central government services.

Network Risks and Security

As our core infrastructure becomes more digitally connected, our vulnerability to systems failure, cyber-attack and related disruptions increases. Fortunately, our region is a world-leader in cybersecurity research, development and commercialisation – and we will work in partnership with academia and industry to meet this challenge.

Offsite Manufacturing and New Materials

The development of new materials and changing fabrication techniques will change the way infrastructure is designed and manufactured, and affect the cost of building and maintenance. New applications of smart materials are already being seen in transport infrastructure such as solar roads that generate renewable energy and surfaces that self-detect or charge vehicles at speed. Increasingly, new materials, such as ductile or bendable or self-healing and low-

Page 54 of 76

carbon concrete, will change the design and build of infrastructure, and reduce annual maintenance costs and environmental impact, for example of bridges and tunnels.

Changes to fabrication methods, including 3D printing, will alter the way and location where construction is occurring, offering the opportunity for onsite fabrication (or offsite manufacturing allowing for faster construction and higher quality production) reducing the costs of transport of materials and construction.

QUESTION 8

Are these the investment priority areas we need to focus on to maximise the benefits from emerging technologies? If not, what do you think are the investment priorities that will maximise benefits from emerging technologies?

Strategic Investment Priorities: What We Need To Do To Maximise The Benefits From Emerging Technologies

We will:

Digitise public service access points	by targeting the digitisation of public interfaces to our core public services, where appropriate, in order to use technology to improve accessibility, reduce transaction times, enhance service provision and responsiveness, drive up service quality and meet user expectations
Upgrade the public service digital infrastructure	by focusing investment on upgrading core enterprise systems to reduce operational delivery costs, modernise and streamline workflows and transform service delivery; this will include a heavy emphasis on smart technology, leveraging smart devices and artificial intelligence
Take advantage of data analytics and data science	by investing in our data management and analytics infrastructure, recognising data as a valuable public sector asset, and strengthening the capacity and capability of our public services to make decisions at all levels informed by evidence derived from analysis of data
Improve information security and network resilience	by working collaboratively with industry and academia to ensure effective investment in strengthening our network resilience and security

PART D: OUR APPROACH TO STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Introduction

This Investment Strategy recognises that investment in infrastructure should be based on an evidenced need; should be prioritised to ensure the most effective use of resources overall and to achieve the outcomes we need; and should make tangible, positive differences to citizens' lives.

This means we will develop a balanced investment plan that recognises the funding needs of existing infrastructure (both capital and revenue) as well as the new, enhanced and reconfigured infrastructure requirements set out in this document.

Embedding infrastructure into Government approval and delivery processes

Delivering infrastructure investment at scale means creating alignment between all departments' investment needs; the Department of Finance as the key funding stakeholder; and the NI Executive as the body that endorses the overall investment strategy.

To ensure that infrastructure investment is embedded into funding and delivery plans, we will develop a comprehensive rolling 10-year Executive Infrastructure Investment Plan. This will be supported by a new Medium-Term Infrastructure Financial Plan and will enable the development of detailed departmental Investment Plans. This approach will seek to take full advantage of collaborative working across public bodies, community and private-sector stakeholders to ensure that strategic, regional and local investments maximise the opportunity for value creation and enhanced inclusion through co-ordination of resources and investment.

These plans will result in the publication of a visible pipeline of projects for the construction industry and other sectors, and create transparency in the delivery of infrastructure against plans.

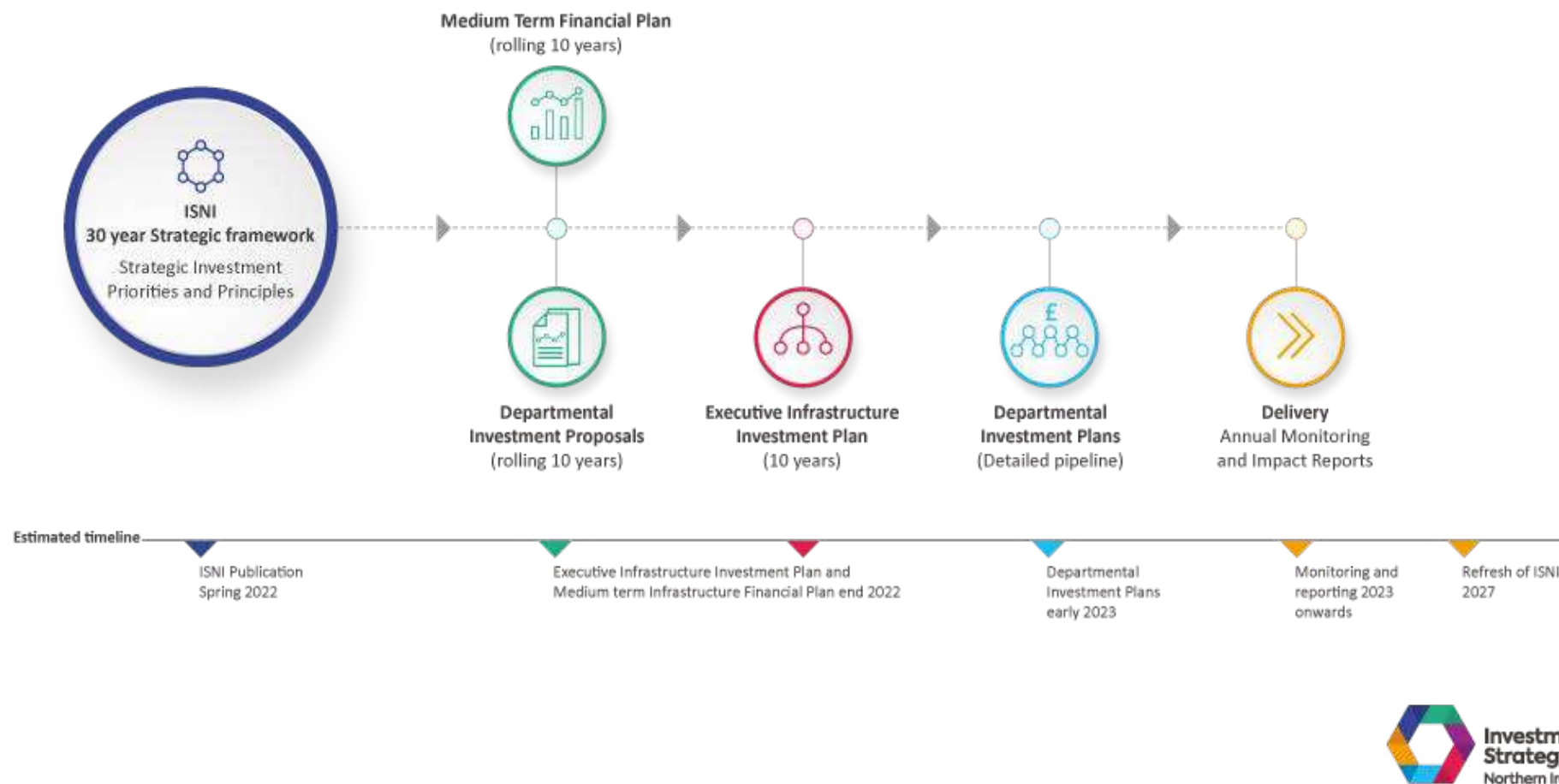


Fig 5: Infrastructure Investment Plan

Funding and financing

The Scale of Required Investment

The scale of investment required to maintain our existing infrastructure and provide for our future needs and ambitions will be significantly higher in real terms than the £1.2–£1.4 billion per annum typically invested over the past 10 years.

To optimise our ability to invest in coming years we need to:

- (i) prioritise investment to areas with the most need
- (ii) maximise and co-ordinate the public and private sources of finance to help us deliver our goals
- (iii) ensure that sufficient delivery capacity exists within the public, private and community sectors to ensure that we invest in projects that can be delivered on time and on budget.

Proposed Investment Prioritisation

A prioritisation framework will need to be developed to help inform the Executive Infrastructure Investment Plan. The following proposals set out some of the criteria that will need to be considered in the development of such a framework.

1. Does the proposed investment support the achievement of the objectives of the Programme for Government and the priorities of the Investment Strategy?

- There must be a clear strategic fit between the proposed investment and the achievement of the outcomes set out in the Programme for Government and this Investment Strategy.

2. Will the investment be sustainable and resilient?

- Will the proposal deliver the required outcomes at the right whole-life cost?
- Will the investment result in an improved and more efficient public service?
- Will the investment make best use of public and private infrastructure assets?

- Do they contribute to decarbonisation?
- Does the investment protect/enhance the natural environment and ecosystems?
- Will the new assets be resilient and sustainable in future?
- Does the proposal reflect the UN Sustainable Development Goals?
- Does it contribute to climate resilience?
- Are they consistent with the Circular Economy?
- Will the investment impact the marine environment?
- Does the use of technology enable digitisation opportunities and address cybersecurity risks?

3. Is the proposed investment inclusive and equitable/equal?

- Does the proposal address imbalances (for example, urban/rural, social economic, age and gender)?
- Does it promote greater intergenerational fairness?
- Will it support equality and good relations?
- Will it deliver balanced development across rural and urban areas, across sectors and communities?
- Will it maximise Social Value?
- Has it been developed through co-design and stakeholder engagement, and moving forward can it be developed through co-delivery (for example central/local government partnerships, community partnerships)?

4. Is the proposed investment affordable?

- How do we decide between unaffordable projects with the greatest need and affordable projects for which the need is lower?
- What is the right balance of public and private finance required?
- Is there sufficient public finance and can it be deployed more efficiently?
- Have all opportunities to secure alternative funding and finance been explored?

- Is there sufficient capital and resource funding to manage and maintain investments?
- Is there the opportunity to maximise economies of scale?

5. Is the proposed investment prepared for delivery?

- Are appropriate governance and accountability arrangements in place?
- Have opportunities for collaboration been identified and exploited?
- Are the appropriately skilled resources in place and are they fully funded?
- Has planning and procurement risk been appropriately mitigated?
- Is there evidence of market readiness to deliver the investment?
- Can progress and risk be transparently monitored?
- Is there evidence of market capacity to deliver the investment?

Investment Planning

We will set out exactly how we will prioritise, fund and deliver these plans in a **Medium-Term Infrastructure Finance Plan (MTIFP)**.

Infrastructure investment projects and programmes, by their nature, take a significant period of time to plan, procure and deliver effectively. This is often measured in years. Good investment practice dictates that capital budget allocations (or indicative allocations) therefore need to be made on the same timescale. A longer-term perspective on the supply of finance encourages longer-term planning, better coordination between projects and partners and more efficient use of capital. It helps to avoid otherwise more costly and sub-optimal investment decisions. Engagement with the NI Fiscal Council will be key to ensure that all possible means of financing our infrastructure are fully exploited.

In recent years, long-term investment planning has been hampered by immediate-term (1-3 year) budget settlements. This has inhibited our ability to plan on a multi-year basis and has tended to favour smaller and less strategic investments that can be delivered in the shorter timeframe. A Medium-Term Infrastructure Finance Plan will be developed to help inform departmental capital planning. The plan will:

- cover a rolling 10-year period, and be updated each year in line with the NI Budget process
- commence with confirmed Capital Departmental Expenditure Limits (CDEL) for all departments and related public bodies in line with committed HM Treasury Spending Review allocations to the Executive, and consistent with the NI Budget and this Investment Strategy
- be supplemented by an assumption of indicative capital allocations for years beyond the Budget, up to and including Year 10
- include an assessment of all other sources of public finance, such as Reinvestment and Reform Initiative borrowing, Financial Transactions Capital loan finance or equity, external public funding (UK, RoI and International)

- include an assessment of potential private finance, where this does not unduly impact on the NI Executive budget and risk appetite
- consider the revenue costs associated with pre-development and operational management.

The Executive's 10-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan

Departmental Investment Proposals will be assessed, in aggregate, against the priorities set out in this strategy, and the available resources set out in the Medium-Term Infrastructure Finance Plan.

From this work, we will agree and publish a new Executive Infrastructure Investment Plan, setting out all projects and programmes ongoing, planned or expected to commence within the next 10 years. This will demonstrate the matching of prioritised infrastructure needs and demands with projected financial resources set out in the Medium-Term Infrastructure Finance Plan, presented under each of the strategic investment priorities set out in this strategy.

Delivery of the Executive's Infrastructure Investment Plan will be subject to the enhanced governance and oversight arrangements described in more detail later in this document.

We intend that the initial Executive Infrastructure Investment Plan (including the Finance Plan) should be delivered by the end of 2022 and cover the period to 2032, reflecting both existing commitments and new investment programmed for that period.

This approach will ensure investment planning is strategic in addressing the major areas of investment need and effectively coordinated between sectors and across all public sector bodies. Publication of the Plan will provide the construction sector and investors with greater clarity and visibility of proposals, through a published pipeline of future investment that will be regularly reviewed.

Information Portal and Contracts Pipeline

More granular information on investment programmes and projects will be published on the Executive's ISNI Information Portal. This will be enhanced to include a detailed Contracts Pipeline to ensure our construction industry and its supply chain have the information they need to plan ahead effectively. It will also assist the wider industry and academic institutions to plan ahead to ensure we have the right skills in our local workforce to help deliver our investments on the ground.

QUESTION 9

How should we prioritise between maintaining or upgrading existing assets and new aspirations?

QUESTION 10

How should we communicate with consultees on projects that present affordability challenges, and thus may require alternative funding and financing to be utilised?

QUESTION 11

Do you agree with the proposed prioritisation criteria? If no, then what changes would you suggest?

QUESTION 12

What level of engagement should we have with consultees on project milestones and delivery progress once a project has been programmed for delivery?

Improving Delivery

The Challenge

Our delivery challenge is considerable. We must respond to fundamental changes to the infrastructure needs documented in this strategy by delivering more projects and by delivering them on time and to budget.

Stakeholder engagement during the development of this strategy highlighted that the planning policy framework and planning process have often been perceived as barriers to effective infrastructure investment: taking too long, or being too unpredictable or inconsistent, with legal challenges an ongoing feature in many planning applications. We know that a strong, sustainable spatial planning framework that is robust and consistently applied can provide certainty for developers and confidence to investors, as well as assurance to citizens and businesses. We need to recognise that all will need to contribute to secure these improvements, including better quality applications and increased upfront engagement, as well as improved efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system.

Construction is one of our major industries. It is experiencing skills gaps and an ageing workforce and there is a need for development of both traditional site-based and vocational skills, adapting to the changing digital delivery of construction and new opportunities in the green economy. Ensuring we invest in skills to support our infrastructure will be essential, and expertise will also be needed in emerging technical areas, for example to manage flood risk and climate change impact.

How We Will Improve Delivery

Programme and Project Management

Departments will continue to develop their programme and project management capacity and capability. Working with SIB, CPD and NICSHR, they will ensure staff involved in the delivery of projects have the skills, knowledge and experience required to be successful. This will require significant investment not only in additional resource capacity in the short term but also in a longer term capacity building, recruitment and training programme. Governance

and oversight will be improved and better monitoring and reporting of performance will enable informed decision-making. Delivery collaboration and the breaking down of silos will also improve outcomes and delivery confidence.

Procurement and Ensuring Social Value

Building on the work of the Procurement Board, we will continue to strengthen the professional development of procurement and construction staff to support efficient procurement management, and streamline procurement processes to maximise buying power and improve delivery.

Public procurement is an important source of expenditure and social value clauses are included in our construction contracts, building in employment and training requirements such as apprenticeships and providing placement opportunities for the long-term unemployed, as well as work experience and community initiatives. From June 2022 a minimum of 10% of the total award criteria of tenders must be to social value, where the construction contract is valued at over £4.7m, and we will continue this commitment to maximise the social value from our infrastructure investment.

CASE STUDY: Social Value

Social value refers to wider financial and non-financial impacts on the well-being of individuals, communities and the environment. Legally, social value outcomes can be included in the procurement process if they are considered at business case stage and relate to the subject matter of the contract or the performance of the contract. The Procurement Regulations specifically refer to incorporating social value into specifications, contract performance clauses, selection criteria and award criteria.

The Executive has previously promoted the use of public procurement to deliver social, economic and environmental objectives, including endorsing Equality of Opportunity and Sustainable Development in Public Sector Procurement in 2008 and including 'sustainability' as a component of Value for Money alongside cost and quality in 2011.

An important initiative to deliver social value is the Buy Social Model, which the Procurement Board approved in 2015. The Buy Social Model specifically addresses key quality of life indicators such as: personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion, equal opportunities and sustainable development. Over this period many public bodies have been highly innovative in their use of public procurement to promote social value, including the scoring of social value criteria.

By September 2021, 2,065 New Entrant Trainees had a training and employment opportunity under Buy Social. In addition, 98% of Buy Social participants who completed their NET period remained in employment with the contractor, found alternative employment or returned to education/training (where an outcome has been recorded).

Building on this, Construction & Procurement Delivery (CPD) has recently launched guidance on the policy to evaluate social value as an award criterion (within public procurement contracts) alongside cost and quality. The Executive has approved this policy, so that from 1 June 2022 tenders must include a minimum of 10% of the total award criteria to social value.

A jobs model commissioned by SIB will allow assessment of the potential impact (including on long-term unemployed/apprentices) of investment on full-time employment. This model provides a quantitative assessment of the impact of specific investment plans and projects going forward.

Measuring Progress and Impact

We must make sure that how and what we invest in achieves the objectives we want. Our engagement has shown there is real interest from organisations and citizens in our infrastructure and investment decisions.

Our current delivery tracking system already allows for monitoring of the construction pipeline. This will be expanded and developed to allow for greater interaction and be more accessible to a wider audience. It will include:

A forward look – providing information and certainty for the construction industry so they can plan. This will set out:

- What is likely to be invested in, by whom and when. This will be searchable, for example by location, by type of project, scale of expenditure, procurement route, and current status (e.g., business case, planning, design, etc.).
- Users will be able to request alerts, and get clear information on how to bid.

Performance monitoring – to ensure we are delivering projects to time and to budget; and, if not, to enable us to understand why so that remedial actions can be taken. We will implement a new portfolio management system that will ensure there is a single, accurate, consistent and timely picture of the state of each major project. This will be accessible to the Executive, Ministers, Assembly Committees, officials, the private sector and citizens. Searchable and downloadable data, complemented by interactive dashboards, will be available through the Investment Strategy website.

Retrospective impact assessment – of the infrastructure investment, linking with the PfG outcomes delivery framework (when approved) and other high-level strategic objectives such as the 10x Economic Strategy, Green Growth Strategy, the Energy Strategy, the Environment Strategy, the Housing Supply Strategy and Anti-Poverty Strategy. Key performance metrics will be agreed to allow for ongoing monitoring of our infrastructure investment.

Our monitoring will set out to demonstrate a range of impacts including:

- social value
- social impact
- rural needs
- equality and good relations
- environmental impact
- economic impact

We will publish an Annual Monitoring Report that will include a specific Investment Delivery Report.

QUESTION 13

Do you agree that the proposals we have set out will adequately measure progress and impact? If no, then how should we measure progress and impact?

Accountability and Oversight

The Challenge

With so much changing quickly in relation to infrastructure, we know that solutions will be increasingly complex, and require a cross-departmental, inter-jurisdictional and more joined-up approach to planning, investment, delivery and monitoring. We will need to ramp up our capability and our capacity to be able to work in a more agile way to manage our infrastructure investment. This will require interim measures to overcome short-term capacity and skills issues, complemented by a programme of recruitment, training and capacity building to provide a more sustainable long-term solution to infrastructure investment.

Accountability for delivery of the Executive's Infrastructure Investment Plan will be sharpened, providing greater clarity of oversight, more transparency and improved monitoring to critical areas of the Executive's spending.



Fig 6: Accountability and Oversight

Providing Resilient Leadership for Infrastructure Investment

Strategic Oversight by the Executive

The Executive will exercise strategic oversight on Infrastructure Investment to assure strategic direction and focus on delivery is maintained at the highest level, and to respond to emerging strategic issues, risks and opportunities in the years ahead. The Investment Strategy will be included on the agenda for Executive meetings twice per year, supported and informed by inputs from the ISNI Programme Board.

ISNI Programme Board

The NICS Board will sit as the ISNI Programme Board **twice per year, or more frequently if needed**. The role of the Programme Board will be to scrutinise delivery of the **Executive's Infrastructure Investment Plan and Medium-Term Infrastructure Finance Plan**. The ISNI Programme Board will consider all opportunities to collaborate, innovate, accelerate delivery, address any blockages that arise, oversee risk management and take timely actions as appropriate.

Departments and Related Public Bodies

Departments and related public bodies will retain principal responsibility for the planning, resourcing, procurement and successful delivery of projects under this ISNI, working closely with other departments as appropriate, and with the Strategic Investment Board and Department of Finance. Normal accounting officer responsibilities and business case approvals processes will apply.

Senior Officials Group

A Senior Officials Group will meet regularly to ensure departmental collaboration throughout the development of the Executive's Infrastructure Investment Plan and across the delivery phase. This will include senior officers from all key infrastructure departments and SIB, providing consistency with the governance arrangements of the other high-level strategies such as the Green Growth Strategy.

The ISNI Senior Officials Group will, from amongst its membership, appoint lead officers for each of the five investment themes. This will provide appropriate structures to encourage and support the inter-departmental working necessary to deliver the investment required by this strategy.

Strategic Investment Board

The Strategic Investment Board has the statutory function to develop the Investment Strategy. Consistent with this, it will ensure the ongoing development, application and monitoring, reporting and review of the strategy.

SIB will ensure there is ongoing collaboration and engagement with departments, industry and citizens regarding investment in our infrastructure. This engagement will be critical to the development of the Medium-Term Infrastructure Finance Plan and 10-yearly Executive Infrastructure Investment Plans, to effective monitoring, and to ensuring the continued relevance of our Strategic Investment Priorities.

SIB will provide a secretariat function to both the Ministerial Strategic Oversight Group and the NICS Programme Board.

Stakeholder engagement has been central to the initial development of this Investment Strategy and identifying our investment needs and Strategic Investment Priorities. This engagement will continue with the establishment of a wide-reaching forum, facilitated by SIB. This will provide ongoing feedback, identification of needs/gaps and reassessment of priorities and enable ongoing engagement with industry and relevant stakeholders.

SIB will lead a specialist task and finish/working group structure providing critical input into and oversight of the development of the Medium-Term Infrastructure Finance Plan and Infrastructure Investment Plan.

The Infrastructure Commission

The Executive has made a commitment in its Covid Recovery Plan to establish an Infrastructure Commission. At the time of writing, work is ongoing to determine the precise remit of the Commission and its relationship with the Executive, departments and SIB. This

section of the strategy will, therefore, be adapted to take account of the Executive's decisions in respect of the role of the Commission.

QUESTION 14

Do you agree that the proposed accountability and oversight structures will support successful delivery? If no, then what other proposals should we consider?

QUESTION 15

Do you agree with the process and the findings of the draft EQIA and Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA)? If no, then please explain why.

QUESTION 16

Are there any other issues or inequalities that have not been highlighted in the draft EQIA or RNIA that you believe need to be noted? If yes, then please explain what they are.

QUESTION 17

Are there any other comments or suggestions that you think are relevant to help us develop and deliver the Investment Strategy?

Glossary

CCRA	Climate Change Risk Assessment
CODA	City of Derry Airport
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DE	Department of Education
DEL	Departmental Expenditure Limits
DfC	Department for Communities
DfE	Department for Economy
DfI	Department for Infrastructure
DoH	Department of Health
DoJ	Department of Justice
EV	Electric Vehicles
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FTC	Financial Transactions Capital
GHG	Greenhouse Gas(es)
HSCT	Health and Social Care Trust
ISNI	Investment Strategy Northern Ireland
NDNA	New Decade New Approach
NICS	Northern Ireland Civil Service
NIE	Northern Ireland Electricity

NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NISRA	Northern Ireland Research and Statistics Agency
NIW	Northern Ireland Water
PfG	Programme for Government
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RDS	Regional Development Strategy
ROI	Republic of Ireland
TEO	The Executive Office
SIB	Strategic Investment Board
SPPS	Strategic Policy Planning Statement

Freedom of Information Act 2000: Confidentiality of Consultations

The Strategic Investment Board will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The Strategic Investment Board can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority (the Strategic Investment Board in this case). This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Strategic Investment Board cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances.

The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- the Department (Strategic Investment Board) should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's (Strategic Investment Board's) functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
- the Department (Strategic Investment Board) should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature;
- acceptance by the Department (Strategic Investment Board) of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses, please contact the Information Commissioner's Office.

INFRASTRUCTURE 2050

The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland

Draft Consultation Document

isni.gov.uk



**Northern Ireland
Executive**

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**Investment
Strategy**

for Northern Ireland

Page 146 of 262

APPENDIX 3B



1 April 2022

Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland
Strategic Investment Board
5th Floor, 9 Lanyon Place
Belfast
BT1 3LP

Email: consult.isni@sibni.org

Re: Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland Consultation

To whom it may concern:

Mid Ulster District Council would like to take this opportunity to submit relevant feedback in relation to the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland Draft Consultation. The Council welcomes the publication of this draft Strategy and is optimistic that the strategy has the potential to provide solutions to many of the key financial and infrastructure challenges that currently exist. It is a welcome aspect of the strategy that it sets out the major spending objectives in Northern Ireland for the next 30 years and identifies the areas in most need, which must be prioritised.

However, with regards the Vision for infrastructure the document does not mention specific infrastructure projects, but highlights the need for investment in new roads, schools, hospitals, social housing and public transport. It acknowledges there are "significant deficiencies" in our current infrastructure. For example, investment in Northern Ireland's water and wastewater infrastructure is a key priority, which could see a real possibility of tax increases such as water charging. The former Northern Ireland Regional Development Strategy recognised the importance of infrastructure to balance with effective regional development.

Mid Ulster District Council believes that the Vision for the Investment Strategy is ambitious, looking at key objectives for infrastructure investment in the region up until 2050. However, the Council would suggest the Vision should include reference to "**promoting regional balance**" in Northern Ireland in order to address decades of infrastructure underinvestment West of the Bann including Mid Ulster. Investment in infrastructure and connectivity is central to addressing regional imbalances and achieving "levelling up". Northern Ireland has developed an unbalanced economy with investment in jobs and infrastructure focussed largely on Belfast.

Suggested Vision:

*“We have the infrastructure that enables everyone to lead a healthy, productive and fulfilling life; that supports sustainable economic development, **promotes regional balance** and protects our environment.”*

The Council is concerned that the strategy states “will make the best use of our capital and revenue budgets to meet immediate priorities”. In the past that has meant the economic viability of undertaking projects was the deciding factor. Rural proofing or addressing the problems in areas of most need have been overlooked.

The critical aspect of this Vision is that it correctly notes that future economic development must be ‘sustainable’; to enable this the future approach and investment from government must therefore, be on a longer-term strategic basis. Over previous years, the short-term approach to investment planning has proved to be a severe constraining factor to supporting economic growth, effectively acting as a barrier not a driver.

Infrastructure planning should be people-centred and genuinely developed as a fully inclusive region. In turn, this will create conditions for a sustainable region that is accessible and connected.

The new Investment Strategy should seek to create the conditions to successfully deliver the City and Growth Deals in Northern Ireland to achieve regional balance’ and ‘levelling-up’ policy imperatives respectively. This would support the delivery of the Strategy’s vision for our society and economy and unlock better social and economic outcomes and address global challenges in a sustainable way.

Identifying indicative timeframes (short/medium/long) would assist in striving to achieve the aspirations of the strategy until 2050.

Objective 1: To Decarbonise our Economy, Assets and Society

Mid Ulster District Council is broadly supportive of the details set out to achieve this objective. However, as a rural district it is important to be mindful that connectivity is a significant issue that challenges the rural economy need to be addressed in order for the economy to thrive throughout Northern Ireland. Therefore, decarbonisation of the economy needs to be addressed within the context of cumulative issues such as poor broadband and mobile phone coverage and poor road and transport networks.

However, the Council acknowledges the clear strategic benefits of a circular economy and would particularly support resilient waste management system solutions. Council would also be supportive of additional electric charging points on Councils sites as well as incentives and support for local businesses and industries to ensure their materials and packaging.

Objective 2: To Strengthen Our Essential Services

In relation to the Investment priorities to strengthen our essential services, the Council is supportive of the proposed long term funding streams to deliver these ambitions. In particular, a common theme amongst local authorities in recent years has been decreased or static year-on-year local funding (despite inflationary costs).

The Council believes that there is a need to secure both support and resources from other government departments and agencies, in particular the need for cross-government approach, which includes transport, health, education and planning in order to make the most of opportunities including the various other departmental strategies. The Council would support the imposition of a number of quantifiable targets where possible with regular milestones and the inclusion of Key Performance Indicators.

Mid Ulster District Council would also strongly advocate that this proposed overarching strategy should act as a catalyst and springboard for the Mid-South West (MSW) Growth Deal. While strengthening key services within the region, the investment priorities should also ensure that the social and economic conditions are created and maintained to encourage and capture further investment. This will then also ensure 'spin off' investment for local SMEs and new innovations. This is within the context of already boasting Northern Ireland's fastest growing manufacturing business base, and the largest outside Belfast. Our district produces 7.3% of Northern Ireland's economic output.

However, Mid Ulster District Council cannot emphasise strongly enough, the detrimental impact of the issue of water and wastewater management in Mid Ulster and the associated negative impact on the district achieving a number of key PfG outcomes. Many people living in the Mid Ulster District Council area are facing significant housing stress because of house building not keeping up with housing demand. New housing developments particularly in our urban towns and key settlements are being refused by NI Water, due to lack of upgrading to WasteWater Treatment works and new water mains not being delivered. Significant WasteWater network capacity issues are emerging in our five main hub towns including Magherafelt, Cookstown, Dungannon, Maghera and Coalisland. These towns have been identified within the Area Plan for Mid Ulster for growth status. Mid Ulster is currently completing on the development of the Area Plan and has estimated a need for approximately 10,950 new houses by 2030. In addition to the WasteWater Treatment Works, WasteWater network capacity issues are emerging in 20 areas across the district. Because of this, new connections are being declined in parts of the catchment.

Objective 3: To Enhance Our Communities and Spaces

Redefine the purpose of our high streets/urban centres

Mid Ulster District Council considers high streets and urban centres as key social and economic drivers and as such there is a clear and urgent need to make them fit for purpose in 21st century, particular as we recover from the devastating impacts of Covid-19. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought new and unprecedented economic challenges to Mid Ulster town centres and has required us to reimagine and reinvent our High Streets for the future and tackle the huge problem of empty units and derelict sites. However, it is clear that local and central Government cannot do this in isolation. There is a critical need for direct partnership working with the private sector supporting them with financial package incentives and investment. The Council believes that local authorities have a critical role to play in the future of our high streets and addressing local needs but are held back by the lack of devolved “Regeneration powers” and supporting financial resources. The current fragmented “ad-hoc” approach simply does not work. There is a need for multi-year budgets to enable Councils to plan effectively.

The Council would recommend a cohesive, joined-up approach by central government involving; the Department for the Economy (DfE), Department for Communities (DfC) and Department of Agriculture, Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). This type of cross-departmental partnership working is essential to enable our towns and high streets to be vibrant and thriving. Regarding planning the “Town Centre First” approach must be fully strengthened and implemented. Furthermore, empty units need to be repurposed to meet the business need and an extensive package of incentives introduced to achieve this goal. There is a clear need for strategic and significant investment to support the recovery and renewal of our town centres, similar to the Future High Streets Fund in England and Strategic Sites Acquisition Fund by the Welsh Government. A capital fund is needed to incentivise property owners to invest in the reuse and repurposing of derelict/empty premises through internal restructuring and reconfiguration of shop units or liveable spaces. The cost of doing business in our high streets is huge with spiralling rates and ever-increasing rents. This has caused businesses ‘to go under’ and discouraged new retail start-ups in our town centres.

To further compound these challenges, parking charges, poor infrastructure and the closure of bank branches have contributed to the decline of our high streets. The Council would support the proposal for more public sector service delivery in town centres in order to act as a catalyst for footfall and private sector investment. Businesses trading in town centres are at a market disadvantage to out of town developments (such as enterprise parks) because they are paying much higher rates. It is difficult to see the plan developed by Professor Carlos Moreno, (leading urbanist from Paris) being adaptable to the rural towns in Mid Ulster where all business is within a 15-minute walk or bike ride from home.

Promote active travel, prioritising walking, cycling and wheeling for leisure and mobility. Develop sports, culture, arts, and leisure facilities and enhance our natural environment.

Mid Ulster has a large reliance on cars as the main means of transport. There is a variety of reasons for this reliance, for example, the population is rural and public transport is not easily accessible to everyone, there is no train service and there are very few dedicated cycle lanes in town centres.

Therefore, in relation to the promotion of active travel, prioritising walking, cycling and wheeling for leisure and mobility, the Council would agree that active travel, walking and cycling for leisure has now become a key part of everyday life and almost all communities are involved in this. Further investment in infrastructure will be welcomed in developing safe and well light routes that are accessible to all.

However, as previously noted, in promoting these activities, government must be cognisant of the key issues and challenges in delivering this agenda to predominantly rural areas such as Mid Ulster. These are fundamental considerations to ensure future investment is balanced across the sub-regions and that active travel opportunities are available for all.

In terms of investing in Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure, restoring the **Ulster Canal** to its former glory has the potential to be the most exciting waterways project in Ireland. Realising the full ambition of the canal could see cruisers navigating their way from the mouth of the River Bann at Castlerock through Coleraine to Lough Neagh and Lough Erne and into the Shannon before continuing down through the southern canal system to Dublin, Limerick and Waterford.

Minister Mallon reported the following progress on the restoration of the Ulster Canal at North/South Ministerial Statements in the NI Assembly on 30 November 2021:

“Phase 1 of the Ulster Canal is complete and now open for navigation. The phase 2 restoration of the stretch from Clones to Clonfad is underway. The creative design is complete, and there are plans to develop a vision for the canal to Clones, including an architectural features that links the canal to the cultural history of the town. Phase 3, preliminary work on the restoration of the stretch Castle Saunderson to Clonfad will commence before phase 2 is complete. Of course, all three phases of the project have been funded by the Irish Government.

Waterways Ireland has North South Ministerial Council approval to explore the potential restoration of the stretch of the Ulster Canal from Clones to Lough Neagh. It remains a clear commitment in the Stormont House Agreement, the Fresh Start Agreement and in New Decade, New Approach. I am very keen, funding permitting, to see that progressed.”

A Feasibility/ economic study on the River Blackwater is currently underway to consider the economic benefits arising from the reinstated water system between Moy and Clones with particular focus on Mid Ulster District Council and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council. The document has identified the need for investment to implement the mentioned projects and works along the river. A Working group is to be established between the two councils to drive forward ambitions for Lough Neagh and the Ulster Canal.

In relation to enhancing the Natural Environment and considering sustainable tourism the Government needs to protect our Dark Skies with the creation of a Light Management Tourism Policy for Northern Ireland.

Funding needs to be made available to the private sector to enhance and reimage their property/product to become sustainable and environmental friendly (and promote Green Tourism).

In addition, the Sperrin Mountains provide the setting for a highly distinctive landscape, containing a rich tapestry of both spatially extensive and diverse built, cultural and natural heritage assets many of which remain unknown to the wider public and underutilised as a tourism resource. The Sperrins remain a highly inaccessible landscape, more so than many other similar landscapes in the UK and Ireland, with only short to medium distance access routes developed by local communities as a localised recreational resource. However, it is this inaccessibility, extensiveness and diversity of the resource base that lends itself to the provision of opportunities for creating a wide range of outdoor recreation, tourism, wellbeing and heritage engagement activities, which require investment.

Expand social and intermediate housing

In the Mid Ulster area, house building has not kept pace with growth in demand. Many people and households are currently facing major housing challenges with exceptionally high levels of housing stress and homelessness and as such, Mid Ulster has one of the highest levels of social housing need and this is reflected in the level of housing stress. At March 2020, there were 1,899 applicants on the waiting list for Mid Ulster with 1,169 in housing stress and only 306 allocations over the year. Housing stress in rural areas is also increasing on an annual basis since March 2016. At March 2020, there were 501 applicants on the rural housing waiting list for Mid Ulster with 279 in housing stress and only 131 allocations over the year. Over 1/3 of the housing stress stems from the affordability of other rented options; both private and some housing association provision. Mid Ulster has the second lowest number of NIHE and Social Housing properties across all districts. Up to March 2020, NIHE and Housing Associations have sold 7,654 units under the house sales scheme, leaving 3,875 of NIHE housing stock in the district. NIHE has identified a social housing need of 685 units required for the 2019/2024 period. There were 42

units completed and 76 units onsite at March 2020; and 202 units programmed for the 2020/2023 period, falling well short of what is required by 2024. Almost 50% of all units required are in the Dungannon area followed by Coalisland and Magherafelt.

Affordable and social housing provision is a key strategic issue identified for Mid Ulster as part of its Community Plan. As the allocation of housing is a central element in achieving many of the objectives detailed in the Community Plan, it is difficult to consider it in isolation of the other key areas, including poverty, regeneration, health and wellbeing and prosperity. Mid Ulster Community Planning has identified a number of actions to address the housing crisis in the District. Mid Ulster Community Planning has initiated a pilot Housing and Regeneration Place Shaping Plan in Dungannon, in partnership with NIHE. This plan will identify 'Place Shaping Principles' that we will seek to have adopted and implemented by Council and NIHE when assessing social housing planning applications, based on complementing the priorities for regeneration for Dungannon town. Mid Ulster Community Planning is seeking Executive support to replicate this partnership and process across all hub towns.

The set of draft principles include:

1. Good quality design with adequate density to suit the streetscape, for example if streetscape is 2-storey to continue this frontage, if 3-storey then this is to be accommodated
2. Preference for town house schemes in line with, town conservation, housing for families with 2-3 bed provision
3. Parking provision to be provided
4. Good quality green space provision and play areas for children in all housing areas
5. The 1970s model of flats with a minimum of 2 bedrooms in a town house setting – 2 apartments per house setting
6. Locations must be suitable for family housing, not beside leisure/nighttime economy establishments
7. Housing design and quality to be in character with the area and not of a lower standard
8. Housing that regenerates an area (economy and regeneration)
9. Living over the shops to be promoted for apartments
10. Future social and affordable housing should be within mixed tenure developments only (private and social/affordable mix)

Additional factors that have been identified that require significant consideration in relation to addressing future housing provision include:

- Mixed tenure
- Affordability
- Intervention in the Private Rented
- Latent Demand Testing
- Homelessness
- Housing Standards and Quality Housing
- Supported Housing
- Public Sector Asset Mapping
- Land Banking
- Adequate Green Space Requirement in Planning

Objective 4: To Build a Strong, Connected and Competitive Region

Improve connectivity on strategic corridors

Facilitating transport, advanced cross-border connectivity, greater access to road, rail, ports and airports, progressive digital communication capability, access to industrial land, energy and water are all considered by Council as the bedrock to prosperity and building a strong, competitive and connected region.

Infrastructure has a key role to play in terms of boosting Northern Ireland's long run competitiveness, raising standards of living and societal wellbeing.

There are significant infrastructure and connectivity deficits in the Mid Ulster region which need to be addressed within the NI Investment Strategy:-

Road Infrastructure

Within the Mid Ulster Community Plan, '*Infrastructure*' has been identified as one of five themes and a key action is to advance the development of the Strategic Road Network (the A29 – A31, A4, A6 and A5), including bypasses for the main towns and villages on the strategic routes.

The Mid Ulster region is growth dependent on the A29, and investment in Hub Bypasses in Cookstown and Dungannon would strengthen economic competitiveness, enhance accessibility to regional services and reduce peripherally.

Our engagements indicate that industry has been forced to operate with substandard road networks in Mid Ulster for a long period of time with consequent constraints on the efficiency of their operations and associated productivity. Businesses located in Mid Ulster are wholly dependent on the A29 for a range of critical business functions including freight movement, getting products to market, business travel (client meetings), staff commuting, and leisure travel (including by visitors and tourists) etc. The further economic development and regeneration of Mid Ulster as an industrial and commercial hub will be supported by expanded economic networks and trade facilitated by the A29 infrastructure investment.

The strategic importance of the A29 should be recognised in the emerging RSTNTP by upgrading the route to a Key North South Transport Corridor and in doing so addressing key infrastructural and connectivity deficits across the region.

The long awaited Cookstown bypass Scheme is a priority project within the MSW Growth Deal and is being led by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). The Council would emphasise the importance of retaining momentum on all stages of scheme development to ensure the business case can be completed in line with MSW timescales as well as managing public expectations for this project delivery. It is important that DfI officials work at pace with Council and key stakeholders including landowners to push forward this critical capital project within the required timeframes of the MSW Growth Deal or earlier,

It is also imperative that the Dungannon Bypass scheme is included in the forthcoming RSTNTP to ensure there is a strategic transport corridor through Mid Ulster. Investment in a bypass in Dungannon is critical to enable all three towns (Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt) to collectively fulfil their potential as dynamic Hubs and collaboratively act as an economic powerhouse for the Mid Ulster and Mid-South West Region.

Cookstown and Dungannon will play a central role in helping to realise a number of long-standing strategic policy objectives, most particularly in delivering a regionally balanced economy across the whole of Northern Ireland.

Bypasses in Cookstown and Dungannon were first proposed over 40 years ago and illustrate decades of underinvestment in the road network in our region that has left our businesses facing a daily battle to access export markets via non-classified road networks, with consequent impacts on productivity as noted above.

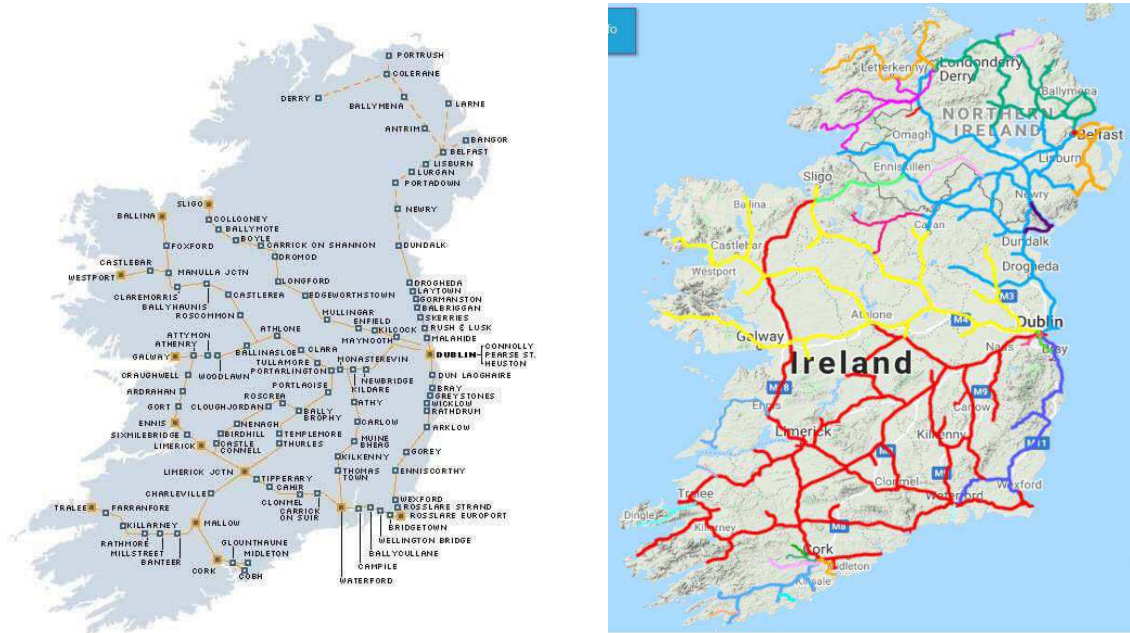
The Council also supports the completion of the A5 Western Transport Corridor as a strategic link to the North West.

Rail

In order to address regional imbalances and achieve levelling up of the NI economy, it is essential in the first instance, to expand the rail network to include Mid Ulster as a gateway to the 'west' and as a cross-border link. Decades of underinvestment in our road and rail network has left communities marginalised and isolated from essential services as well as businesses facing a daily battle in the movement of freight to export markets via non-classified road networks, with consequent impacts on growth, productivity and competitiveness.

The map of the rail network in Ireland on the next page shows that the West of the Bann has a very striking and major gap in accessibility to rail services relative to the rest of the island economy (and expands on the map on previous page, which only includes the NI road network). Second map shows all historic railway lines in Ireland.

It confirms that most of the railways that served the MSW region and provided the necessary connectivity have been stripped away over recent decades.



To achieve the aspiration of inclusive, balanced regional growth, rural communities must have greater access to services and an equal opportunity to participate in the economy. Moreover, investment in rail infrastructure West of the region would create opportunities to increase the use of the network for freight, which is essential to supporting economic recovery, and long term sustainable growth. Rail freight also delivers environmental benefits by reducing congestion and carbon emissions.

As a result of the lack of accessible public transport approximately 85% of households in Mid Ulster own a private vehicle, with this dependency expected to continue in the future. Accordingly, Travel Survey NI 2014-16 notes that 91% of rural workers travel to work by car/van. Unfortunately, residents cannot rely on a poor public transport network which exists and has been reduced further in recent years. For Mid Ulster residents the private vehicle is the only viable option.

Therefore, while the Council recognises that investment in an improved rail infrastructure could contribute to decarbonisation and reduce carbon emissions from motor vehicle travel, this will only be achieved across the Mid Ulster Council area with the restoration of connections that the former rail network afforded. This would improve connectivity to the two major cities in Northern Ireland and create an alternative to private vehicle usage to Derry City Airport, Belfast International Airport and Belfast City Airports located in Northern Ireland.

The Council request consideration of a range of effective rail solutions (including for example light rail), including:

- Reinststate the **Derry-Portadown** rail line via Dungannon, Omagh, Strabane and Newbuildings;
- Reinststate the rail network from **Dungannon to Coleraine** (via Coalisland, Cookstown, Magherafelt and Maghera).
- Extend the rail network to access and develop key economic and industrial areas such as **Carn and Seagoe, Granville (Dungannon), Derryloran (Cookstown) and Toome etc**

Industrial lands

Investment in infrastructure should include “industrial lands” to allow for economic growth and business expansion.

The acute shortage of industrial land and Invest NI serviced sites is a huge barrier to investment in Mid Ulster and has forced high growth businesses to relocate employment opportunities outside the region (and Northern Ireland) resulting in a subsequent loss of exports and GVA. Consequently, the area has lost out on significant investment and businesses have been forced to look at alternative sites outside the district, which is unacceptable. Indeed, the chronic shortage of industrial land in Dungannon in particular has pushed industrial land prices up to £125,000 per acre (in some cases 240% higher than some other areas of Northern Ireland). In recognition of this shortage, an additional interim supply has been identified at Dungannon and Granville within the Council’s Local Development Plan 2030 (Draft Plan Strategy).

In addition to the shortage of Invest NI owned industrial land, many private landowners are reluctant to develop land for industrial use as other uses are more lucrative. However, even if this land was to be developed for industry, there is evidence of an impending shortage of any suitable land. This suggests market failure on a much larger scale. For example, land zoned for industrial development in Cookstown, Dungannon & Magherafelt has declined by 22.8% in 2018. At that rate, without additional industrial land, the total available land zoned for industrial development in the area will be exhausted by c.2030, if not sooner.

Despite being the most enterprising and entrepreneurial region in Northern Ireland (and having the largest business base outside Belfast), underinvestment in the provision of industrial land is a contributing factor to the fact that too many indigenous businesses in Mid Ulster fail to grow. For a number of years Mid Ulster District Council and its legacy Councils have been lobbying for an increased supply of industrial zoned land to meet growing demand for existing and new business in the area.

Mid Ulster presently has no industrial land available for development; industrial estates in Granville, Dungannon, Cookstown and Creagh are at full capacity with no room to expand.

Strengthen our public transport network

Mid Ulster is a geographically dispersed population with a quarter of citizens living in the main towns, a third living in local towns and 40% of our homes located in the countryside. The district suffers from a lack of rural accessibility with very poor rural roads and bus services leaving many rural communities cut off, unable to access jobs and services. This situation is compounded by the absence of any rail infrastructure and connectivity in the district.

The whole question of transport cannot be considered in isolation, it must be led by an environmentally friendly policy and localised to suit each rural, urban and suburban place. More public transport routes will bring some but not all the answers in Mid Ulster because the population is dispersed.

Unless significant investment is provided public transport for rural areas such as Mid Ulster then the gap between access to services such as economic opportunities, health, education, and civic services will widen further between rural and urban Districts.

Investment in our public transport network must consider rurality, and the communities and populations that are isolated from core and more importantly essential services.

Maintain strong utility and digital connectivity

Mid Ulster's economy is private sector led and boasts the largest business base (9,200 businesses) outside Belfast. Global connectivity is vital to the competitiveness of our businesses and therefore the Council fully supports strong digital connectivity.

Digital connectivity would enable Mid Ulster citizens to access public services and allow students to benefit and compete equally with others from main towns and cities.

We note that the Strategy (p48) states, '*We have a strong communications infrastructure reflecting past and current investments by both the private and public sector*'. While Mid Ulster (and other rural areas) has indeed benefitted from recent initiatives such as Project Stratum there remain a number of areas in this District where the level of broadband speed and indeed, mobile connectivity, is wholly unacceptable. Project Stratum will bring full fibre to over 12,000 premises in Mid Ulster but unfortunately, it will not fix everyone under 30 Mbps.

We welcome the 'Shared Rural Network', however, further work is still required not just to 'maintain' strong digital and mobile connectivity' but to also ensure that this is made available to all. Mid Ulster has a strong entrepreneurial culture, almost two thirds of our population and businesses are rurally based. Access to high-speed broadband and reliable mobile connections should already be available to all by now, and not an aspiration to be achieved by 2025. Failure to deliver on this fundamental infrastructure requirement will continue to impede business start-up and growth in rural areas, as well as innovation and productivity.

Many of the rural areas within Mid Ulster suffer from poor broadband and worse mobile phone coverage. The ongoing issues of 'not-spots' or poor broadband connection need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

A major challenge for Mid Ulster is encouraging further investment in telecommunications infrastructure. Communications Providers do not have a sufficiently robust business case to adequately address the broadband and mobile requirements of our rural areas, with their low population densities and low rates of urbanisation.

Mobile phone coverage in Mid Ulster is of a relatively poor quality at a number of locations and across certain networks. There is a need for Government Departments to work in partnership with international providers to enhance and extend the reach of mobile voice and data services in the Council area. The lack of reliable mobile connectivity clearly disadvantages both Mid Ulster businesses and residents and endangers our future growth prospects. Therefore, there is an urgent need to significantly improve the telecommunications infrastructure across the entire Council area.

Leverage key strategic development sites (e.g. Maze/Long Kesh)

In order to meet this Investment Priority, there is a critical need to address chronic and long-standing shortages of industrial land for development within the Mid Ulster District Council area. Therefore, the Council would request that the **Desertcreat site**, outside Cookstown should be **leveraged as a key strategic development site** within the new Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Mid Ulster is recognised as one of the most entrepreneurial and enterprising regions in NI, with a dynamic private sector driven economy boasting the largest business base outside Belfast with over 9,000 VAT registered businesses. It has a higher productivity per head of population compared to the NI average and a GVA of £3.24bn (producing 7.7% of NI's economic output).

However, the acute shortage of industrial land and Invest NI serviced sites is a huge barrier to investment and has forced high growth businesses to relocate employment opportunities outside of Mid Ulster (and NI) meaning a subsequent loss of exports

and GVA. Mid Ulster is a hotbed for manufacturing, producing more than 40% of the world's mobile crushing and screening equipment.

This project, involving the acquisition of 180 acres of land at Desertcreat provides a once-in a-lifetime opportunity to unlock the investment potential of a large strategic development site to meet latent and immediate demand for the provision of high quality serviced sites to enable indigenous businesses to expand and grow to their full potential.

Desertcreat industrial lands project is of immense importance, not only to Mid Ulster but also to the Northern Ireland economy.

Objective 5: To Maximise the Benefits from Emerging Technologies

With regard to embracing the pace of the emerging technologies, the Council would agree with the objectives to prioritise the public interfaces to our core public services across Local and Central government. Funding/investment to address such actions should be accessible to both local authorities and departments under such initiatives.

The need to provide a secure and highly resilient Network and Core system infrastructure is a continuous challenge and requires investment and ongoing review involving industry security expertise, design and implementation. Investment in conjunction with NCSC guidelines and industry will lead to a highly resilient public service infrastructure critical to maintain the integrity, availability and confidentiality of public services and data. The importance and wider use of data sets available across the public sector will be strategically and critically important in planning, delivering and decision-making made within the public in the future, based on an evidence-based approach.

Closing Remarks

In relation to the approach to Strategic Infrastructure Investment, the Council welcomes the proposal for a rolling 10 year Executive Infrastructure Investment Plan. Departmental alignment to ensure that strategic investment requirements are met are also important to develop, maintain and review. Mid Ulster District Council is also encouraged by the scope of the proposals and is of the opinion that the strategy has the potential to bring in wider range of investment to Northern Ireland that could help to ensure regional balance to outcomes delivered as a result. The Council would also recommend that the related timescales and budgets allocated to projects are realistic. The Council also welcomes the collaborative aspects to the proposals and that there is an overall aim to enhance inclusion.

In relation to communication with consultees on projects that present affordability challenges, early communication is critical where affordability challenges are identified. Risks associated with affordability should naturally emerge as part of the prioritisation framework, which will in turn help to inform the Infrastructure Investment Plan and be clear to all consultees. Affordability challenges identified should then be

further explored in the Medium-Term Infrastructure Finance Plan; ensuring challenges remain to the fore as planning progresses. In so doing, stakeholders and consultees will have early warning of where the identifiable challenges may be and early discussion/consideration/input can then take place about alternative funding. Clearly not all challenges will emerge at these initial stages and some will develop as projects reach the more detailed planning stage. However, direct communication with the right person/people is critical, and so, the identification of a named person (people) in each organisation to whom these challenges can be flagged as appropriate is essential.

Regarding what level of engagement should be carried out with consultees on project milestones and delivery progress once a project has been programmed for delivery, the document acknowledges that to date 'engagement has emphasised the need for the Investment Strategy to take a holistic and cross-cutting approach – working across traditional departmental and sector boundaries – to reflect the increasingly interconnected way in which services will need to be delivered'. If this has been the case at a macro level in terms of the strategy's development to this point, then it follows that targeted engagement should take place through every stage of the process and delivery of the resulting plans, particularly the detailed departmental Investment Plans which is where, we would anticipate, individual project milestones will be stated and against which progress will be measured.

Engagement should be formally mapped out as part of the planning stage of project plan delivery, in such a way to reach the right people at the right level in the right organisations, at the right time. This reflects the fact that some stakeholders and consultees will have differing priorities at different stages of a project and indeed, that from departmental perspectives, there will also be a different priority and importance attached to the input of stakeholders and consultees at different stages. The strategy needs, therefore, to recognise that there is unlikely to be a 'one engagement approach fits all'.

Finally, in relation to accountability of the strategy, the Council is satisfied with the mechanisms detailed in the consultation. Council is also content in relation to the areas examined and mitigated against in the EQIA and the Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

Mid Ulster District Council strongly agrees that region faces significant challenges in the coming years and as such it looks forward to the implementation of a robust and ambitious Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, that will provide effective strategic collaborative, resulting in positive outcomes for residents.

Yours sincerely

Paul McLean
Chairperson of Mid Ulster District Council

Appendix 4



Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council

Regional Development Office HQ
4th Floor North
9 Lanyon Place
BELFAST
Co Antrim
BT1 3LP

Telephone: (028) 9082 9307

Email: gerard.murray@communities-ni.gov.uk

Our reference: CO1-21-23485

Date: 18 March 2022

By email: Adrian.McCreesh@midulstercouncil.org

Project Reference No	CO1-21-23485
Project Applicant	Mid Ulster District Council
Project Title	Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme
Amount of Funding	£2,781,000
Period of Funding	15 March 2022 – 31 March 2023
Organisation's Financial Systems and Controls Rating	Robust

Dear Adrian

1. Award Approval

The Department for Communities ("the Department") is pleased to inform you that total funding of £2,781,000 towards the Organisation's Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme has been approved.

The funding is awarded on the basis of the organisation's Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Plan dated 15 March 2022 (a summary of which is set out in Annex A to this document), and any other detail provided throughout the assessment process prior to the date of this letter. Specifically, funding is offered

on condition that the project delivers its aims and contributes to the achievement of the Department's Programme Outcomes, as set out in the Schedule hereto attached. Approval is subject to your acceptance of all the conditions set out in this letter.

2. Definitions

In this Letter:-

“the Organisation” means Mid Ulster District Council ;

“the Project” means Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme; and as further defined under (revenue) items and (capital) items below.

“the grant” means a sum up to a maximum of £2,781,000; of which:

“capital items” means a sum of £2,590,000 towards the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Plan.

“revenue items” means a sum of £191,000 towards plan delivery costs. This can include staffing resource, goods and services, marketing and promotion, and materials.

“the project start and completion date” means the day by which the project must start and be completed so as to achieve the performance outputs as specified in paragraph 3 below.

“the equality legislation” means the statutory provisions from time to time in force in Northern Ireland in relation to discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, sexual orientation, gender or political opinion, including the obligations on public authorities set out in s.75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and in s.1 of the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 ;

3. Funding Period and Termination

The Organisation shall not commence the Project before 15 March 2022 and shall end the Project no later than 31 March 2023. The expenditure should be incurred before the end date of the Project. In the event that unexpected delays occur, the Organisation may request an extension to this end date. This should be in exceptional circumstances.

The Department reserves the right to terminate this offer of funding at any time by giving 3 months written notice to the Organisation of termination. Any liabilities properly incurred or earned before the date of termination will be payable by the Department in accordance with the terms of this Letter of Offer.

4. Default

If:-

- (i) any information provided by the Organisation or any representative of the Organisation in connection with or for the purposes of this letter and whether before or after the date of this letter is misleading or incorrect in any material respect;
- (ii) the Organisation is in breach of any obligation on the part of the Organisation contained in this letter and such breach is incapable of remedy or if capable of remedy remains unremedied for a period of 30 days after written notice by the Department;
- (iii) an order is made or an effective resolution is passed for the winding up of the Organisation or a Receiver is appointed over the undertaking or a material part of the undertaking of the Organisation;
- (iv) the Organisation is unable to pay its debts within the meaning of Article 103 of the Insolvency (NI) Order 1989;
- (v) an Administration Order is made in respect of the Organisation,

then in any such event or events the Department shall be under no obligation to make any payment or further payments of the funding and the Organisation shall forthwith on written demand by the Department repay the whole of the amount of the funding paid under this letter or such lesser amount as the Department may at its sole discretion so determine. Furthermore in the event of the Organisation defaulting under section 4 (i) of the letter, criminal proceedings may be instigated against the Organisation under Article 4 of the Social Need Order (NI) 1986 as the Department may at its sole discretion so determine.

5. Grant Conditions

- (i) The grant (a breakdown of which is set out in Annex A) shall only be made upon the return of this Contract for Funding, duly signed and dated by the appropriate council officials.
- (ii) Grant shall only be used for goods or equipment which are new, unless prior written consent from the Department is obtained. It shall not be used against costs for equipment, materials, goods or any services incurred prior to the date of this letter. The Organisation shall have due regard to its statutory Health & Safety obligations when purchasing, installing and using any capital equipment purchased with this funding.
- (iii) A dedicated current account must be maintained for the disbursement of project expenditure. Details of the account must be provided on the Bank Details form provided at Annex C to this letter. The funding will be paid directly into this bank account. The bank account should be identified as a Departmental funded project account and must be maintained by the Organisation for the sole purposes of the Project.
- (iv) Organisations involved in the delivery of multiple projects may already have a financial system using cost centres rather than multiple bank

accounts. Such organisations may wish to negotiate with the Department to retain this system for the purposes of managing the project. These negotiations will require that the Applicant establishes a dedicated cost centre for this fund and demonstrates to the Department's satisfaction that the systems in place guarantee a clear audit trail with regard to all aspects of the project finances. Should subsequent system checks reveal that the Department's requirements are not being met in this respect then the use of a dedicated bank account will become mandatory.

- (v) The Department will make every effort to pay funding promptly but accepts no liability in respect of loss or charges attributable to delay in the payment or to any suspension, reduction or cancellation of funding.

6. General Conditions

The Organisation shall:-

- (i) **Grant use** - apply the grant solely for the purposes of carrying out and implementing the Project;
- (ii) The development and delivery of the Organisation's Small Settlements Regeneration Plan should be informed by suitable stakeholder engagement, to be determined by the Organisation and should show clear connections to the outcomes and objectives of the overall programme. Consideration should be given to engagement with representatives from the Historic Environment Division (contact Manus Deery at Manus.Deery@communities-ni.gov.uk), Arts Council for Northern Ireland (contact Damian Smyth at dsmyth@artscouncil-ni.org), the Ministerial Advisory Group on Architecture and the Built Environment (contact the Secretariat at magsecretariat@communities-ni.gov.uk), and Business Improvement District managers (should one be established within the town);
- (iii) Ensure the project is completed in accordance with any necessary statutory approvals;
- (iv) **changes** - immediately inform the Department in writing of any circumstances which will or may affect the ability of the Organisation to deliver their Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Plan; (Examples include: major changes to the project; the potential failure to meet agreed outputs/targets; posts becoming vacant through sickness; and Maternity Leave. This list is not exhaustive)
- (v) immediately inform the Department in writing of any proposed major change to the individual schemes or items of expenditure or profile amounts for same as set out in the Organisation's Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme. For the purposes of this clause and clause (iv) above, a major change is defined as one that impacts upon works, goods and/or services that account for more than 10% of the value of the funding.

- (vi) not without the prior written consent of the Department vary or alter the Project; its scope, use, financing or ownership; start and end dates;
- (vii) **constitution** - not alter or vary its memorandum or articles of association without the prior written consent of the Department;
- (viii) **assignment** - not without the prior written consent of the Department assign or in any way encumber this letter of offer or any benefit derived or to be derived by the Organisation under it;
- (ix) **duplicate funding** - not seek, or make any application for or accept any financial assistance from any other Government Department, Agency or other funding body in respect of the expenditure for which funding is or may be payable under the terms of this letter; provided always that the provision shall not apply to financial assistance which may be payable by another funding body but the Department shall be entitled to reduce the funding available under this letter by an amount if equal to such financial assistance;

The levels of funding have been agreed as follows:

- (i) **Department for Communities – up to a maximum of £810,000 Capital and £115,000 Revenue;**
- (ii) **Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs - up to a maximum of £1,050,000 Capital and £76,000 Revenue;**
- (iii) **Department for Infrastructure – up to a maximum of £730,000 Capital**
- (iv) **£309,000 Council contribution**

You must advise the Department immediately if there are any changes.

- (x) **Procurement** – to ensure Best Value for Money, the Council will ensure that all procurement is carried out in line with its own procurement policies, and in accordance with the principles of the Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy and all relevant Procurement Guidance Notes, and that all spend is compliant with the Council's policy and procedures on Capital Expenditure. The Council will provide the Department with a Procurement Plan which sets out procurement arrangements for each project, and will not engage in any procurement until the Procurement Plan has been evaluated by the Department in conjunction with the Department of Finance's Construction & Procurement Delivery Directorate;
- (xi) **ensuring Value for Money** - Council should ensure that any capital construction project in the Plan with a value of £500,000 or above is

supported by a business case that has been approved by the Department before procurement commences.

The Department will also test drill projects below the value of £500,000 to ensure suitable documentation is in place to support the value for money decision to fund the project. Council should, therefore, retain and make available on request all relevant documentation related to these projects.

- (xii) **insurance** - insure any items of an insurable nature which have been obtained with the benefit of the funding to the full replacement value thereof.
- (xiii) **maintenance** - Provide evidence that an arrangement for the maintenance of the project after completion has been put in place;
- (xiv) **inventory of assets** – establish and maintain an inventory of all fixed assets acquired, built or improved wholly or partly using the Department's funding, whether owned by the applicant or third parties. An asset is defined as an item that will not be used up within 12 months and which is not intended to be sold before the end of its useful life. The inventory should show the date of purchase; description of the asset; net price paid; location of the title deeds; serial or identification numbers; location of the asset; date of disposal; and sale of proceeds net of VAT.
- (xv) **disposal of assets** – not dispose of any asset without the prior authorisation of the Department. If any asset obtained with the benefit of the funding is disposed of within 4 years from the date of acceptance of this letter, the Organisation shall, on demand, repay to the Department the depreciated value of the asset. For the purposes of this clause, depreciation shall be calculated at 25% per annum of the asset's original cost;
- (xvi) **Financial controls** - establish and maintain effective financial control systems in relation to its operations generally but specifically in relation to the Project;
- (xvii) **provision of records** - from time to time upon request by the Department furnish the Department or the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland with both hard and soft copy documents of all such financial accounting and other information relating directly or indirectly to the Project as the Department or the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland may request. Original documents or verified true copies must also be produced upon request. Failure to produce the original documents or satisfactory agreed substitutes could result in requests for repayment of funding;
- (xviii) **retention of records** - ensure that all records and information relating to the implementation of the Project and its financing are retained for a period of not less than 7 years following the payment of funding under this letter and make any such record available to the Department and the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland for inspection upon

request by the Department or the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland.

- (xix) **publicity** – You should acknowledge our funding prominently in any press release or any other type of media activity that you may be planning surrounding the support. Please send a copy of your draft press release prior to publication to DfC Press Office -Press.Office@communities-ni.gov.uk and allow at least three working days for approval. On occasions the Department will also include a quote into your press release to highlight the importance of the funding. The Department may also choose to issue its own press release to promote the funding of the project.

If you have an active social media presence you may wish to announce the funding on your social media platforms. The Department has a Twitter profile so you may wish to tag us using @CommunitiesNI. Unfortunately due to the large number of projects we support each year we are unable to commit to tweeting about them all individually. We do however encourage you to tag us when you share updates in your project so we can keep up to date and 'like' your tweet where possible.

Council shall include appropriate references to the assistance made available by the Department to the Organisation under this letter in any publicity or brochures or other material produced by or on behalf of the Organisation and in which the Project is mentioned.

- (xii) **data protection** - acknowledge that information on applications and claims for payment for Grant assistance is stored on computer and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, and that such information may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000; in addition this shall include any applicable national implementing Laws as amended from time to time including (i) the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Law Enforcement Directive (LED) and (ii) Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 to the extent that it relates to processing of personal data and privacy; and (iii) all applicable Law about the processing of personal data and privacy;
- (xiii) **overpayments** - shall repay the Department any overpayment forthwith on first demand or becoming aware that funding has been overpaid, whichever first occurs;
- (xiv) **political or religious** - ensure that the funding shall not be used for the purpose of or in any way connected with the promoting of any political party or religious viewpoint. No aspect of the activity being funded should be party political in intention, use or presentation or likely to be perceived as discriminatory. Any activities, such as campaigning, by the Organisation must be in furtherance of, and ancillary to, its main purpose.
- (xv) **legislation** - comply with the equality legislation to the extent that the same applies to the Organisation. No aspect of the activity being funded

should be party political in intention, use or presentation or likely to be perceived as discriminatory on the grounds of race, disability, sexual orientation, gender or political opinion. Any activities, such as campaigning, by the Organisation must be in furtherance of, and ancillary to, its main purpose;

- (xvi) **liability** - by accepting this letter acknowledge that the Department accepts no liability to the Organisation other than as expressly provided for, in and subject to, the terms and conditions stated in this letter. Further, the Organisation shall indemnify the Department against all actions, proceedings, costs, claims, demands and liabilities arising out of, in respect of, or in connection with this letter, caused or contributed to by the negligence or default of the Organisation, or by any circumstances within its control.
- (xvii) **Employment** - the Department accepts no responsibility or liability for the staff employed on the Project. The Applicant shall be the employer of staff required for the Project and shall be responsible for all matters in connection with their employment. The Applicant shall comply with the requirements of all EC Directives and legislation from time to time in force relating to working conditions, health and safety at work etc. The Applicant shall comply with the requirements of the Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 and 1988, the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and any enactments amending, extending or replacing the same
- (xviii) **Conflict of Interest** – declare any actual or potential Conflicts of Interest which could exist as a direct consequence of the Organisation’s use of the funding to be provided by the Department and record same in a Register of Conflicts.
- (xix) **Charity law** - ensure that the organisation, [and any Charity Registered Voluntary & Community Sector organisation receiving funding through this Contract for Funding], operates within, and meets its obligations under charity law in Northern Ireland and further promotes, where relevant to the project, the charitable sector’s obligations under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.
- (xx) **Public Accounts Committee** – attend Public Accounts Committee hearings on request and fully co-operate in an honest and candid manner at such hearings.
- (xxi) **Government Funders Database – requirements for Government Departments, NDPBs and Councils etc.** Ensure that any award to a Voluntary & Community Sector organisation made from this funding is recorded on the Government Funders Database no later than 4 weeks from the date the award is made.
- (xxii) **Child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults** – The grant recipient [and any Voluntary & Community Sector organisation receiving

funding through this Contract for Funding]* must provide assurance that they have a Safeguarding Policy in place, and confirm that they operate effective procedures and controls, including appropriate checks, to ensure the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults.

7. Fraud

- (i) The organisation (and/or its representatives) may be prosecuted if it fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with any condition subject to which financial assistance has been given to the organisation requiring it to inform the Department of any event whereby the financial assistance becomes repayable.
- (ii) The Department may by notice require the organisation to furnish to the Department such information, or to produce for examination on behalf of the Department such books, records or other documents, as may be specified in the notice for the purpose of enabling the Department to determine whether any condition subject to which the financial assistance is given is satisfied or is being complied with or whether the financial assistance has become repayable in whole or in part in accordance with any such condition.
- (iii) The organisation (and/or its representatives) may be prosecuted if in purported compliance with a notice issued under paragraph (ii) it knowingly or recklessly makes any statement or produces any document which is false in a material particular.
- (iv) The organisation (and/or its representatives) may be prosecuted under Article 4 of the Social Need Order (NI) 1986, if without reasonable excuse, it fails to comply with a notice under paragraph (ii).
- (v) It will be the responsibility of the Organisation to take whatever action is necessary to minimise the risk of fraud and to notify the Department immediately of any instances of attempted, suspected or proven fraud. Following a Departmental investigation all instances of suspected fraud will be reported to the Police and criminal proceedings may be instigated if deemed appropriate.

8. Sharing of Information

All Government Departments, Agencies and other funding bodies may share information to enable them to prevent and detect fraudulent applications and to co-ordinate the processing of complementary applications. Accordingly, information provided by the Organisation during the application and assessment process, monitoring returns and any other information provided by the Organisation may be made available to other Departments/Agencies for the purpose of ensuring the accuracy of information and preventing or detecting crime. Such information may also be placed in the public domain.

9. Monitoring & Evaluation

The Department shall monitor and evaluate the Project on a quarterly basis by reference to the Performance Outputs and also to the Department's Outcome Based Accountability Report Card (Annex D). The Organisation shall complete a quarterly monitoring return by 30th June 2022 and quarterly thereafter (see Annex E for template) and submit it to the Department, along with any other such information and assistance for these purposes as the Department may request.

The Department may also from time to time require the Organisation to provide evidence that the Organisation have fulfilled their statutory obligation in relation to HMRC in respect of PAYE and National Insurance contributions.

10. Withholding of Funding

The Department may withhold all or part of the funding and may require all or part of the funding to be repaid if it considers that you have not complied with any of the terms and conditions in this Letter of Offer.

11. Notice

Any letter, notice or demand by the Department shall be sufficiently served on the Organisation if it is delivered by hand at, or sent by post to, the Organisation's last known address.

12. Duration

The obligations of the Organisation under this letter shall remain in force for a period of 4 years following the date of acceptance of this letter; with the exception of 7 (xviii), which shall remain in force for a period of 7 years following the date of the last payment of funding under this letter in line with legislative requirements.

13. Acceptance

This letter has been issued electronically and accordingly if the Organisation is prepared to accept the foregoing offer please return one complete copy of this letter duly signed and dated on behalf of the Organisation (see Annex B) within 4 weeks from the date of this letter.

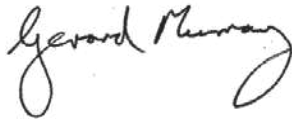
In accepting this offer the Organisation is agreeing to comply with the conditions contained in this letter and any guidance that the Department subsequently issues.

This letter may be made available to other Departments/Agencies and other funding bodies for the purposes of preventing or detecting fraud.

14. Availability of Offer

The foregoing offer shall remain open for a period of 1 week from the date of this letter. Failure to return one complete copy of this letter duly signed and dated on behalf of the Organisation within this period shall result in the offer being withdrawn.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerard Murray'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

GERARD MURRAY
Director for Regional Development

ANNEX A

Capital	Project costs	Funder contribution		
		DFI	DAERA / DFC	Council
Castlecaufield Recreation Area	£ 671,000	£ -	£ 603,900	£ 67,100
Castledawson (Riverside)	£ 175,000		£ 157,500	£ 17,500
Manor Park, Moneymore	£ 227,000		£ 204,300	£ 22,700
Coalisland Canal	£ 519,111	£ 467,200	£ -	£ 51,911
Bellaghy - walking trail and recreational area	£ 422,000	£ 262,800	£ 117,000	£ 42,200
Clady recreational area	£ 130,000		£ 117,000	£ 13,000
Moy 4G multi use pitch	£ 733,667	£ -	£ 660,300	£ 73,367
	£ 2,877,778	£ 730,000	£ 1,860,000	£ 287,778
Resource				
ICT	£ 212,222	£ -	£ 191,000.00	£ 21,222.00
Overall totals	£ 3,090,000	£ 730,000	£ 2,051,000	£ 309,000

ANNEX B**OFFICIAL FUNDING ACCEPTANCE AND DIRECTOR OF FINANCE'S
STATEMENT**

Project Reference No	CO1-21-23485
Project Applicant	Mid Ulster District Council
Project Title	Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme
Amount of Funding	£2,781,000
Period of Funding	15 March 2022 – 31 March 2023

I **ADRIAN MCCREESH** have authority **on behalf of**
(Name of Chief Executive in Block Capitals)

MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name of Council

to accept the offer of funding set out in the letter dated 18 March 2022 and agree to deliver the above project on the terms and conditions therein.

Signed by
(Chief Executive)

ADRIAN MCCREESH
Name in Block Capitals

Date

Witnessed by
(Registered Office Bearer)

Name in Block Capitals

Date

FINANCIAL DECLARATION (TO BE SIGNED BY DIRECTOR OF FINANCE OR EQUIVALENT)

I hereby confirm that this funding will be spent in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures for capital/revenue expenditure. I further confirm that there will be no duplication in expenditure from other public sector funding, and that the fund will not be used to pay for equipment, goods or service costs incurred prior to the date of this letter.

Signed by: _____

Name in block capitals: _____

Position in Council: _____

Date: _____

ANNEX C

BANK DETAILS

Project Reference No	CO1-21-23485
Project Applicant	Mid Ulster District Council
Project Title	Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme
Amount of Funding	£2,781,000
Period of Funding	15 March 2022 – 31 March 2023

Please complete Bank details below.

Name of Organisation: Mid Ulster District Council

Name of Account: Mid Ulster District Council General Account

Bank Name: Bank of Ireland

Bank Address: 11 Market Street

Magherafelt

BT45 6EE

Sort Code: 90-49-82 **Account Number:** 88583270

Signed by
(Chief Executive)

Witnessed by
(Registered Office Bearer)

Name in Block Capitals

Name in Block Capitals

Date

Date

ANNEX D

OUTCOME BASED ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD

<p><u>How much did we do?</u></p> <p>Number of costed Small Settlements Regeneration Plans (SSRP) developed by councils.</p> <p>Number of stakeholder engagement forums established or identified to support delivery of SSRP.</p> <p>Number of projects that support increased use of land for active travel (i.e. extended footways, cycle ways, connecting pathways) which connects people with key services and ensures accessibility for all including those with disabilities.</p> <p>Total funding distributed by DfC by council</p>	<p><u>How well did we do it?</u></p> <p>% of costed Small Settlements Regeneration Plans (SSRP) developed by councils within agreed timescales.</p> <p>% of stakeholder engagement forums established within agreed timescales.</p> <p>% of stakeholders reporting that they were satisfied with the quality of the engagement by the forum (by council).</p> <p>% of projects completed on time</p> <p>% of projects that improved accessibility</p>
<p><u>Is anybody better off?</u></p> <p>% of residents in smaller settlements where projects have been delivered agree that the improvements to the area would encourage people to live, work, visit and invest in the area.</p> <p>% of the public (residents and visitors) using smaller settlements where projects have been delivered agree that the improvements to the area would encourage people to live, work, visit and invest in the area.</p> <p>% of the public (residents and visitors) agree that projects supported would encourage people to change from car use to more environmentally friendly choices such as walking and cycling for journeys of under two miles</p> <p>Number & % of businesses within the scheme areas who reported schemes funded through this Programme have positively impacted on sales figures.</p>	

ANNEX E

Monitoring Assessment Report

Name of organisation	
Full description of project	
Reference number	
Period of report	
Project contact	

Section 1: Assessment of expenditure

Is the expenditure expected for the full year still achievable?

If **yes** please confirm that the expenditure is on track and no underspend or overspends are expected, if **no** explain what action is being taken

Are there any budgetary or re-profiling changes

If **yes** please detail what agreed re-profiling changes have been made and why, if **no** please write 'no' in the box below

Section 2: Progress on objectives/outputs

Is the project/service in line with the Council's objectives/outputs identified in their Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme, and with the Department's OBA Report Card as stated and agreed in the Letter of Offer?

If **yes** please detail how the project/service is meeting its objectives/outputs, if **no** explain what action is being taken to bring the project/service into line

Have the targets as outlined in the Council's Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme been met for this reporting period?

If **yes** please detail how the project/service is meeting its targets, if **no** explain what action is being taken to bring the project/service into line

Are the targets for the full project lifespan still achievable?

If **yes** please confirm that the targets are still achievable, if **no** explain why the targets are no longer achievable and what action is being taken

Has there been any change to targets within the funding period?

If **yes** please detail what changes have been made to the targets and comment, provide details of any letters of variance or revised Letter of Offer, if **no** please write 'no' in the box below

Section 3: Governance update

Are there are any Governance issues or concerns or are there any ongoing investigations or suspected fraud?

If so, please detail below, including the action taken or required

Section 4: Declaration

I am content that the monitoring report shows that the organisation is delivering in line with the contract for funding.

Please use this space to add additional supporting information, or to identify any issues with project delivery

Name of officer (in capitals):

Signature:

Position within Council:

Date:



Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin Monaghan County Council

APPENDIX 5

Acmhainní Daonna
Human Resources
047 30586

Airgeadas
Finance
047 30589

Na Bóithre
Roads
047 30597

Clár na dToghthóirí
Register of Electors
047 30551

Comhshaol
Environment
042 9661240

Na hEalaíona
Arts
047 38162

Iasachtaí /Deontais Tithíochta
Housing Loans/Grants
047 30527

Leabharlann an Chontae
County Library
047 74700

Mótarcháin
Motor Tax
047 81175

Músaem an Chontae
County Museum
047 82928

Pleanáil
Planning
047 30532

Pobal
Community
047 73719

Rialú Dóiteáin/Foirgnimh
Fire/Building Control
047 30521

Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil
Local Enterprise Office
047 71818

Seirbhísí Uisce
Water Services
047 30504/30571

Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council
Burn Road
Cookstown

BT80 8DT
Adrian.mccreesh@midulstercouncil.org

Date: Tuesday, 15 February 2022

Re: Contribution towards Sliabh Beagh Scoping Study

Dear Mr McCreesh

The Sliabh Beagh Partnership was established in September 2021 and its aims are to assist and support rural communities and businesses within the Sliabh Beagh area to further develop and be more sustainable. Three Councils form Sliabh Beagh and these are Mid Ulster District Council, Monaghan County Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

At the January meeting of the partnership, following a presentation from Shane Campbell, ICBAN discussions centred around accessing funding for product development in the area.

It was proposed that £5,000 would be requested from each council to develop a scoping study to identify priority recreational projects and to draw up outline costs for these projects.

The subsequent plan would then be used to seek funding for the partnership to deliver these projects on a phased basis.

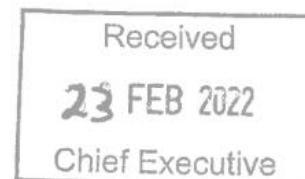
As a result, I am now writing to request a contribution of £5,000 from Mid-Ulster Council for the development of this joint Scoping Study.

If you have any further queries on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Cathy Bennett

Councillor Cathy Bennett
Chairperson
Sliabh Beagh Partnership



Fálann an tUdarás Áitiúil roimh chomhfhreagras i nGaeilge.

Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin, Oifig an Chontae, An Gleann, Muineachán, Éire.

Monaghan County Council, Council Offices, The Glen, Monaghan, Ireland.

00353 4 7800 47 82738 www.monaghan.ie

eolas@monaghancoco.ie info@monaghancoco.ie

Report on	1. Update on ESF Call 3 Match Funding Requests 2022/23
Date of Meeting	6 April 2022
Reporting Officer	Assistant Director of Economy, Tourism & 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>Update on ESF Call 3 Match Funding Requests 2022/23</p> <p>The strategic aim of the European Social Fund (ESF) is designed to combat poverty and enhance social inclusion. It supports participants to progress into further education, training and ultimately employment through funding organisations to deliver programmes for the unemployed and the economically inactive as well as people with disabilities and young people not in education, employment or training.</p> <p>In May 2021, the Economy Minister launched a third and final call for projects to apply for funding under the NI ESF programme for the period April 2022 to March 2023.</p> <p>In July 2021, following receipt of four requests for match funding, Council agreed the provision of the following contributions, subject to the organisations being successful in their ESF funding bids to the Department for the Economy. The full amount of match funding each organisation was provisionally allocated from Council was reduced to fit within Council's £50,000 available budget.</p> <p>i) SUSE+ Up to £25,000 to South West College to deliver the SUSE Programme</p> <p>ii) Women Towards Education and Employment Programme Up to £12,500 to First Steps Women's Centre to deliver the Women Towards Education and Employment Programme.</p> <p>iii) Up for Work Programme Up to £6,250 to Network Personnel to deliver the Up for Work Programme.</p>

	<p>iv)Job Match Programme Up to £6,250 to Network Personnel to deliver the Job Match Programme.</p> <p>These organisations required match funding support from a range of sources as part of a wider cocktail of funding to allow the employability schemes to commence. It was noted at the meeting that lead organisations may have the opportunity to secure match funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and that option was being explored by the Department for the Economy.</p> <p>Council subsequently then also received four additional match-funding requests from Enterprise NI, NOW Group, Specialisterne Northern Ireland and Bytes, and it was agreed at a meeting of the Development Committee in September 2021 to defer consideration of these until further information on the provision of match funding is received from the Department for the Economy and the applicant organisations.</p>			
3.0	Main Report			
3.1	<p>Update on ESF Call 3 Match Funding Requests 2022/23</p> <p>Each organisation has now provided updated confirmation to Council of their match funding status for 2022/23, and details of their programmes and targets as outlined below (full detailed Proposals are attached in Appendices 1 – 4)</p> <p>i) SUSE+ – Council offered up to £25,000 towards the project and South West College has confirmed that all other match funding is now in place</p> <p>SUSE+ delivers skills development and employability support to help participants into further development, training, education and employment. The SUSE+ programme is a mentor led initiative with six mentors employed to support participants across the district. Whilst the initiative supports citizens in the urban areas of Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon, assistance for rural dwellers is a key focus (& target) of the programme and is reflected in the spread of mentoring resources across the district.</p> <p>SWC has secured ESF funding for a 1 year extension to the current programme. This will continue to be delivered in its current format and will again be collaborative in its approach and it is envisaged that the partnership, which was developed to deliver SUSE+, will be retained to deliver any new programme. It is now confirmed that all current partners including the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Radius Housing will continue to support SUSE+ for the year 2022/23.</p> <p>Projected Outputs (2022-23)</p> <table><tr><td>• 200 Participants (unemployed and economically inactive people)</td></tr><tr><td>• 425 Qualifications achieved at Level 1</td></tr><tr><td>• 35 Essential Skills Level 1 Qualifications to be Achieved (Literacy, Numeracy and a strong focus on ICT)</td></tr></table>	• 200 Participants (unemployed and economically inactive people)	• 425 Qualifications achieved at Level 1	• 35 Essential Skills Level 1 Qualifications to be Achieved (Literacy, Numeracy and a strong focus on ICT)
• 200 Participants (unemployed and economically inactive people)				
• 425 Qualifications achieved at Level 1				
• 35 Essential Skills Level 1 Qualifications to be Achieved (Literacy, Numeracy and a strong focus on ICT)				

- 44 participants or 22% of participants to Enter Employment on Leaving the Programme
- 44 Participants or 22% of Participants in Employment Six Months After Leaving Programme
- 16 Leavers From the Programme Join Education or Training Programmes
- 294 Specialist qualifications attained

Programme Funding (2022-23)

Source	%	Amount	Status
DfE/ESF	65%	£543,685.23	Confirmed
DAERA	10.2%	£85,065.82	Confirmed
MUDC	2.99%	£25,000	Conditional
FODC	4.78%	£40,000	Confirmed
Radius Housing	2.99%	£25,000	Advised intend to support
SWC	14%	£117,687.82	Confirmed
Total	100%	£836,438.82	

The SWC has provided confirmation that, should Radius funding be less than intended, funding will be provided from SWC's own resources.

Recommendation: SUSE+

Based on current budget constraints, projected outputs / outcomes and funding package, it is recommended to approve a financial commitment of £25,000 to South West College for the period 2022-23, subject to the SWC providing confirmation of the final match funding package, verifying their capacity to deliver and commitment to the targets outlined.

- ii) **Women Towards Education and Employment Programme** – Council offered up to £12,500 towards the project. First Steps Women's Centre has now confirmed all their match funding is now in place

Women Towards Education and Employment Programme (WTEEP) (Lead organisation: First Steps Women's Centre)

This request is for match funding for their 'Women Towards Education and Employment Programme' (WTEEP). The Programme will provide a range of training including interview skills, ESOL, literacy and numeracy, health & wellbeing, progression and mentoring as well as a Job fair. FSWC will employ a Progression Worker to guide participants into further education and employment. The Progression Worker will also assist women in setting training and employment targets and working towards them.

Since 2015 FSWC has drawn down £2.5million into the Mid Ulster Council area, the majority from the European Social Fund programme, (£479k was for a capital refurbishment programme 2017-18). This capital investment has doubled the size of the Centre transforming it into a modern Centre with facilities including 4 training rooms and an onsite crèche. Furthermore, 219 women gained employment since 2015 as a result of attending FSWC. The additional

development of Wellbeing programmes has created a positive environment for many women to consider employment who had previously been labelled “Economically Inactive”. FSWC has now secured ESF funding of £287,146 for the year 2022/23.

Projected Outputs (2022-23)

- Interview & CV Skills – FSWC has liaised with Terex to provide Interview Technique training;
- 1 X Literacy & Numeracy – up to Level 1 for 25 women
- 12 X IT Courses for 120 women. These courses will range from Level 1 Sage Accounts & Sage Payroll, Microsoft Office, Excel and Beginners IT. There will also be introductory programmes including: iPad & Tablet, Digital Photography;
- 20 X Health & Wellbeing Programmes for 175 women – These are aimed at building up the soft skills such as Confidence, Resilience, Assertiveness and Communication;
- Progression & Mentoring work – FSWC will employ a Progression Worker whose role is to guide women into further education and employment. The Progression Worker will assist women in setting training and employment targets and working towards them;
- 1 X Job Fair – 25 organisations and 200-300 people attending.

Programme Targets (2022-2023)

Targets	2022-23
Job Creation	42
Qualifications	145
Number of Courses	39
Participants - places	264
Job Fair	1 event with 200-300 in attendance
Improvement in Soft Skills	225

Programme Funding (2022-23)

Source	Percentage	Amount	Status
Total Project costs	100	£441,763	
ESF	65	£287,146	Confirmed
First Steps Women's Centre	16	£69,877	Confirmed
MUDC	3	£12,500	Conditional
The Pathway Fund	4	£15,000	Confirmed
Garfield Weston	6	£30,000	Confirmed
Weslyan Assurance	2	£9,940	Confirmed
Volant Charitable Fund	4	£17,300	Confirmed
TOTAL		£441,763	

FSWC have also submitted applications for match funding to the Dept for Communities' Women's Centre Childcare Fund and Community Initiative Fund and are awaiting the outcome of these. If these are successful, the contribution required from FSWC will reduce accordingly.

Recommendation: Women Towards Education and Employment Programme

Based on current budget constraints, projected outputs / outcomes and funding package, it is recommended to approve a financial commitment of £12,500 to First Steps Women's Group for the period 2022-23, subject to FSWC providing confirmation of the final match funding package, verifying their capacity to deliver and commitment to the targets outlined.

iii) Up for Work Programme (Network Personnel)

iv) Job Match Programme (Network Personnel)

Network Personnel has advised Council that it no longer requires Council match funding requested for these programmes, totalling £12,500 as this will now be provided by DfE

As noted above, four additional requests were received by Council, however, due to the limited budget available, Council is only able to offer the first two received up to £6,250 each, subject to confirmation of their final funding package being in place.

v) Exploring Enterprise Programme (Enterprise NI)

Exploring Enterprise Programme (EEP) is a pre-enterprise programme which supports participants from disadvantaged groups who are unemployed / economically inactive, or working or in training less than 16 hours per week to explore self-employment, to enter or return to the labour market. The programme is a mixture of group training and one to one mentoring support.

Participants do not need to have a specific business idea to join; the programme provides an insight into starting a business whilst allowing participants to work towards achieving the OCN endorsed Level I qualification in Understanding Business Enterprise. In addition, there will also be an emphasis with regards guiding and assisting individuals into and through the mainstream business support/further education options. Pre-enterprise support is an essential first stage in the continuum of support required to encourage entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland. The EEP will help boost the economy by initiating business start-ups and skilling individuals to become more employable.

EEP flexible design allows participants to receive support which meets their individual needs whilst remaining within the framework of a structured and programme offering, as follows:

Stage 1: Pre-Training Mentoring (6 hours per participant)

Stage 2: Training in groups (45 hours)

Stage 3: Post Training Mentoring (10 hours per participant)

Enterprise NI is in receipt of a ESF Letter of Offer from DfE for EEP (please see breakdown below).

Programme Targets (2022-2023)

Targets	2022-23
Courses delivered	4
Participants Enrolled (Receiving Pre-Training Personal Development Plans)	40

Participants receiving OCN Level 1 Understanding Business Enterprise Qualification	28
Participants exiting Into Employment (Including Self-Employment)	15
Participants exiting Into Further Education and Training	3
Participants In Employment 6 months after exit	17

Programme Funding (2022-23) – Mid Ulster

Source	Percentage	Amount
Funding from ESF / DfE	65%	£28,500.50
Enterprise NI own resources	21%	£9,096.42
Mid Ulster Council	14%	£ 6,250.00
TOTAL		£ 43,846.92

Regional match funding position

Funder	%	£	Status
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	100%	£459,892.20	
Department for the Economy	65%	£298,929.93	
Match funding (breakdown listed below) 24% Councils + 11% ENI/LEAs	35%	£160,962.27	
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council	4.9	£22,741.31	<i>Going to committee in March 2022</i>
Ards & North Down Borough Council	2.1	£9,614.50	<i>Pending outcome of competitive process.</i>
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon borough council	3.3	£15,049.00	
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council	4.3	£20,000.00	<i>Agreed at L&D committee Feb 2022, to be ratified at full council in March 2022</i>
Fermanagh & Omagh District Council	0.5	£2,500.00	
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	1.5	£5,852.31	<i>Pending outcome of competitive process.</i>
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council	3.9	£17,787.52	
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council	2	£10,000	
Mid Ulster District Council	1.4	£6,250.00	<i>Conditional offer</i>
Total Councils Match Funding	24%	£109,824.64	
Enterprise NI & LEA's	11%	£51,167.63	

Recommendation: Exploring Enterprise Programme

Based on current budget constraints, projected outputs / outcomes and funding package, it is recommended to approve a financial commitment of £6,250 to Enterprise NI for the period 2022-23, subject to ENI providing confirmation of the final match funding package, verifying their capacity to deliver and commitment to the targets outlined.

vi) Project VERVE (NOW Group)

Verve, NOW Group's flagship employment and training programme, is funded by the European Social Fund and has just completed its fourth year of delivery in March 2022. Verve is targeted at participants with learning difficulties/disabilities and/or neurodiverse conditions who need additional support in order to access sustainable paid employment opportunities or sustained voluntary opportunities. In March 2020 Project Verve was awarded the prestigious OCN Provider of the Year Award - <https://www.ocnni.org.uk/learner-awards/learner-awards-2020>

VERVE provides participants with opportunities to avail of innovative pre-employment academy training courses, which fall in line with labour market trends. The academy model is a 12-week training programme that consist of both theory and practical learning methodologies. The experiential learning process, along with classroom-based theory allows participants to gain a holistic perspective of the vocation and delivers well trained, qualified participants ready to explore employment opportunities. Other tailored interventions include:

- A dedicated Employment Officer to help participants prepare for employment or volunteering
- Assistance to find the job participants want and support to sustain them in the new position
- Access to a range of training courses to help participants prepare for work, including; CV building, job search techniques, customer services skills, effective communication skills and essential skills
- Tailored career guidance and access to a job club

The amount requested will allow for the appointment of a full-time staff member, dedicated to the operational delivery of service provision within the Mid Ulster area. The match funding will also allow for a part time Skills Trainer, who will deliver accredited training within the Mid Ulster council area.

The NOW Group is in receipt of an ESF Letter of Offer from DfE for the VERVE Project (please see breakdown below).

Programme Targets (2022-2023)

Targets	2022-23
Participants supported	20
Participants increasing skills	20
Paid employment secured (over 10 hours)	5
Voluntary Jobs Secured	5
Jobs sustained over 6 months	4
Participants gaining a vocational qualification (Level1 / 2)	16
Participants gaining work experience	16
Local employers engaged and offering support	45

Programme Funding (2022-23)

	Source	%	Amount	
	Total Project costs	100	£1,301,526.48	
	Department for the Economy	65	£845,992.21	
	DfC (Department for Communities)	13	£175,000	<i>Confirmed</i>
	Ards & North Down Council	2	£25,000	<i>Conditional offer</i>
	Antrim & Newtownabbey Council	2	£25,000	<i>Conditional offer</i>
	Mid & East Antrim Council	2	£25,000	<i>Confirmed</i>
	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	2	£25,000	<i>Confirmed</i>
	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	2	£25,000	<i>Conditional offer</i>
	Mid Ulster District Council	0.5	£6,250	<i>Conditional offer</i>
	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	0.7	£10,000	<i>Confirmed</i>
	BHSCT	7	£90,000	<i>Confirmed</i>
	Self-Match (NOW)	3.8	£49,284	<i>Confirmed</i>
	TOTAL		£455,534	
	<p>Recommendation: Project VERVE</p> <p>Based on current budget constraints, projected outputs / outcomes and funding package, it is recommended to approve a financial commitment of £6,250 to the NOW Group for the period 2022-23, subject to NOW Group providing confirmation of the final match funding package, verifying their capacity to deliver and commitment to the targets outlined.</p> <p>Requests from the organisations below were also received, however, there is no match funding now remaining in Council's budget to resource these.</p> <p>vii) Specialisterne NI - £8,225</p> <p>viii) Bytes Project - £25,000</p> <p>Members should note that, going forward, funding of this nature (i.e. for the provision of employability and skills support) would be within the remit of the recently established Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership. It is anticipated that the LMP's 3-Year Action Plan will have a specific budget set aside for a competitive process whereby submissions will be invited from organisations to outline how they propose to meet the objectives of the Mid Ulster LMP in addressing employability and skills issues in Mid Ulster.</p>			
4.0	Other Considerations			
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications			
	<p>Financial:</p> <p>Update on ESF Call 3 Match Funding Requests 2022/23 £50,000 is available from Council's economic development budget for the period 2022/23</p>			
	<p>Human:</p> <p>Update on ESF Call 3 Match Funding Requests 2022/23 Officer time in managing and monitoring the programmes</p>			

	Risk Management: Programmes are regularly monitored by staff.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <p>Update on ESF Call 3 Match Funding Requests 2022/23</p> <p>Approve the four contributions as outlined below for the period 2022/23, subject to the project promoters providing confirmation of their final match funding package being in place, verifying their capacity to deliver their projects as outlined and committing to achieving the targets as detailed in their proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve up to £25,000 to SWC for the SUSE+ Programme for the period 2022/23 (ii) Approve up to £12,500 to First Steps Women's Centre for the Women Towards Education and Employment Programme for the period 2022/23 (iii) Approve up to £6,250 to Enterprise NI for the Exploring Enterprise Programme for the period 2022/23 (iv) Approve up to £6,250 to the NOW Group for the VERVE Project for the period 2022/23 (v) Approve that officers write to Specialisterne NI and Bytes to advise that Council has no available budget in 2022/23 to fund their requests.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix 1 – SUSE+ Programme (South West College)</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Women Towards Education and Employment Programme (First Steps Women's Centre)</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Exploring Enterprise Programme (Enterprise NI)</p> <p>Appendix 4 – VERVE Programme (NOW Group)</p>

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE

SUSE+ Proposal to Mid Ulster District Council

1.0 Introduction

Based on the success to date of the Step Up to Sustainable Employment + (SUSE+) programme to date, South West College intends to submit an application in response to the ESF Call 3 for a 1 year extension to the existing SUSE+ funded under Call 2 of the ESF Programme. It is anticipated that this Call will be live from 1st April 2022 and will end on 31st March 2023. The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the success of the SUSE+ programme in Mid Ulster area and set out the broad outlines of the proposed new programme.

The SUSE+ Programme is a collaborative employability programme, which support participants entering or moving towards employment across the Mid Ulster and Fermanagh/Omagh District Council Areas. The Programme is led by South West College (SWC) with the support of a range of partners:

- Northern Regional College
- Mid Ulster District Council
- Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
- Education and Library Boards
- Northern, Southern and Western Trusts Health and Social Care Trusts
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

2.0 SUSE+ Outputs and Outcomes 2018 to 2021

The impacts to date have been significant with 170 or 28% of participants entering sustained employment. Even at the minimum wage this yields wages of over £2 million per annum to the local economy.

The SUSE+ programme is a mentor led initiative with six mentors employed to support participants across the district. Whilst the initiative supports citizens in the urban areas of Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon, assistance for rural dwellers is a key focus of the programme and is reflected in the spread of mentoring resources across the district. To ensure an equal distribution of mentors the College has divided the district into three discrete sectors and allocated two mentors to each sector.

Table 1 below provides an overview of the programme outputs to date by geographic sector:

Table 1: Cumulative programme outputs by area 2018-2021, Mid Ulster Council.

District Sector	Participants Recruited	Outputs		
		Qualifications	Specialist Training	Sustained Employment
Carntogher Moyola Magherafelt	177	232	168	46
Cookstown Torrent	183	255	186	52
Dungannon Clogher Valley	240	347	243	72
Total	600	834	597	170

3.0 Self-Evaluation

At the conclusion of year 2 of the current programme (June, 2020) the SUSE+ Programme team undertook a detailed self-evaluation process, which identified strengths and areas for improvement. A synopsis of the findings is contained in Table 2.

Table 2: SUSE+ Strengths and Areas for Improvement (June 2020)

Strengths	Areas for Improvement
Six dedicated mentors based in MUC area supporting citizens to reach full potential.	Further increase the provision of engineering training to match local employer needs
246 participants recruited in MUDC area in year 2 of the current programme against a target of 200.	Further develop a comprehensive range of Blended provision for Year 3 of the programme which fully meets the care, welfare, personal development and learning needs of participants
Focus on rural outreach with 139 participants recruited from these rural areas in year 2 against a target of 96.	Develop a comprehensive Recruitment and Marketing Strategy for Year 3 of the Programme to take into account remote working model for staff, a remote delivery model for staff and a remote learning model for participants.
76 citizens in the district securing sustainable employment against a target of 44 for year 2.	

The ability of the programme to provide participants with travel, childcare and subsistence allowances to address barriers to participation.	
54 participants progressing to Education and Training against a target of 161 year 2 of the programme.	

4.0 Programme Proposal 2022-2023

South West College intends to apply for a 1 year extension to the current SUSE+ programme in response to the imminent ESF Call 3 which will run from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. The programme will continue to be delivered in its current format and will again be collaborative in its approach and it is envisaged that the partnership which was developed to deliver SUSE+ will be retained to deliver any new programme. It is intended that all current partners including The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will continue to support the programme for a further year in response to Call 3 of the ESF programme.

4.1 Programme Aim and Rationale

To provide a mentor led initiative which supports citizens in the Mid Ulster District Council area move into or towards sustained employment through the provision of a mentor led education, training and development programme.

Table 3: Programme Rationale

Who	Engage 200 unemployed and economically inactive people exhibiting barriers to employment.
Where	Delivery will be provided in the College campuses and via outreaching mentoring support in a range of locations across the region. Partner organisation premises will be utilised for mentoring, work placement and delivery of Step into Employment Programmes.
When	200 participants in the 2022/23 financial year.
What	Mentor led initiative will identify and address barriers to progression into Education, Training & Sustained Employment through mentoring, support, guidance, Essential Skills and qualifications at level one and below along with specialist training. Participants will have access to Specialist Support Services, work placement and Step Into Employment Programmes. Mentors will signpost participants to the provision and support which best meet their needs. All participants will avail of post programme mentoring after they leave provision to ensure the progression to education, training and employment is sustained.
Why	To increase economic performance across the region thus combating poverty; securing sustained employment for 36% of the target group and significantly

	enhancing the employability of the remainder through a structured, partnership based approach which complements existing provision and places employers at the centre of delivery.
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5.0 Opportunities for Mid Ulster Council

South West College intends to make an application to The European Social Fund Managing Authority Call 3 for approximately £634,614 for a further year's funding for the SUSE+ employability programme representing 75% of the total budget required to fund the programme. It is envisaged that the remaining 25% match funding requirement will be realised from the statutory partners that supported the SUSE+ programme. Based on the breakdown of annual funding realised for SUSE+ it is anticipated that the commitment profile for any new programme would be as outlined in Table 4.

Table 3: Annual Funding Profile

Source	Percentage	Amount
DfE/ESF	65%	£543,710.15
DAERA	10.16%	£100,000
MUDC	4.26%	£40,000
FODC	4.26%	£40,000
Radius Housing	2.99%	£25,000
SWC	13.33%	£62,767.01
Total	100%	£836,477.16

In a Mid Ulster specific context the provision of £40,000 per annum in match funding would leverage an additional £464,768 of funding to support citizens in the district. As we enter the development stage of this proposal an opportunity exists for council officials to participate in a range of partner workshops where that application will be developed and aligned with the community plan.

Indicative objectives for the delivery of proposed employability programme in the Mid Ulster Council area

1. 425 Qualifications Achieved at Level 1
2. 35 Essential Skills Level 1 Qualifications to be Achieved (Literacy , Numeracy and a strong focus on ICT)
3. 44 participants or 22% of participants to Enter Employment on Leaving the Programme
4. 44 Participants or 22% of Participants in Employment Six Months After Leaving Programme
5. 16 Leavers From the Programme Join Education or Training Programmes
6. 294 Specialist qualifications attained

APPENDIX 2



First Steps Women's Centre Application for ESF Call 3 Match Funding to Mid Ulster Council

14th June 2021

Author: Michael McGoldrick, CEO

Contents

Executive Summary.....1

Economic Impact and Track Record.....1

ESF Outputs and Outcomes 2015-20212

New ESF Programme.....3

Title of Project: Women Towards Education and Employment3

Proposed Outputs and Outcomes 2022-233

Partnership4

Funding5

Executive Summary

First Steps Women's Centre (FSWC) is a registered charity and Company Limited by Guarantee, based in Dungannon. It was formed in 1998 to provide education, training and support to women. These support services include free onsite creche, minibus transport service to and from the Centre and a Benefit Checker service aimed at assisting women and their families through the complex benefit system. This support alongside the training is vital for the retention and success of the programmes.

Since 2008 FSWC has been a recipient of the European Social Fund (ESF). The remit of applications was to provide training, education that would lead into employment and further education and training.

The main training and education areas are

- **IT** – Ranging from Sage Accounts, Sage Payroll to Microsoft Office and Excel
- **Wellbeing and Lifeskills** – These courses are often the first steps for many women seeking to reengage positively in society. They include programmes such as Assertiveness, Creative Writing, Managing Stress in Lockdown, Building Resilience, Pilates, Yoga Hormone Harmony
- **Lifeskills** - Consists of accredited Numeracy, Literacy and ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages programmes.

At present the Centre employs 2 full time and 16 part time staff. The Centre also hires up to 20 part time tutors every year.

Economic Impact and Track Record

Financial Impact - Since 2015 First Steps Women's Centre has brought in a staggering **£2.5million** into the Mid Ulster Council area. Most of this funding was through our European Social Fund programme, however £479k was for a capital refurbishment programme (2017-18). This capital investment has doubled the size of the Centre and totally transformed the building into a modern Centre with facilities including 4 training rooms and an onsite creche. The Centre is a fully equipped and modern building with WIFI throughout. It has been recently endorsed by CEO of South West College, Michael McAllister and also Adrian McCreesh, CEO of Mid Ulster Council.

Employment - 219 women gained employment since 2015 as a result of attending FSWC. FSWC believes that this has been a very positive boost for the local economy. The additional

development of Wellbeing programmes has created a positive environment for many women to consider employment who had previously been labelled “Economically Inactive”.

ESF Outputs and Outcomes 2015-2021

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
Job Creation	63	45	48	35	22	6	219*
Qualifications	108	94	129	138	151	183	803
Number of Courses	41	49	61	51	61	38	301
Participants - places	356	489	763	623	776	259	3,266
Income	£420k	£405k	£394k	£436k	£424k	£424k	£2.5m

***Employment Trends** – The above table indicates a downward trend in employment. There are two main reasons for this. There has been a downward trend in local vacancies and also a number of women who have attended the Centre have other family/caring responsibilities that make it difficult to travel outside the Borough.

Job Fair – FSWC has held two successful Job Fairs with more than 30 employers and over 400 participants attending. These were open to the whole community including schools. FSWC had to cancel a planned Job Fair in March 2020 due to the COVID 19 Pandemic. It is a key aim of ESF Call 3 application is to host a Job Fair in the autumn of 2022.

Local Migrant Population – FSWC has a 15-year successful track record of providing accredited English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training and qualification. Approximately 45% of all participants attending FSWC have been from the migrant community. They come to learn English so that they can gain employment, further their learning and to help integrate within the Mid Ulster community. Testimonials show that it is the manner and way in which FSWC provides the learning that ensures 80% and above retention levels. These include the following:

- **Family Friendly Times** – Courses start at 9.45am or 1.00pm for 2-3 hours,
- **Bi-Lingual Staff** – FSWC has 4 bi-lingual staff operating within its creche,
- **Transport** – This is a big plus for many women who do not have access to transport,
- **Benefit Checker** – Assistance with the numerous forms including Universal Credit has helped bring some financial stability to women and their families.

New ESF Programme

Title of Project: Women Towards Education and Employment

Annual Cost of programme £480k

Match Funding required £168k

Request to MUC £25k

Additional Match Funders identified – see page 5

Wrap Around Project

This proposal will be based at FSWC's own premises. This is a fully equipped, self-contained space with an onsite creche. It is the intention of FSWC to provide the following programmes on an annual basis. Each area of work has its own co-ordinator who will recruit and mentor the women throughout their journey. They will be assisted by a Progression Worker who will help and encourage those attending to apply for higher levels of education and/or seek employment.

Proposed Outputs and Outcomes 2022-23

Interview & CV Skills – FSWC has liaised with Terex to provide Interview Technique training.

1 X Literacy & Numeracy – up to Level 1 for 25 women

12 X IT Courses for 120 women. These courses will range from Level 1 Sage Accounts & Sage Payroll, Microsoft Office, Excel and Beginners IT. There will also be introductory programmes including: iPad & Tablet, Digital Photography.

20 X Health & Wellbeing Programmes for 175 women – These are aimed at building up the soft skills such as Confidence, Resilience, Assertiveness and Communication.

Progression & Mentoring work – FSWC will employ a Progression Worker whose role is to guide women into further education and employment. The Progression Worker will assist women in setting training and employment targets and working towards them

1 X Job Fair – 25 organisations and 200-300 people attending

Outcomes for Women Towards Education & Employment 2022-23

Outcomes	2022-23	Outcomes	2022-23
Job Creation	42	Participants - places	264
Qualifications	145	Job Fair	1 with 200-300 in attendance
Number of Courses	39	Improvement in Soft Skills	225
Income	£480k		

Partnership

FSWC has been a vital cog within the community and voluntary sector of Mid Ulster. Our ESF programme stretches far and wide throughout the Borough and beyond. The Centre has developed many partnerships especially for referrals and for progression beyond FSWC. These include the following:

- **South West College** – regular contact with senior and programme staff. This included College providing a progression route for Literacy class up to a Level 2 qualification. FSWC recently met with CEO and Ciaran McManus to plan a Level 3 programme at FSWC. This partnership will include FSWC providing transport, childcare and a room while the College will provide a tutor. This will be a progression route for 15 of FSWC's ESF participants.
- **University of Ulster** – This has been through the Community Engagement Office at UU. A new Level 3 course Unlocking Potential will commence in the autumn hosted by FSWC, and run by UU.
- **Terex** – provision of Interview Skills training for participants at FSWC.
- **Surestart Dungannon & Coalisland** – Referrals from Surestart for local and migrant women as well as sharing of best practice by childcare staff.
- **Women's Aid** – WA has an outreach office with FSWC. They use this to meet with a clients. Some of these clients will be signposted to attend a course at FSWC. FSWC will also provide Benefit Checker assistance and help complete Universal Credit applications as well as providing reception support.
- **Mid Ulster Council** – Through receipt of Strategic Development Grant. MUC has provided funded over the past 5-6 years under the SDG. This has enabled FSWC

provide much needed services for the Centre. Over the past 8-9 months CEO of FSWC has been liaising with MUC regarding future ESF programmes and match funding. MUC has also been supportive of the Community Relations work with local migrant community through guidance and funding.

- **PSNI, Education Authority NI, De Paul Ireland, St Vincent de Paul, Vineyard Church, Probation Board NI, et al** – FSWC works with many statutory, community and voluntary organisations including the those listed.

Funding

Leveraging Additional Funding through Match Funding

The ESF programme makes a 65% contribution to the overall cost of the project. FSWC needs to raise £155k-£170k per annum in order to maximise the outputs and outcomes. The income on page 2 shows the fluctuation on funding. This is down to the difficulty in raising and identifying match funding. If MUC were to provide £35k in Match Funding then this would draw down an additional £65k for the project.

Funding Sources – FSWC has had to apply for Match Funding from multiple sources. It is estimated that this project will cost £480 with a £168k match fund required from FSWC. With £168k FSWC will be able to draw down an additional £312k per annum into the Mid Ulster Council area.

Source of Funding	Amount	Definite (Y/N)
FSWC	£25k	Y
Dept f Communities	£70k	Y
MUC	£25k	TBC
Match Funding to be identified	£48k	

Funding Request to Mid Ulster Council

FSWC understands the current economic situation and the financial situation of Mid Ulster Council. FSWC also recognises that the Council has awarded financial support in the past to other organisations from its Economic Department. However, FSWC had not been offered such support. FSWC believes that an award of £25k is a reasonable request given the proven benefits that it brings to the Council area.

EXPLORING ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To request match funding of £6,250 for 4 Exploring Enterprise Programme courses to be delivered under Call 3 of the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2014-2020 in the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Exploring Enterprise Programme (EEP) is a pre-enterprise programme which seeks to support people who are considering self-employment as their route to enter and/or return to the labour market. The programme is a mixture of group training and one to one mentoring support. Participants do not need to have a specific business idea to join; the programme provides an insight into starting a business whilst allowing participants to work towards achieving the OCN endorsed Level 1 qualification in Understanding Business Enterprise. In addition, there will also be an emphasis with regards guiding and assisting individuals into and through the mainstream business support/further education options. Pre-enterprise support is an essential first stage in the continuum of support required to encourage entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland. The EEP will help boost the economy by initiating business start-ups and skilling individuals to become more employable.

EEP flexible design allows participants to receive support which meets their individual needs whilst remaining within the framework of a structured and manageable programme offering.

There are four key areas that we focus on to enhance the self-employability outcomes of participants:

- Participants are provided with knowledge which is underpinned by the OCN Level 1 Understanding Business Enterprise qualification.
- Participants are provided with soft skills and confidence they require to use their knowledge.
- Participants are provided with one-to-one support tailored to their needs from qualified and experienced staff.
- Participants are signposted to additional support which is relevant to them to further enhance their self-employability outcomes.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Stage 1: Pre-Training Mentoring (6 hours per participant)

The Business Mentor will identify participants unique development requirements and create a personal action plan which provides a framework which ensures that support is focussed on the participants specific needs.

Stage 2: Training (45 hours)

Training is delivered in small groups of 5-10 participants using OCN approved training materials and additional support materials which are specific to the needs of the group. A range of learning experiences are provided including peer-to-peer support and team working which allows softer skills such as networking, problem solving, communication and confidence building to be enhanced.

Participants can work towards achieving the OCN Level 1 Understanding Business Enterprise qualifications which incorporates three mandatory units: Developing a Business Idea, Factors Contributing to being a Successful Entrepreneur and Being Enterprising.

Additional workshops are also delivered which cover the key skills (Business Operations, Introduction to Business Finance, Know your Market, Marketing and Promotion, Pitching an Idea) required to start and run a business.

An Employability workshop is also offered which covers CV development, employability skills and interview techniques aimed at participants who decide that self-employment is no longer their preferred pathway.

Workshops are supplemented by guest speakers from external organisations such as Accountants etc who provide expert advice. Additionally, participants have the opportunity to speak to local entrepreneurs to gain valuable insight on running a small business.

Stage 3: Post Training Mentoring (10 hours per participant)

Personal action plans are reviewed to determine the participants progress following training and any additional areas that need to be addressed are identified. Participants are assisted to determine their preferred progression pathways (self-employment, employment and/or further education or training) and the Business Mentor will identify specific activities for each pathway which may include:

Self-Employment

Developing the business idea, market research, pricing and financial projections, marketing, and legal and regulatory requirements.

Employment

Identifying suitable jobs, job searching, developing a CV, completing application forms and interview preparation.

Further Education or Training

Researching relevant courses, completing application forms, and liaising with education providers.

PROGRAMME DELIVERY

We propose to run 4 courses in the Mid Ulster District Council area over the year (1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023). This will allow us to support another 40 people of which 28 will gain a qualification and 18 will have positive immediate outcomes when they complete the programme.

Programme Outputs in the Mid Ulster District Council Area

Outputs	Total
Courses Delivered	4
Participants Enrolled (Receiving Pre-Training Personal Development Plans)	40
Participants receiving OCN Level 1 Understanding Business Enterprise Qualification	28
Participants exiting Into Employment (Including Self-Employment)	15
Participants exiting Into Further Education and Training	3
Participants In Employment 6 months after exit	17

Workspace Enterprises will deliver 1 medium course. Dungannon Enterprise Centre will deliver 2 large courses and they will also 1 small course for participants from the Cookstown area. Due to Covid-19 the programme has been adapted using a blended learning approach with a hybrid of face-to-face (subject to public health guidance) and online delivery. Technology enhanced learning using tools such as Nearpod, Cahoot etc has been incorporated in programme delivery.

Programme Budget in the Mid Ulster District Council Area

Description	£
Total Funding Requirement	£ 43,846.92
Funding from ESF / DfE (65%)	£28,500.50
Funding from Enterprise NI (21%)	£9,096.42
Match Funding Request from Council (14%)	£ 6,250.00

Regional match funding position

Funder	Agreed	Requested	Comments
Department for the Economy - 65%	£298,929.93		
Match funding - 35% (breakdown below)	£160,962.27		
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council		£22,741.31	Going forward to committee in March 2022
Ards & North Down Borough Council		£9,614.50	Pending outcome of competitive process.
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon borough council	£15,049.00		
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council	£20,000.00		Agreed at L&D committee in February 2022, to be ratified at full council in March 2022
Fermanagh & Omagh District Council	£2,500.00		
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council		£5,852.31	Pending outcome of competitive process.
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council	£17,787.52		
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council	£10,000		
Mid Ulster District Council		£6,250.00	
Total Match Funding	£65,336.52	£44,458.12	
Enterprise NI & LEA contribution	£51,167.63		

IMPACT OF EXPLORING ENTERPRISE TO DATE

The Exploring Enterprise Programme has had a significant impact in the Mid Ulster District Council area. Under the current Letter of Offer 9 courses have been successfully delivered.

92 people have received pre-training mentoring support and 56 went on to receive the CCEA accredited Level 1 Certificate in Understanding Business Enterprise qualification.

43 participants gained employment of which 37 went into self-employment and 6 went into employment. An additional 16 participants went onto training or further education.

The high number of participants who went into self-employment and started their own business in the Mid Ulster District Council area is notable. A wide range of businesses across various sectors were started such as photography, construction, sports massage, interior design etc. During the Covid-19 pandemic the programme continued to be delivered in very challenging circumstances with 9 participants going into self-employment.

The creation of new business within the area also creates employment opportunities for others.

Year 1 - 2018/19	Overall Target	Actual Cookstown	Actual Dungannon	Actual Magherafelt	Total Outcome
Courses Delivered	4	0	2	1	3
Participants enrolled	40	0	23	8	31
Individuals achieving QFCF Level 1 in 'Understanding Business Enterprise'	32	0	15	7	22
Individuals into Employment/Self-Employment on leaving	8	0	10	2	12
Individuals into Employment / Self - Employment after 6 months	11	0	13	4	17
Individuals Into FE & Training	3	0	0	0	0

Year 1 - 2019/20	Overall Target	Actual Cookstown	Actual Dungannon	Actual Magherafelt	Total Outcome
Courses Delivered	5	0	2	2	4
Participants enrolled	49	0	24	16	40
Individuals achieving QFCF Level 1 in 'Understanding Business Enterprise'	39	0	11	13	24
Individuals into Employment/Self-Employment on leaving	10	0	18	5	22
Individuals into Employment / Self - Employment after 6 months	13	0	13	4	17
Individuals Into FE & Training	4	0	0	1	1

Year 1 - 2020/21	Overall Target	Actual Cookstown	Actual Dungannon	Actual Magherafelt	Total Outcome
Courses Delivered	5	0	1	1	2

Participants enrolled	37	0	12	9	21
Individuals achieving QFCF Level 1 in 'Understanding Business Enterprise'	30	0	1	9	10
Individuals into Employment/Self-Employment on leaving	8	0	7	2	9
Individuals into Employment / Self - Employment after 6 months	10	0	TBC	TBC	
Individuals Into FE & Training	4	0	0	2	2

PROGRAMME BENEFITS

We are confident that EEP is an important value-added and complimentary offering in what we refer to as the “continuum of support” for entrepreneurs in the Mid Ulster District Council area and that it plays a vital part in helping us address the entrepreneurial deficit. EEP is often the very first step for someone who believes that self-employment may be their best route back to the labour market, allowing them to understand what it takes to be self-employed and run a business, so they can make an informed decision.

EEP feeds into and supports the success of other mainstream offerings such as the Go for It programme which in turn increases the level of entrepreneurial activity in the Mid Ulster District Council, reduces the levels of unemployment and economic inactivity and helps to re-balance the economy. The programme equips participants with the practical information and skills required to start their business.

PROGRAMME TARGET PARTICIPANTS

To be eligible for EEP you must be:

- Aged 16 or over
- Legally able to reside and work in the UK
- Unemployed or Economically Inactive or want to increase the hours you work per week; and
- Not participating on another ESF programme.

A number of key target groups you identified:

- Long term unemployed or long term economically inactive.
- Living in areas of deprivation.
- Where the number of workless families is high.

- From underrepresented groups such as lone parents, women, ethnic minority groups; prisoners.
- Individuals with no or low education and skill levels.
- From areas suffering from the economic impact as a result of major employer closures and redundancies including significant Covid-19 related job losses.
- Young People (16-30)

Locally, our direct delivery partners have in place established relationships with the key stakeholders in their area and share information about their respective services so as to ensure participants are aware of the programme and of other support available locally to them. Business Mentors have knowledge of existing provision within the council area and at initial meetings will assess the participants individual's needs and requirements. If Exploring Enterprise is not the best fit for the participant, they will be assisted move on to a more suitable offering. At entry level potential participants must confirm they are not currently participants on another ESF programme. This is verified using the ESF database – if the participant is on another ESF programme this will be flagged on the system and the participant cannot be enrolled on EEP.

PROGRAMME DELIVERY STAFF

There will be no staffing implications for Council as the programme will be delivered by Workspace Enterprises and Dungannon Enterprise Centre. Delivery staff are qualified and experienced Business Mentors.

SUMMARY

The Exploring Enterprise Programme will have a significant impact in the Mid Ulster District Council area. We propose to deliver 4 EEP courses targeting 40 people over the year. 28 people (70%) will achieve a recognised qualification which will enhance their CV. Furthermore 18 participants (45%) will have an enhanced outcome from the programme with the creation of 15 new jobs.



NOW Group
ESF Match Funding Proposal – Call 3
2022/23

*European Social Fund
Call 3 2022-2023
Priority 2 - Disability*

NOW Group

NOW Group are an award-winning social enterprise who delivers services across Northern Ireland supporting people with learning difficulties, disabilities and autism into jobs with a future. We are passionate about changing lives and our priority is on outcomes and impact for individuals, their families and the communities who are the most disadvantaged.

Our Employment and Training services focus on supporting people into open employment through our model of individual progression which reaching people who often 'fall through the gaps' and are not currently supported by traditional providers.

NOW Group continually scan workforce trends and the economic and political environments for opportunities for employment, up skilling and social engagement which will increase inclusion and well-being, leading to citizenship development and civic involvement for our participants. Our work is also about social and community inclusion which leads to the people we work with having better health, a better education and a brighter future. Our services are continually evolving as a result of co-design, participant feedback and learning from projects.

NOW Group have delivered programmes under the ESF programme since 2008 and provides training and employment services for people with learning disabilities, difficulties and Autism. Like all previous ESF programmes, our current flagship programme Verve has exceeded all targets set and offers substantial 'value for money' when reviewing investments against results.

Since April 2018 we have supported 337 people into paid employment and 80 participants have maintained voluntary jobs across all council areas. Impressively, from the 337 paid job outcomes since 2018, 83% have sustained their job for more than 6 months. Also, we support progression by providing appropriate life/work experience opportunities and tailored accredited and non-accredited qualifications through intensive academy styled training backed by practical work experience. To date 2,150 training accreditations have been completed by our participant cohort.

NOW Group's project Verve has been recognised as one of the top-six programmes in Europe for promoting the employment of people with disabilities in 2020.

The Employment for All award, which is overseen by an internal jury panel of the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), screens the work of around 15,000 initiatives from businesses and support providers across European nations.

Inclusion in the final six candidates of the fourth edition of the award demonstrates Verve's success in providing a model for employment that is viewed as one of the most sustainable. – <https://www.nowgroup.org/post/now-group-one-of-the-best-in-europe>

March 2020 also seen Project Verve awarded the prestigious OCN Provider of the Year Award - <https://www.ocnni.org.uk/learner-awards/learner-awards-2020>

Social Enterprise NI held their Annual Awards on Friday 15th October 2021, with NOW Group winning the; Best in Category for: Education, Employment and Training, for the work associated with Project Verve. This is the second time in three years that Project Verve has won this award. –

<https://www.socialenterpriseni.org/post/social-enterprise-ni-awards-2021-winners-announced>

Proposal – Project Verve

Verve, NOW Group's flagship employment and training programme is funded by the European Social Fund and is now into the fourth year of delivery. Verve is targeted at participants with learning difficulties/disabilities and/or neurodiverse conditions who need additional support in order to access sustainable paid employment opportunities or sustained voluntary opportunities. The programme provides participants with opportunities to avail of innovative pre-employment academy training courses, which fall in line with labour market trends. The academy model is a 12-week training programme that consist of both theory and practical learning methodologies. The experiential learning process, along with classroom-based theory allows participants to gain a holistic perspective of the vocation and delivers well trained, qualified participants ready to explore employment opportunities. Other tailored interventions include;

- A dedicated Employment Officer to help participants prepare for employment or volunteering
- Assistance to find the job participants want and support to sustain them in the new position
- Access to a range of training courses to help participants prepare for work, including; CV building, job search techniques, customer services skills, effective communication skills and essential skills
- Tailored career guidance and access to a job club

The Department for Economy (DfE) and the European Commission (ESF) have released a Call 3 for providers. Contract will be agreed through an open call, tender application process.

We are seeking match funding of **£6,250** per annum to support our ESF application for Call 3 2022/23, with a value for of **£312** per participant supported. This proposal can be scaled up depending on the demonstrated need within the council area.

The amount requested will be matched by NOW Group and will allow for the appointment of a full-time staff member, dedicated to the operational delivery of service provision within the Mid Ulster area. The match funding will also allow for a part time Skills Trainer, who will deliver accredited training within the Mid Ulster council area.

Programme Costs

Total Project Costs: Up to £1,301,526.48

Total Programme Funding (ESF & DfE) 65%: Up to £845,992.21

Match funding (35%) £455,534.27 (below)

Funder	£	Status
DfC (Department for Communities)	£175,000	Confirmed
Ards & North Down Council	£25,000	Conditional Offer
Antrim & Newtownabbey Council	£25,000	Conditional Offer
Mid & East Antrim Council	£25,000	Confirmed
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	£25,000	Confirmed
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	£25,000	Conditional Offer
Mid Ulster District Council	£6,250	Conditional offer
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	£10,000	Confirmed
BHSCT	£90,000	Confirmed
Self-Match (NOW)	£49,284	Confirmed
TOTAL	£455,534	

Outcomes

Outcome	Annual Target
Participants Supported	20
Paid Employment Secured (over 10 hours)	5
Voluntary Jobs Secured	5
Jobs sustained over 6 months	4
Participants increasing skills	20
Participants gaining a vocational qualification (Level 1 / Level 2)	16
Participants gaining work experience	16
Local Employers engaged and offering support	45

Our ambitious target against jobs and retention is based on our experience and ability to align individual progression planning, relevant training, job outcome and ability to sustain jobs through Workable (NI). Workable (NI) offers a flexible range of long-term support to help people with disabilities who have barriers to employment to secure and sustain work. Workable (NI) is a 12-month contract for participants and is solely funded by the Department for Communities (DfC).

Strategic Context

The proposal will support the Council's Economic Growth Plan, their Strategic Economic Priorities, the Draft Programme for Government and compliment City Deal Skill Development. The outcomes of the programme will create a culture of enterprise and business with improved employment and skills for the population across the council area. Reducing economic inactivity and offering sustainable opportunities to people who may have been reliant on benefits is a key area of success for the NOW Group.

NOW Group Background

The NOW Group are an award-winning social enterprise who delivers services across Northern Ireland supporting people with learning difficulties, disabilities and autism into jobs with a future. We are passionate about changing lives and our priority is on outcomes and impact for individuals, their families and the communities who are the most disadvantaged.

Our Employment and Training services focus on supporting people into open employment through our model of individual progression which reaching people who often 'fall through the gaps' and are not currently supported by traditional providers.

NOW Group continually scan workforce trends and the economic and political environments for opportunities for employment, up skilling and social engagement which will increase inclusion and well being, leading to citizenship development and civic involvement for our participants. Our work is also about social and community inclusion which leads to the people we work with having better health, a better education and a brighter future. Our services are continually evolving as a result of co-design, participant feedback and learning from projects.

European Social Fund Experience (ESF)

NOW Group have delivered programmes under the ESF programme since 2008 and provides training and employment services for people with learning disabilities, difficulties and Autism. Like all previous ESF programmes, our current flagship programme Verve has exceeded all targets set and offers substantial 'value for money' when reviewing investments against results.

Since April 2018 we have supported 337 people into paid employment and 80 participants have maintained voluntary jobs across all council areas. We support progression by providing appropriate life/work experience opportunities and tailored accredited and non-accredited qualifications through intensive academy styled training backed by practical work experience. To date 2,221 training accreditations have been completed by our participant cohort.

Our Model

NOW Group have tried, tested and refined our progression model to reach maximum impact. The following model of good practice has been designed specifically to

increase progression routes for participant and develop strategic outputs in line with Council economic planning. This model will increase progression routes for participants and map to identified skills gaps across all council. We will deliver on the principles of Supported Employment.



Delivery

- Employment Programme provides one-to-one specialist support to individuals to help them get the job they want and to keep it.
- A range of interventions to build clients capacity to engage in training, work placements, voluntary work and community/social activities.
- Vocational and employability training delivered at appropriate levels.
- In work support to increase sustainability.

NOW Group's Employment Team have an expert working knowledge of DEL/DES funded programmes. We continually scope for new opportunities or programmes that will cater for our participants. We recognise that one size does not fit all and along with DES, JBO Staff and other providers, we can deliver a suite of complimentary programmes which lead to sustained employment for the ESF participants. Successful programmes map directly to the strategic context and advancement of local government's key priorities by supporting participants through a continuum of support that is tailored to individual progression as outlined below.

Before Work	Getting into Work	Sustaining Job
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Training • Vocational academies • NOW services • Transition Services • Volunteering • Training for Success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESF Programmes • Steps to success • WRES (Work Ready Employment Services) • JobStart Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WorkableNI • Access to Work (NI) • Conditional Management Programme

We recognise that working in collaboration with like-minded organisations supports shared expertise, learning and progression for participants. NOW is a member of the Supported Employment Solutions (SES) Consortium, with contracts to deliver NI-wide on the Work Connect, Workable programmes. There are 7 organisations working together to ensure that we job entrants receive the most appropriate in work support. We will work in collaboration with JBO Staff and FE/HE providers to continually seek the best programme fit for progression for our participants. As an organisation we do not wish to duplicate service provision currently on offer and

believe that Project Verve is stand alone within the employability model we have designed and expertise in delivery.

Sustainability and Growth

NOW Group successfully operate social enterprises across the province, with the revenue generated supports our progressive approach when working with people with learning disability, difficulty and neurodiverse condition.

We are also part of a consortium of seven disabilities organisations, SES Partnership, who currently deliver the in-work support programme Workable (NI). This programme works as a continuum for the ESF programme to further support those who gain paid employment to sustain and progress within the job. We currently support 73 people to sustain their employment post their participation on the ESF programme.

Employer Engagement

NOW Group has evolved their activities through co-design and production. A key element of this is to work with participant and potential employers to map learning against need. Employer forums have been established to support this model and this will be introduced within the area. NOW will proactively work in advance with employers to establish working relationships before introducing participants. This method of job match has enabled NOW to maximise opportunities for both employers and employees. At present we are engaged with over 25 employers within the Mid Ulster area. However, with a dedicated staff member, we can strengthen these strategic links and establish further relationships with local employers and businesses.

The success of the JAM Card initiative through the private business, government and council sectors has been a catalyst for employers wanting to contact NOW to discover how else they can support communities. We actively work with business and employers to provide opportunities for career progression, partnership working and to develop social enterprise as an integral part of supply chains. NOW also support business to meet their social corporate responsibilities to add value to an organisation's activities by ensuring they have a positive impact on society, the environment and the economy.

NOW Group ESF Call 3 – Funding

Project Verve	1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023
	£1,301,526
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (AS PER ANNEX A OF YOUR APPLICATION)	1,301,526
MINUS REVENUE (if applicable)	
ELIGIBLE TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	1,301,526
TOTAL ESF CONTRIBUTION - 50%	650,763
TOTAL DfE CONTRIBUTION - 15%	195,229
TOTAL PUBLIC or PRIVATE (OTHER) MATCH FUNDING CONTRIBUTION - 35%	455,534

DfC (Department for Communities)	£175,000
Ards & North Down	£25,000
Antrim & Newtownabbey	£25,000
Mid & East Antrim	£25,000
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	£25,000
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	£25,000
Mid Ulster	£6,250
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	£10,000
BHSCT	£90,000
Self-Match	£49,284

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council
held on Thursday 10 March 2022 in the Council Offices, Circular Road,
Dungannon, and by Virtual Means**

Members Present Councillor Molloy, Chair

Councillors Ashton, Black, Burton, Clarke*, Corry*, Cuddy,
Doris*, Elattar*, Hughes*, McNamee*, Milne*, Monteith*,
Quinn* and Wilson

Officers in Attendance Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Ms Campbell**, Strategic Director of Environment
Mr Galloghy**, Rural Development Programme Manager
Ms Linney**, Assistant Director of Development
Mrs Forde, Member Support Officer

Others in Attendance **Secondary Schools Union**

Morgan Shuttleworth***, President
Ellie Jo Taylor***, Equality Officer

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes Others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Cllr Molloy in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee in the chamber and by virtual means, by referring to Annex A to this minute.

D039/22 Notice of Recording

This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site

D040/22 Apologies

Councillor Kerr

D041/22 Declarations of Interest

The Chair, Councillor Molloy reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest.

D042/22 Chair's Business

The Chair, Councillor Molloy advised that Coalisland Clonoe Comhaltas have been awarded the privilege of hosting the Tyrone Fleadh for the incoming year and requested that Officers engage with the group in relation to the event.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy spoke of the recent paper brought to Committee regarding the Blackwater Feasibility Study and requested that an update be brought to the next meeting.

Councillor Doris congratulated the Coalisland Clonoe Comhaltas on the Tyrone Fleadh coming to Coalisland and supported the call for Officers to engage with the group regarding the event.

Councillor Doris requested that officers provide clarity to herself regarding proposed lighting at the Coalisland Canal walkway stating that there had been discussion that any proposed lighting be wildlife friendly.

Councillor Doris advised that she had clarification that lands at Stewartstown carpark were owned by the Department for Communities and requested that Council engage with the department to endeavor to secure additional car parking for the area. She highlighted that the additional parking was much needed as there was new businesses in the village and requested that an update be brought back to relevant committee.

Councillor Burton requested that Council officers make contact with representatives of Ulster Rugby regarding progressing a project within the Aughnacloy area.

Councillor Wilson related how he, like many others was shocked and horrified about the ongoing situation in Ukraine and the slaughter and murder of innocent people. He said he knew it was not a matter for the meeting this evening but requested that Members receive a report about the ongoing work of Community Development team with local groups responding to the crisis. He said too that Council should show its support to the local community highlighting how they had reached out across the world to help.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy stated that it was heartwarming to see how community groups throughout the district were responding.

Councillor Burton said it was heartwarming to see rural groups who have pulled together and filled cattle trailers to the roof with supplies to be shipped across Europe to assist the people of Ukraine. She spoke in particular of Colin Tinsley who had coordinated the response. She concluded that it was so sad to see how wickedness can impact so many lives.

Councillor McNamee concurred with what has been said and commended all groups in their response. He also spoke of the appeal on the news for foster families and said that officers should follow up on this also.

The Chief Executive advised that the AD: Development was in communication with groups in order to coordinate community response and if any Members was aware of participating groups to refer them to the officer team. He said that Council were awaiting guidance from the Northern Ireland Office in relation to any resettlement programmes and that Members would be kept updated.

The AD: Development advised that the Department for Communities had scheduled a multi agency meeting for the incoming week following which she would provide an update to Members.

D043/22 Deputation: Secondary Students Union NI: School Uniform Campaign

The Chair, Councillor Molloy welcomed representatives of the Secondary Students Union NI to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation with regard to the School Uniform Campaign.

Miss Taylor delivered presentation detailed at appendix A outlining the focus and progress to date on the School Uniform Campaign.

The Chair Councillor Molloy thanked the representatives for the presentation saying that when he went to school the only branded item was a tie and maybe a blazer but having four children himself he was well aware of the additional pressures. He advised some schools were helpful whilst others were maybe not so supportive regarding the issue. The Chair invited Members questions.

Councillor Corry commended the representatives on the presentation and said she could remember going home with fear due to lack of finance in the home to have to ask for maybe new shoes. She said the matters need to be addressed and items should be brand free which would make them more affordable.

Councillor Corry proposed that Council write to the Minister for Education in relation to brand free/affordable school uniforms.

Councillor Corry commended the representatives of SSUNI and told them to keep up the good work.

Councillor Doris said she was very impressed with the facts presented and commended the representatives in how they had coped with the technical difficulties and pressed on. She spoke of the cost of living impacting everyone and said whilst it used to be single parent families in stress now even with two people working in the home families were getting it hard. Councillor Doris spoke of the stigma attached to not wearing the current brand and said that the whole point of a school uniform was to move away from this thus branding was ludicrous. She spoke of a motion moved by Sinn Féin at the Assembly in December and said she would follow up with her MLA colleagues as to its outcome.

Councillor Doris seconded the proposal to write to the Minister.

Mr Shuttleworth advised that the group had sought a meeting with the Minister but it had been cancelled by the Department of Education and they had been told it would be rescheduled. He further advised that the Minister had provided a response to a letter forwarded by SSUNI but it had been somewhat disappointing as it had indicated that whilst there was guidance the Department of Education could not make it statutory that schools did not stipulate branded clothing. He also stated that the letter had indicated there would not be much progress in relation to uniform grants either.

Councillor Doris requested that aforementioned points be included in the proposed letter to the Minister. She reiterated that she would follow up with the group in relation to the motion brought to the NI Assembly regarding school uniforms.

Councillor Monteith thanked SSUNI for the presentation and said that the uniform issue goes back over a long time. He stressed that it should not be swept under the carpet and that uniform grants had never met the cost of uniforms and whilst the difference has become paramount the grant has always been inadequate. He said that the grant needed to be uplifted to a realistic level and serious consideration to eligibility needed to be given. Councillor Monteith spoke of schools receiving extra income if students attending were from areas of deprivation and it was ludicrous that the school expected them to buy branded sports gear. He said that every school uniform could be quite simple and if there was political will it could be sorted out. He spoke of the expense of sports kits and the various kits required for different sports which included kit bags. He reiterated the need for political will and said that August was an unbearable month for many families and the most expensive one outside of December. He concluded that the uniform grant needed to be improved and the rules around uniforms should be black trousers, white shirt and school tie.

Councillor Elattar said that like many of the other Members in the room she attended secondary school about 40 years ago and uniforms was an issue then. She said that she was the eldest of eight children and not only was uniforms expensive but you were checked for specific underwear for physical education classes. She stated that young people were attending school to be educated not to be a status symbol and it was crazy in current times that students could not participate in classes due to lack of uniform. Councillor Elattar spoke of the stigma associated with this and said that she could remember in the 1980s when her father had lost his job she took a pack lunch rather than avail of free school meals. She concluded that she was fully supportive of the campaign.

Councillor Ashton thanked the group for the presentation and said it was good that they had not only highlighted the difficulties but had recommendations as to how they could be addressed. The Councillor concluded that Council should support the SSUI in their quest.

Councillor Wilson thanked the SSUNI for the presentation and said that the comments had been well made. He wished them well in their campaign and supported their issues stating that if the clothing wasn't branded it would be a start.

Councillor Quinn thanked the SSUNI for the presentation and stated that the school uniform issue was well known and many families struggled with it. He concluded wishing the group all the best with the campaign.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to write to the Minister for Education in relation to brand free/affordable school uniforms and that guidance provided to schools with regard to uniforms be reviewed.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy concluded that Council unanimously supported and wished them well with the campaign. He concluded that they should keep pushing it and demanding answers.

Matters for Decision

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Quinn declared an interest in Craic Theatre.

D044/22 Development Report

The AD: Development presented the previously circulated report to provide an update on key activities and sought approval for the following:

- Community Grants – to agree the rolling grant awards – Local Community Festivals, and Good Relations.
- DfC Real Living Wage Salary Uplift for the General Advice Support Project – to approve the direct transfer of finance through the community support programme.
- Arts – Arts Festival and Arts Outreach Plan – to note the arts festival and plan for Mid Ulster under the current arts development programme.
- PCSP Plan – to note the PCSP plan for information
- Development – to update on Development

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Wilson

Resolved To propose the Development Report as detailed below:

- **Community Grants**

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to agree the rolling grant awards – Local Community Festivals, Good Relations, and the Strategic Events

- **DfC Real Living Wage Salary Uplift for the General Advice Support Project**

The AD: Development advised that Council are a conduit in relation to this funding and would be uplifting it as detailed in the report and passing it on to MIDAS/STEP.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be given to the direct transfer of finance through the community support programme

- **Arts – Arts Festival and Arts Outreach Plan**

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be given to the Mid Ulster Arts Festival 2023 & Mid Ulster Arts Outreach programme

- **PCSP Plan**

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to note the PCSP Plan for Mid Ulster

- **Development**

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to note the update on Development

D045/22 Strategic Community Development Update

The AD: Development presented the previously circulated report to provide an update on a number of key areas of delivery under Strategic Development for social housing provision including the Draft Dungannon Place Shaping Plan Pilot; Women's Aid/Apex Supported (social) Housing Scheme; and the response to DfC Housing Supply Strategy Consultation. Updates on the delivery of the Mid Ulster Anti-Poverty Plan and Council Anti – Poverty Plan were also provided.

In relation to the Women's Aid/Apex Housing Scheme the AD: Development advised that a paper had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee and now the next stage was to secure the funding package. She advised that once the funding was secured a further paper would be brought to Policy and Resources regarding the sale of the lands.

Councillor Doris welcomed the progress in relation to the project and stated it was well known that lack of housing was a big obstacle to people leaving abusive relationships. She stated there was a huge need and it was heart breaking when families have to be turned away from Women's Aid due to lack of resources. Councillor Doris advised she had been liaising with Women's Aid and commended officers on driving the project forward. She also welcomed the points added to the document in relation to intimidation regarding the housing supply consultation document.

Councillor Elattar drew attention to the response to the Response to DfC Housing Supply Strategy Consultation and said it was good to have the high cost of rents included but it should be more specific in that housing association and private rents is the problem. She concluded that it was a good document but a line should be added in to include the comments regarding rent and that reference also be made to infrastructure and water.

Councillor Monteith sought clarity with regard to the agreement with the Housing Association in relation to the Women's Aid project. He was emphatic that it should be detailed in the document that proposed rents would be affordable.

In response the AD: Development said that officers were currently working through the legal aspects of the project one element being with Land and Property Services and the second the covenant that Women's Aid have first choice on the housing and the remaining should be category one social need. She stated that there would be further caveats but to date rental and what would be deemed a fair rent had not been discussed. She concluded that if the purchase of the land was passed at a lower cost that should be written into the covenant that it should be reflected in the rent.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy reflected that there should be a level of control.

Councillor Monteith stated that the rate payer is providing a big subsidy and whilst he agreed with the decision he would have serious concerns regarding the rents charged by social housing suppliers. He was emphatic that the conversation with the Housing Association should be that the rent is equivalent to those charged by the NI Housing Executive. He stated that the affordability of rent has become a farce and stated that in Stormont over the past few when the Minister had abdicated from a decision. He concluded that Council must take the opportunity that if the Housing Association wanted help from Council to deliver the project it would be granted with a caveat regarding the rest.

In response the AD: Development stated that Council can ensure that such a caveat is included and advised that Women's Aid have highlighted the cost of rent is a reason for people returning to relationships that are abusive.

Councillor Corry said she too had worked with Women's Aid in relation to the project and they were endeavouring to remove affordability issues in relation to people having to stay in abusive relationships. She too expressed Women's Aid appreciation of Council's assistance with the project. In relation to the response document to DfC Housing Supply Strategy Consultation she expressed her appreciation to everyone who had contributed and concluded that Council must keep up to date in relation to current issues of rising costs.

Councillor Wilson drew on Councillor Monteith's point and stated that Cookstown Enterprise Centre had endeavoured to support Women's Aid in housing projects but had hit a brick wall as grants were only available to Housing Associations thus it is a closed market which effectively means they can do as they wish. He said that Council should get involved with the issue and write to the Minister for Department for Communities siting the Women's Aid project as an example that they are unable to progress support to a project as the criteria stipulates it has to be a housing association.

Proposed Councillor Doris
Seconded Councillor Elattar

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to note updated key areas of delivery under Strategic Development

- (i) Dungannon Place Shaping Plan Pilot
- (ii) Women's Aid/Apex Supported (social) Housing Scheme
- (iii) Response to DfC Housing Supply Strategy Consultation
- (iv) Mid Ulster Anti-Poverty Plan; and
- (v) Council Anti-Poverty Plan.

D046/22 Sports Representative Grants

The SD: Environment drew attention to the previously circulated report detailing the proposed community grant allocations for the range of:

- Sports Representative Grant – Team and Individuals (February 2022)

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Wilson

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that it note and give approval for the sports grant allocations as outlined in the report.

D047/22 Macmillan Move More Programme

The SD: Environment drew attention to the previously circulated report providing an update on the funded MacMillan Move More programme, current contract end date and details of an opportunity to extend the programme.

Councillor Corry stated that she was happy to propose and said that the project was invaluable both physically and mentally to its users.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Wilson

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that it note the contents of the report and give approval to:

- (i) Apply to Macmillan for a maximum investment of £33,333.00 towards costs for the period August 2022 – March 2024
- (ii) To match fund remaining 50% via Council for the above period (approx. £9K Aug 22 – March 23 and approx.. £18k for April 23 – March 24, subject to agreement in the rates estimates process for April 23-March 24.

D048/22 Service Level Agreement with the Drinking Water Inspectorate

The SD: Environment drew attention to the previously circulated report and sought approval for Mid Ulster District to sign an updated Service Level Agreement (SLA) and associated Data Processing Contract with the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI).

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Burton

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that it note the contents of the report and grant approval to the signing of the updated Service Level agreement with the Drinking Water Inspectorate, for the purpose of undertaking on behalf of the DWI, risk assessments and sampling of private water supplies under The Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.

D049/22 Economic Development Report – March 2022 – OBFD

The Rural Development Programme Manager drew attention to the previously circulated report which provided an update on key activities as follows:

- Rural Micro Business Development Scheme 2022
- Lough Neagh Rescue (LNR)

8 – Development Committee (10.3.22)

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the key activities as listed below in the Economic Development Report – OBFD.

- **Rural Micro Business Development Scheme 2022**

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Clarke

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be given for Council's participation in the 2022 Rural Business Development Grants Scheme and subject to the business case being approved for funding, seek permission for the Chief Executive to sign and return the contract document when received from DAERA in due course.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Clarke

- **Lough Neagh Rescue (LNR)**

Councillor Doris stated that she was happy to propose the funding for Lough Neagh Rescue.

Councillor Doris sought an update regarding the recent meeting with Department for Infrastructure regarding dredging at the Barmouth at the Bann estuary.

In response the Chief Executive advised that he had discussed same with the Director of Public Health and Infrastructure and advised that they were awaiting response from ABC Council with regard to the dredging which was mostly in their area however Mid Ulster would work in partnership with them. He stated that officers had engaged with DfI regarding the matter together with possible funding opportunities and that stakeholder mechanisms had to be defined. He concluded that a report would be brought to a future Environment Committee.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be given for the funding request of £12,000 from Lough Neagh Rescue for 2021/22.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that a report be progressed to the Environment Committee in relation to the outcome of discussions with ABC Council, Department of Infrastructure and other relevant stakeholders with regard to dredging at the Barmouth.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Molloy declared an interest in Covid Small Settlement grants in relation to Moy Village Project.

D050/22 Covid Small Settlement Regeneration Programme

The Rural Development Programme Manager drew attention to the previously circulated report that provided an update on key activities relating to the Covid Small Settlement Regeneration Programme.

In response to Councillor Ashton's query in relation to inclusion of projects that had currently missed out in the current programme the Chief Executive advised that Officers would have liked to secure funding for all but it was one grant with many objectives that had to be met. He stated that Council was confident that it could make application to DEARA for two of the projects before the 31 March. He said that the remaining two require support and Council was endeavouring to identify other programmes.

Councillor Ashton referred to the fact that Council had reduced the allocation for four projects and brought forward two from year two and asked if this left space in year two programme for further projects.

In response the Chief Executive advised that the current submission had to be with the Department on Friday 11 March 2022 and the following year has yet to be agreed and the Department would not commit at this time.

Councillor Burton commended the officers on their work but said she was heartbroken that one of the projects in particular was not moving forward at present and asked if there was anyway of escalating same. She reflected that at the meeting to discuss projects going forward all Members had wanted it delivered.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy said that work on the projects that did not meet the criteria was not lost as when a future funding opportunities become available the projects are 'shelf ready.'

In response to Members queries the Chief Executive advised that the project at Claudy where Council owned green space floods due to the carpark would be included.

Proposed by Councillor Milne
Seconded by Councillor McNamee

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be given for:

- (i) The inclusion of projects detailed for Moy and Bellaghy for delivery in 2022/23 under the Covid Small Settlements Regeneration Programme;
- (ii) To grant delegated approval for the Chief Executive to submit Council's revised regeneration plan to DfC immediately following Committee approval given pressures on timescale for the issue of a letter of offer.
- (iii) To grant delegated approval for the Chief Executive to accept a Letter of Offer from DfC should acceptance timescales fall outside of normal Committee or full Council approval timescales.

Matters for Information

D051/22 Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 February 2022

10 – Development Committee (10.3.22)

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 February 2022.

D052/22 Economic Development Report – March 2022 – OBF

Members noted key activities as detailed below:

- Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes 03 & 30.11.21
- Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes 29.11.21
- Tourism Development Group Minutes 25.11.21
- Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Minutes 7.12.21
- Tourism Spring Campaign 2022

Live broadcast ended at 8.05pm

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McNamee

Seconded by Councillor Black

Resolved 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 item D053/22

Matters for Decision

Matters for Information

D053/22 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on Thursday 10 February 2022.

D054/22 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.14pm.

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, [Dungannon/Magherafelt] and virtually.

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I let you know before this happens.

Just some housekeeping before we commence. Can I remind you:-

- If you have joined the meeting remotely please keep your audio on mute unless invited to speak and then turn it off when finished speaking
- Keep your video on at all times, unless you have bandwidth or internet connection issues, where you are advised to try turning your video off
- If you wish to speak please raise your hand in the meeting or on screen and keep raised until observed by an Officer or myself
- Should we need to take a vote this evening please raise your hand in the normal way and keep raised until advised to lower it
- When invited to speak please introduce yourself by name to the meeting
- For any member attending remotely, if you declare an interest in an item, please turn off your video and keep your audio on mute for the duration of the item
- If referring to a specific report please reference the report, page or slide being referred to
- Lastly, I 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 first item on the agenda.

Report on	Ageing Well Initiative Update
Date of Meeting	6th April 2022
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Anne Caldwell, Principal Environmental Health Officer Raisa Donnelly, Age Friendly Coordinator

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	The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on the progress of the Ageing Well Initiative and the outcome of the tender process to support the Age Friendly Coordinator for the future delivery of the initiative.
2.0	Background
2.1	Members will be aware that the work on an Age Friendly initiative has been progressed through the existing Community Planning partnerships structures with Mid Ulster Council being the lead partner. The Ageing Well Initiative seeks to ensure that the Mid Ulster District Council area is an area that supports older people. Mid Ulster District Council has received funding from the Public Health Agency for the development of an Age Friendly Alliance, an Age Friendly Charter, an Age Friendly Strategy and an Action Plan. This work is being developed by the Council's Age Friendly Coordinator.
2.2	Previously in November 2021, Members at the Environment Committee resolved to approve the procurement of external expertise to support the development of the Age Friendly Alliance, Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan (Minute Ref E261/21).
2.3	This report seeks to provide information on progress to date of the procurement process and amended timelines for this project.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In December 2021, a procurement process took place to seek to recruit a suitable competent consultant to assist in the planning process and development of an Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan for the Mid Ulster District council area.
3.2	As part of the specification of works, the successful consultant is expected to deliver a series of workshops to assist in the design and development of an Age Friendly Strategy, Charter and Action Plan for the Mid Ulster District Council area using a co-production approach with statutory partners along with the community and voluntary sectors. It was proposed The Age Friendly Strategy, Charter and Action Plan would be developed and concluded over four half-day workshops using an outcomes based accountability process by the end of March 2022.
3.3	Regrettably for a number of reasons, the intended timescales for the project have slipped however the works schedule has now been reviewed with the consultant and have been

	accepted by the funder of the Age Friendly programme, the Public Health Agency (PHA). The overall deadline for completion of the piece of work as specified by the procurement process is now projected to be end of June 2022 instead of end of March 2022. A future report will be brought to the Development Committee outlining the work and proposed next steps.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial & Human Resources Implications Financial: Budget cost to be covered by the existing PHA funding. Human: Officer time – can be derived from existing resources. Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant policies and procedures
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this point. Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this point.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the content of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	N/A

Report on	DfC Response - Notice to Quit Periods for Private Tenancies
Date of Meeting	6th April 2022
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Anne Caldwell, Principal Environmental Health Officer

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 inform Members of the Government response, published in February 2022, to the recent consultation exercise on Notice to Quit periods carried out by the Department for Communities (DfC).
2.0	Background
2.1	A notice to quit is a type of eviction letter which must typically be given to a private tenant in writing before the landlord can take the tenant to court for an eviction hearing.
2.2	In September 2021, the Chartered Institute of Housing carried out research on behalf of DfC <i>"Private rented tenancies in Northern Ireland and notice to quit periods."</i> The research report can be viewed at the following link: https://www.cih.org/publications
2.3	A consultation on Notice to Quit periods ran for 9 weeks from 1st December 2021 to 25 th January 2022. Previously in January 2022, Members at the Development Committee resolved to approve the submission of a consultation response on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council by the deadline of 25 th January 2022 (minute reference D010/22).
3.0	Main Report
3.1	During 2021, DfC published the response to a consultation on proposals to reform and make the private rented sector safer and a more secure housing option. Due to the urgent need for improved standards in the sector, legislation to bring about reform in the Private Rented Sector is being introduced in 2 phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Firstly, those proposals that could be advanced in the time frame available would be brought forward in a Bill to be delivered during the current Assembly mandate; and (2) Secondly, a further phase of work, such as letting agent regulation, grounds for eviction and a review of the fitness standard, to follow as soon as possible in the next mandate.
3.2	On behalf of DfC, the Chartered Institute of Housing has completed an analysis of the responses received by stakeholders on proposed changes to the Notice to Quit period as laid out in clause 11 of the Private Tenancies Bill and a copy is enclosed within Appendix A.

4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: To be considered by the Department coordinating the consultation exercise.
	Rural Needs Implications: To be considered by the Department coordinating the consultation exercise.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A: DfC publication in relation to consultation responses (February 2022)



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Government Response

Consultation on Notice to Quit period
Private Rented Sector

February 2022

Contents

Ministerial Foreword	3
Background	5
Summary	15

Ministerial Foreword

As Minister for the Department for Communities I am delighted to welcome the publication of the Government response to the Notice to Quit consultation for the Private Rented Sector.

Delivering an ambitious reform of the Private Rented Sector in this mandate, accompanied by primary legislation was always going to be challenging. However it is clear reform is urgently needed to improve protections in the Private Rented Sector particularly for the most vulnerable in our communities. This need has been brought into sharper focus in dealing with the uncertainty of how the pandemic is affecting those living in the sector.



I feel that the Notice to Quit period needed to be longer and asked my officials to explore what further options could be possible. Those options were set out in the Consultation which asked key questions in relation to a reasonable length of Notice to Quit and whether some exemptions should be considered. The results of the consultation and my Departments response are set out in this document.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deirdre Hargey".

Deirdre Hargey
Minister for Communities

Background

In September 2021, Chartered Institute of Housing carried out research on behalf of the Department on “Private rented tenancies in Northern Ireland and notice to quit periods.”

The research report can be viewed on page 2 of the following link:

[Publications \(cih.org\)](#)

A consultation on Notice to Quit periods ran for 9 weeks from Wednesday 1 December 2021 to Tuesday 25 January 2022. On behalf of the Department for Communities, Chartered Institute of Housing has completed an analysis of the responses received by stakeholders on proposed changes to the Notice to Quit period as laid out in clause 11 of the **[Private Tenancies Bill](#)**.

In total, 50 stakeholders responded to the consultation on Citizens Space: 20 responses were received on behalf of an organisation and another 30 responses were submitted by individuals. A further four responses were received by Department for Communities outside of the citizens space questionnaire; views from these additional responses have also been incorporated into the analysis to follow. It should be noted that all respondents did not answer every question, nor did all respondents provide additional comment to support the answer provided for each question.

Stakeholders were asked six questions in total; these questions formed the consultation questionnaire set out by the Department:

- Do you agree that the length of notices to quit for landlord and tenants should be different?
- Do you agree that Notices to Quit should vary depending on the length of the tenancy?
- Do you agree that the length of notice for shorter term tenancies of up to 12 months should remain at 4 weeks? If no, what length do you think it should be, and what information can you provide in support of this?
- What do you think the Notice to Quit period that a landlord will be required to give a tenant should be (where the tenancy is between 12 months and 10 years in length)?
- Do you think that there should be exemptions to this notice period? If yes, what should those exemptions be and what should the reduced Notice to Quit period be for those exemptions?
- Do you think the length of Notice to Quit for those tenants living in an HMO, or for exemptions to the Notice to Quit, should be different from that of other tenants in the Private Rented Sector? If so, in what way?

On 12 January 2022, Chartered Institute of Housing facilitated two consultation events on behalf of the Department to enable stakeholders to discuss potential changes to the Notice to Quit period as part of clause 11 of the Private Tenancies Bill. In total, 15 stakeholders attended the two events. Seven of the stakeholders represented tenants, six stakeholders represented landlords

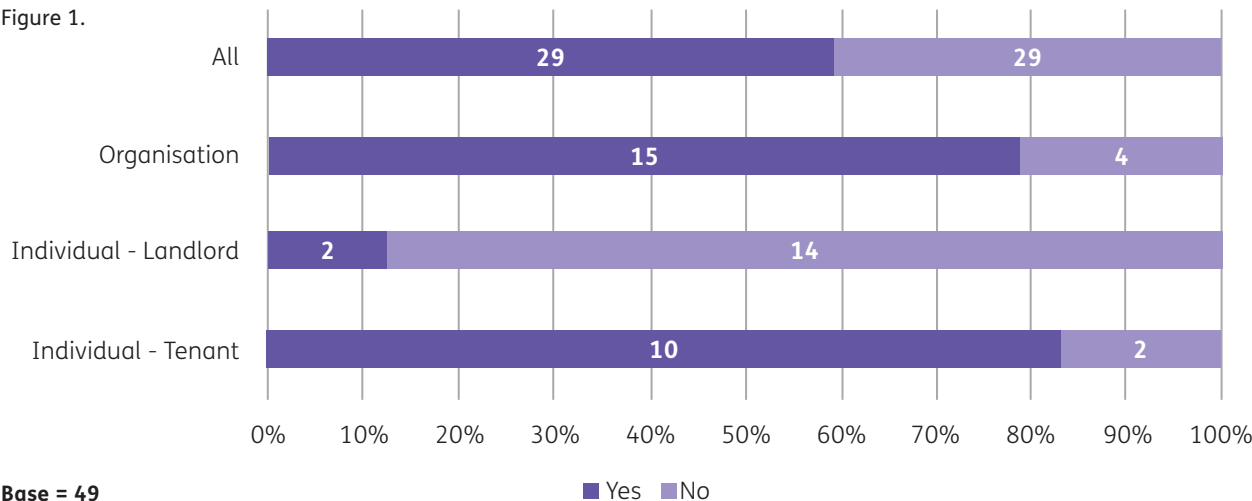
and a further stakeholder represented both tenants and landlords. There was one participant unknown.

Breakdown of respondent type is at [Annex A](#)

Consultation question

Do you agree that the length of notices to quit for landlord and tenants should be different?

Figure 1.



Almost three-fifths of respondents (59%) agreed that the length of Notice to Quit should be different, with 41% of respondents disagreeing. Analysis by type of respondent shows some variation in views. The majority of those responding on behalf of an organisation or as an individual with interest from a tenant perspective agreed that the length of Notice to Quit should be different for landlords and tenants. In contrast, the majority of individuals with an interest from a landlord perspective did not agree.

Many respondents referred to the current context of the private rental market to support their answer, citing current pressures which have led to an imbalance between landlords and tenants. As it stands, there is a significant difference in terms of the time and effort it takes for a prospective tenant to find a new property in comparison to the time and effort it takes for a landlord to find new occupants. The chasm between the lack of available rental properties and current high levels of housing need is continuing to widen.

It was noted that the potential consequences for tenants not being able to secure a suitable tenancy within a reasonable time period, and risking, for example, falling into homelessness, are considered to be far greater than the potential risks for landlords who may be unable to find suitable tenants within the same time period. Also of note is the number of local authorities who were of the view that tenants should be afforded a longer notice period than a landlord.

Stakeholders who responded on behalf of landlords or as a landlord themselves generally held a competing view to those responding on behalf of tenants; this group felt that there should be parity between tenants and landlords when it comes to Notice to Quit periods. It was noted that in instances where landlords serve a tenant with an Notice to Quit for cases of anti-social behaviour, that an extended notice period would exacerbate an already protracted and cumbersome legal process to remove tenants from the property. Similar concerns included the issue of rent arrears and the difficulty of prolonging the period of time that a landlord has their income stream disrupted. This could be problematic for landlords here that have a maximum of 1-2 rental properties and have

mortgages to meet on those properties. It is important to note that in Northern Ireland, the majority of landlords fit this particular profile.

It was raised by several respondents that caution must be taken in regard to the unintended consequences of longer notice periods where a tenant, in a bid to secure a new property, finds themselves paying two rent bills until the notice period expires. This situation would be particularly problematic for those tenants reliant on social security to cover their housing costs; an unduly long notice period where tenancies overlap, regardless to whether the tenant is remaining within the Private Rented Sector or moving into the social sector, poses an increased risk of falling into rent arrears by essentially having to cover the cost of two tenancies for this period of overlap.

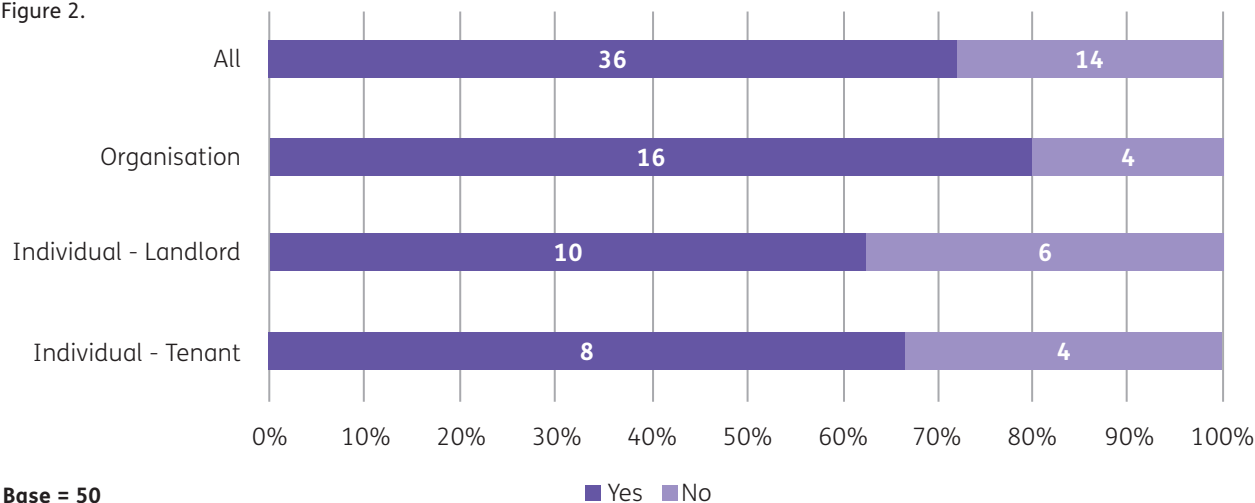
Government response to consultation question

This response supports previous research and policy development which led the Department to introduce different Notice to Quit periods for Landlord and Tenants in the Private Tenancies Bill. This will be monitored for future policy intervention.

Consultation question

Do you agree that Notices to Quit should vary depending on the length of the tenancy?

Figure 2.



In responding to this question, 72 per cent of respondents agreed that Notice to Quit periods should vary depending on the length of the tenancy with 28% of respondents disagreeing. Analysis by respondent type shows a fairly consistent view, with the majority of all respondent types agreeing that Notices to Quit should vary depending on the length of tenancy. Despite support for this position, respondent views varied as to what the notice period should be depending on the length of the tenancy in question. There was an understanding that the longer a tenancy the more disruption caused by serving notice to individuals or families. Respondents cited distinct issues for long-term tenants, particularly those with children still in school and the disruption caused to their education and childcare needs.

Another respondent, while supportive of longer notice periods, highlighted that while serving notice on a long-term tenant is considerably more disruptive than to tenants with a relatively short tenancy, the current difficulties in obtaining a suitable private rental property exist regardless to the length of tenancy in question given the current availability and affordability barriers facing prospective tenants. It was also noted that a significant differential in Notice to Quit periods, dependent upon the duration of the tenancy, risks disincentivising landlords from offering tenancy agreements beyond 12 months in a bid to ensure the notice period can be kept to the minimum statutory requirement.

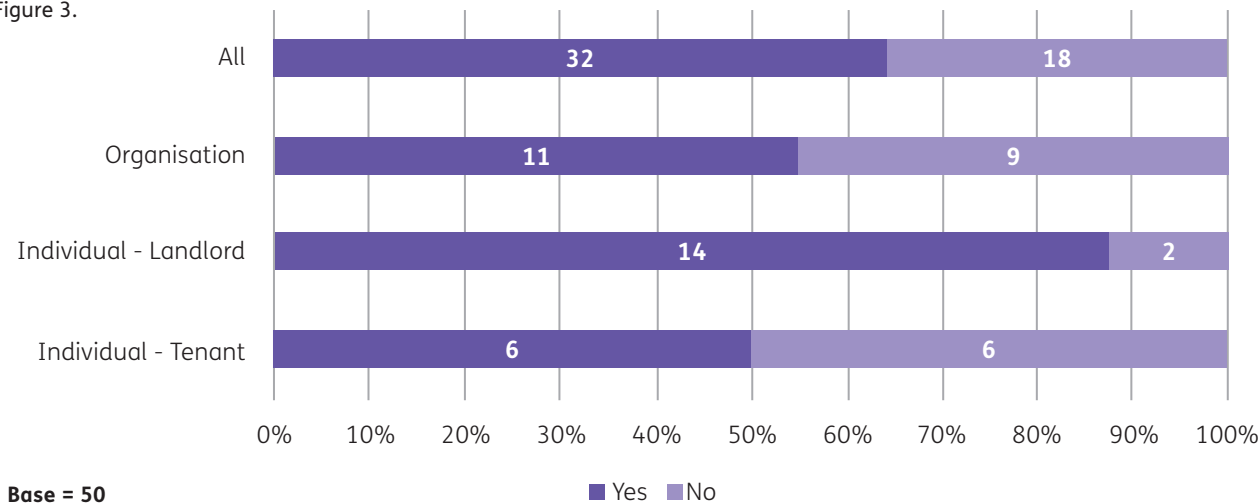
Government response to consultation question

The Notice to Quit requirements based on length of tenancy has been reflected in the Private Tenancies Bill. The number of weeks is dealt with later in this paper and will continue to monitor.

Consultation question

Do you agree that the length of notice for shorter term tenancies of up to 12 months should remain at 4 weeks? If no, what length do you think it should be, and what information can you provide in support of this?

Figure 3.



Just under two-thirds of respondents (64%) agreed that the length of notice for shorter term tenancies of up to 12 months should remain at four weeks, whereas 36% did not agree. Analysis by type of respondent showed that while opinions were split for organisations and those responding as individuals with an interest from a tenant perspective, the majority of individuals with an interest from a landlord perspective agreed that the length of notice for shorter term tenancies of up to 12 months should remain at four weeks.

However, many respondents noted that regardless of the tenancy length, landlords should nonetheless have to provide either an 8 or 12 week notice period to tenants to reflect the difficulty in securing accommodation in the Private Rented Sector; therefore, treating these tenants equally to those living in a property longer than 12 months.

Respondents also raised the financial implications of treating those with tenancies of up to 12 months any differently than those with longer term tenancies on the basis that the former will have recently paid a deposit, and on occasion rent in advance, and will need to have the finances available to repeat this to secure their next tenancy. Respondents felt that in this regard giving them 4 weeks' would place them under financial pressure which could leave them in debt or risk homelessness.

However, a number of respondents raised the issue of the incompatibility of extending the statutory notice period beyond four weeks while the current homelessness legislation states that an individual can only be assessed as a 'Full Duty' homeless applicant by the Housing Executive if they are likely to become homeless within the next 28 days. Those who raised this issue were concerned about the unintentional harm caused by extending the notice period without revising this legislation in tandem. Alongside this point, one respondent referenced statistics to highlight that 'loss of rental accommodation' is cited as one of the top reasons for homelessness in Northern Ireland.

It should be noted that one respondent raised concern around the lack of clarity on the terminology around this question. They highlighted that the Notice to Quit proposals as set out in the consultation document in Section 4.9 refer to tenancies of "less than 12 months" and tenancies of "more than 12 months", giving a twelve-month tenancy an undefined Notice to Quit period. Meanwhile, the consultation questionnaire sets out proposals for tenancies of "less than 12 months" and tenancies "from 12 months". They have asked the Department to ensure that any wording used in amending the Private Tenancies Bill is sufficiently clear with regard to Notice to Quit periods for tenancies of twelve months' duration.

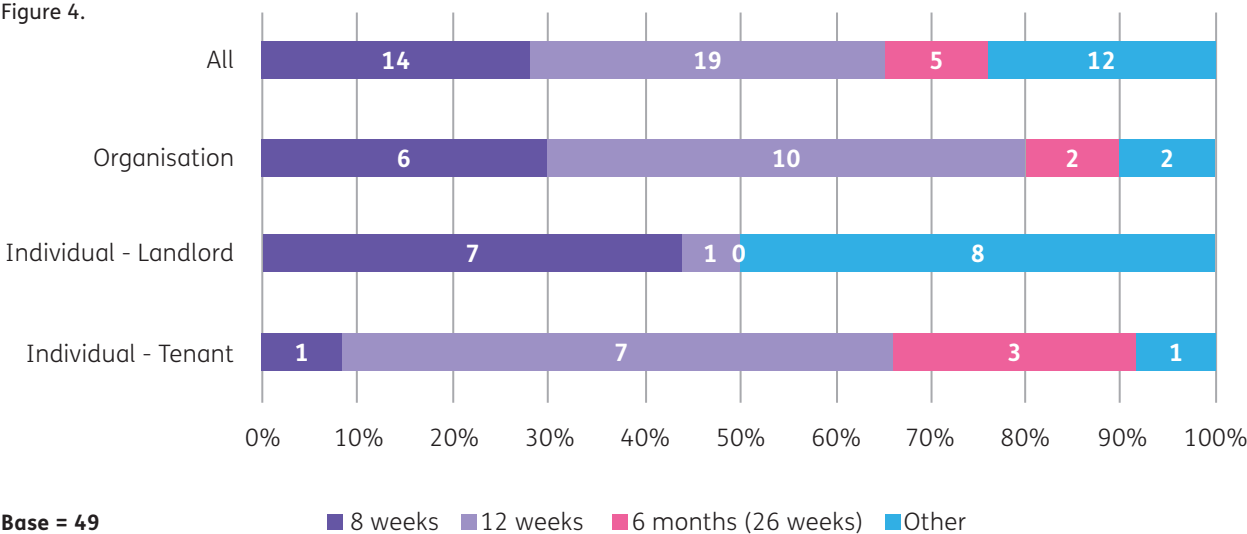
Government response to consultation question

The Department notes this finding and has ensured that for tenancies up to 12 months the Notice to Quit required remains at 4 weeks to allow flexibility for the tenant to move to alternative accommodation. The Department will continue to monitor this. The Department has noted the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's primary aim is to prevent homelessness and believe that an extension of Notice to Quit periods will contribute to this aim by giving tenants more time to find, and move to, alternative suitable accommodation before being made homeless.

Consultation question

What do you think the Notice to Quit period that a landlord will be required to give a tenant should be (where the tenancy is between 12 months and 10 years in length)?

Figure 4.



Almost two-fifths (38%) of respondents think that the Notice to Quit period that a landlord will be required to give a tenant should be 12 weeks. Just over a quarter (28%) of respondents selected 8 weeks as the notice period and 10% of respondents thought this period should be 6 months (26 weeks). Almost a quarter (24%) of respondents selected “Other” with responses ranging from remain at 4 weeks or staggered period suggestions. Individual respondents with an interest from a landlord perspective were fairly evenly split in selecting 8 weeks and ‘other’. In contrast, individual respondents with an interest from a tenant perspective were more likely to think that the Notice to Quit period should be 12 weeks when the tenancy is between 12 months and 10 years in length.

Of those respondents who supported a 12-week notice to quit period, a number said they support this view as it seemed like good balance between the current position and other options such as extending it to six months. It was also noted that the 12-week notice period has been tried and tested as a result of the temporary extension of the notice to quit period which was introduced through the implementation of The Private Tenancies (Coronavirus Modifications) Act (Northern Ireland) 2020.

For respondents who support retaining the current statutory notice period of four weeks, a number of reasons were put forward. Those favourable to this felt that

regardless of the tenancy length itself, the barriers, whether perceived or otherwise to securing a new tenancy would be the same for all prospective tenants.

One respondent cited the risk of disincentivising landlords by extending the Notice to Quit period beyond eight weeks. They added that in the context of changing notice periods, the department should consider what incentives they can offer landlords to encourage more long-term tenancies.

A number of respondents suggested the adoption of staged approach where the notice period reflects the length of the tenancy. One example put forward was as follows:

- 4 weeks at 0-1 year
- 6 weeks at 1-3 years
- 8 weeks 3-5 years and
- 12 weeks 5-10 years

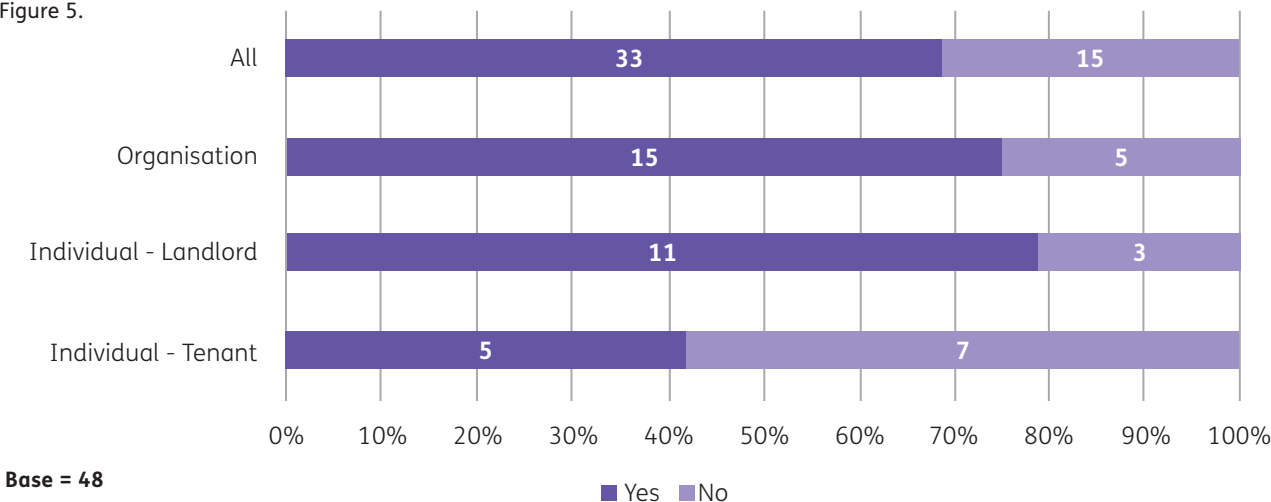
Government Response to consultation question

The Department, in Clause 11 of the Private Tenancies Bill, has included provisions for a Notice to Quit period of 8 weeks for tenancies from 12 months up to 10 years and 12 weeks for tenancies over 10 years. However as there are a diversity of opinions expressed in the consultation, the Department will take forward further work and consider the need for any change by way of further consultation / legislation, in particular taking into account the need for exemptions (see below).

Consultation question

Do you think that there should be exemptions to this notice period? If yes, what should those exemptions be and what should the reduced Notice to Quit period be for those exemptions?

Figure 5.



Over two-thirds (69%) of respondents thought that there should be exemptions to this notice period, whereas 31% did not think there should be exemptions. Analysis by type of respondent shows that those responding on behalf of an organisation and individuals with an interest from a landlord perspective had similar views on whether there should be exemptions. However, individuals with an interest from a tenant perspective were slightly more likely to disagree that there should be exemptions.

Several respondents cited anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviour as top reasons for exemptions to any statutory Notice to Quit period. Respondents also said that cases of serious rent arrears should be exempt; views varied on the extremity of rent arrears in cases where exemption should apply. Periods of rent arrear of four weeks, eight weeks and three months were all put forward as suggestions for how

long a tenant should be in arrears before exemptions are activated.

Less generic reasons associated with tenancy breakdown were noted, such as a situation where an individual is fleeing domestic violence or where a tenant dies during a tenancy and the next of kin or executor of a will requires time to clear belongings from a property.

A number of respondents felt that exemptions should be given more clear thought given the negative connotations for both tenants and landlords where no fault has been caused by either one or both parties. Similarly, it was noted that the consideration of exemptions would have been better placed to run alongside a review of the eviction process. A concern was further raised that the communities committee did not receive sufficient opportunity to scrutinise this proposed clause.

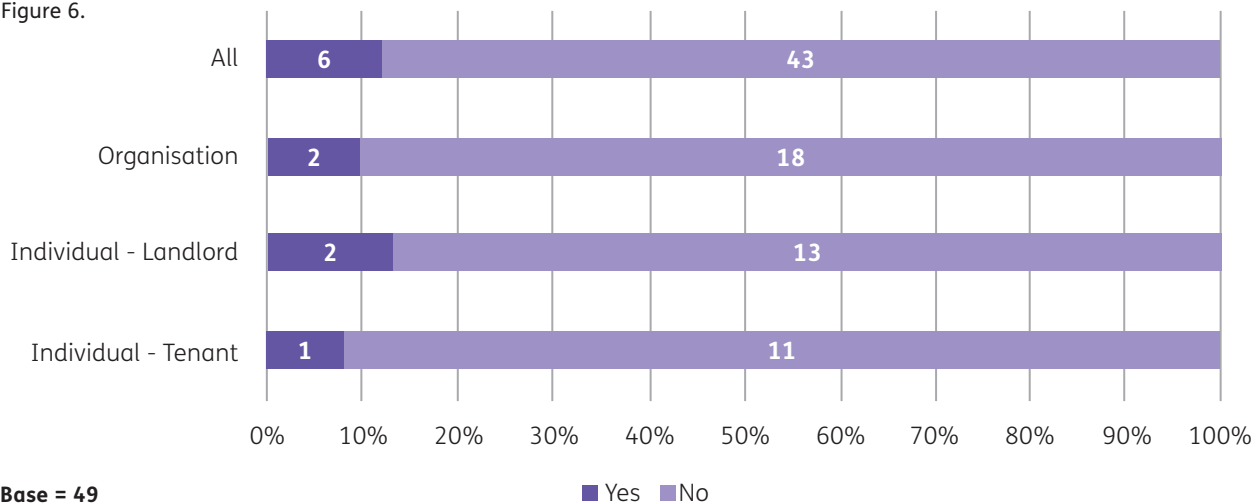
Government Response to consultation question

The consultation indicated that there is strong support for exemptions linked to the previous question– however further work is needed to develop a detailed policy intervention, with further engagement with stakeholders. Clause 11 of the draft Private Tenancies Bill includes a provision to enable this approach.

Consultation question

Do you think the length of Notice to Quit for those tenants living in an Houses in Multiple Occupation, or for exemptions to the Notice to Quit, should be different from that of other tenants in the Private Rented Sector? If so, in what way?

Figure 6.



The majority of respondents (88%) did not think that the length of notice to quit for tenants living in an Houses in Multiple Occupation, or for other exemptions to the notice to quit, should be different from that of other tenants living in the Private Rented Sector, with 12% of respondents agreeing that it should be different. Analysis by type of respondent shows fairly consistent views with regards to whether Houses in Multiple Occupation tenants should have a different length of notice to quite or different exemptions.

Many respondents made clear that Houses in Multiple Occupation should not be omitted from attempts to strengthen security of tenure for those living in the Private Rented Sector and that tenants living in an Houses in Multiple Occupation property should therefore receive the same legislative protections. There was a recognition that often tenants living in Houses in Multiple Occupation properties prefer the flexibility shorter tenancies provide, such as students or young professionals.

However, it was noted that due to welfare reform, tenants are now relying on Houses in Multiple Occupation for longer-term tenancies than previously was the case.

Many respondents stated that tenants in Houses in Multiple Occupation are often occupied by young, single people who are only entitled to the shared accommodation rate of housing allowance, as well as more vulnerable groups such as asylum seekers or people living with addiction where the risk of homelessness is more prevalent.

Although the majority of respondents support parity between Houses in Multiple Occupation and private rentals, a handful of respondents said that Houses in Multiple Occupation should be considered as a ‘subset’ of the private rental market, where tenants needs are often different to those living in the rest of the Private Rented Sector, and often short, fixed-term rentals was the draw for these tenants.

Government Response to consultation questions

The Department recognises the needs of tenants and landlords and that legislation should apply to all types of rental accommodation. Therefore the Notice to Quit applicable to Houses in Multiple Occupation is the same as the private rented sector and addresses the short term tenancy issue.

Appendix A

Summary

Question 1 “Please confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation:”

Total	Total
I am responding as an individual	30
I am submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation	20
Total	50

Question 2 “If you are responding as an individual, which of the following best describes your interest in the consultation? (please tick one)”

	Total
I am interested from a tenant perspective	12
I am interested from a landlord perspective	16
Other (please specify in the space below)	2
Total	30

Question 3 “If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, which of the following best describes your organisation? (please tick one option)”

	Total
Private Landlord	0
Social Landlord	0
Property agent	1
Letting agent	2
Local Government/Council	6
A housing sector representative body	3
Charity dealing with housing issues	2
Other (please specify in the space below)	6
Total	20

Question 4 “Do you agree that the length of notices to quit for landlord and tenants should be different?”

	Type of respondent				Total
	Individual Tenant	Individual Landlord	Individual Other	Organisation	
Yes	10	2	2	15	29
No	2	14	0	4	20
Total	12	16	2	19	49

Question 5 “Do you agree that Notices to Quit should vary depending on the length of the tenancy?”

	Type of respondent				Total
	Individual Tenant	Individual Landlord	Individual Other	Organisation	
Yes	8	10	2	16	36
No	4	6	0	4	14
Total	12	16	2	20	50

Question 6 “Do you agree that the length of notice for shorter term tenancies of up to 12 months should remain at 4 weeks?”

	Type of respondent				Total
	Individual Tenant	Individual Landlord	Individual Other	Organisation	
Yes	6	14	1	11	32
No	6	2	1	9	18
Total	12	16	2	20	50

Question 7 “What do you think the Notice to Quit period that a landlord will be required to give a tenant should be (where the tenancy is between 12 months and 10 years in length)?”

	Type of respondent				Total
	Individual Tenant	Individual Landlord	Individual Other	Organisation	
8 weeks	1	7	0	6	14
12 weeks	7	1	1	10	19
6 months (26 weeks)	3	0	0	2	5
Other	1	8	1	2	12
Total	12	16	2	20	50

Question 8 “Do you think that there should be exemptions to this notice period?”

	Type of respondent				Total
	Individual Tenant	Individual Landlord	Individual Other	Organisation	
Yes	5	11	2	15	33
No	7	3	0	5	15
Total	12	14	2	20	48

Question 9 “Do you think the length of notice to quit for those tenants living in an HMO, or for exemptions to the notice to quit, should be different from that of other tenants in the Private Rented Sector?”

	Type of respondent				Total
	Individual Tenant	Individual Landlord	Individual Other	Organisation	
Yes	1	2	1	2	6
No	11	13	1	18	43
Total	12	15	2	20	49

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Report on	Play Strategy Update
Date of Meeting	6th April 2022
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Paul Bailie, Parks 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	To provide an update on current progress of the Mid Ulster District Council Five Year Parks and Play Strategy.
	Background
2.1	Mid Ulster District Council maintain over 100 public park / play facilities across the Council area ranging from small equipped areas for play, Multi Use Game Areas (MUGAs) to parkland of 70 acres in size. Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI) were commissioned in November 2016 to prepare a Public Park and Play Strategy for Mid Ulster District Council area that would seek to provide direction for the management and development of facilities, programs, infrastructure, resources, and investment over a five year period.
2.2	The Strategic Plan process assessed the status of parks and play within the Council area and outlined a future framework that aimed to reflect the Corporate priorities of the Council and needs of the community.
2.3	A number of workshops, consultations and DEA meetings took place including updated draft strategies presented to Development committees in June and September 2018, and again in October 2019. Members resolved to approve the Mid Ulster District Council Five Year Parks and Play Strategy in November 2019 (minute reference: D193/19)
2.4	Previously in December 2019, Members at the Policy and Resources Committee resolved to approve the allocation of £1,250,000 funding from Council Capital Budget, over a five year period from April 2020 (minute reference: PR220/19).
2.5	Additionally, the Rural Development Programme (RDP) contributes an additional £1,103,839 of funding across 19 sites and a further contribution of £300,000 from Peace IV will provide a combined strategy expenditure of £2,653,839 for identified for Parks and Play projects across Mid Ulster District Council over the five year term. The strategy will be reviewed in year three (2023) to review progress, review the outstanding works and profile the remaining two years.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	To date, 28 projects have been completed at an estimated value of £1.7m. Further details of works completed to date are enclosed within Appendix A.

3.2	A further 3 projects are in current progress at an estimated value of approx. £175k in line with the prioritised phasing of the approved strategy - recently in February 2022, Members at the Development Committee resolved to approve the appointment of contractors to supply and install play facilities at Glenburn (Magherafelt), Jacksonville (Moygashel) and Monrush (Cookstown) – minute reference: D034/22. It is expected that works will be completed by the Autumn of 2022.
3.3	Presently Officers are working on the next tranche of works in line with the prioritised phasing of the strategy (20 projects at an estimated value of £460k) with the pending procurement of the highlighted areas within Appendix A – it is estimated that procurement to appoint contractors/suppliers will be released during Quarter 1 of this financial year with an anticipated contract award during Quarter 2.
3.4	A report will be brought back to a future Development committee for members consideration following evaluation of the pending procurement process.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial: The approved Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan has had council capital allocation for the period of the programme that equates to £1,250,000 (excluding external funding streams) as scheduled within the approved action plan. The Parks and Play Strategy may be subject to variables associated to opportunities of external funding that may enhance or change the delivery objectives over the life of the strategy to include a contingency allowance with each year to allow for agreed variations where necessary (approx. £25k).</p> <p>Human: Ongoing Officer time to manage the contract and to monitor compliance and effectiveness of the contract.</p> <p>Risk Management: In line with Council Policies and Procedures.</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: Members resolved to approve the Mid Ulster District Council Five Year Parks and Play Strategy in November 2019 (minute reference: D193/19). It was noted within this approval that an extensive process of consultation was carried out with individual Council officers, Council elected members, national governing bodies of sport (NGBs), public and statutory agencies, children's day-care providers, youth centres, community associations and groups, sporting clubs and the general public.</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: Members resolved to approve the Mid Ulster District Council Five Year Parks and Play Strategy in November 2019 (minute reference: D193/19). It was noted that within this approval and in line with the Mid Ulster Council Community Plan, one of the 15 outcomes is to '<i>give our children and young people the best chance in life</i>'. Within this approved strategy, it is the aim of Council to address this deficiency and ensure citizens of all abilities are adequately provided for across rural and urban areas.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That Members note the contents of this report.

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A – Play Strategy Update

Appendix A – Play Strategy Update

Play Strategy Classification	Play Strategy Classification	Area	Details	DEA Area	Budget - Play Strategy Estimated Costs at 2019	Approx. Total Expenditure to date (March 2022)	Planned/Completed
						£1,720,040	
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Augher	Play Park – additional equipment	Clogher Valley	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Ballygawley	Resurfacing of play park and additional equipment	Clogher Valley	£51,000	£51,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Caledon	Play Park Improvement	Clogher Valley	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Castlecaulfield	Additional play park equipment.	Clogher Valley	£17,000	£17,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Eglis	Play park area	Clogher Valley	£37,000	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Fivemiletown Fairgreen	Play Park Enhancement Project	Clogher Valley	£160,000	£150,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Granville	Play Park Project	Clogher Valley	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Killyman	Play park upgrade	Dungannon	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Tobermore Mill Park	Play Park Improvement	Moyola	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 1	RDP Funded	Upperlands	MUGA at Alexander Park, Play park at community centre	Carntogher	£246,000	£250,000	Completed
Development Year 1	Upgrades	Monrush	Upgrade phase 1	Cookstown	£50,000		Tender Awarded Feb 2022 - estimate to complete works by Autumn 2022
Development Year 1	Upgrades	Monrush	Upgrade phase 2	Cookstown	£30,000		Tender Awarded Feb 2022 - estimate to complete works by Autumn 2022
Development Year 1	Upgrades	Moygashel Jacksonville	Upgrade	Dungannon	£50,000		Tender Awarded Feb 2022 - estimate to complete works by Autumn 2022
Development Year 1	Upgrades	Drum Manor Forest	Upgrade to provide inclusive play options	Cookstown	£35,000	£29,837	Completed
Development Year 1	Upgrades	Glenburn	Upgrade	Magherafelt	£45,000		Tender Awarded Feb 2022 - estimate to complete works by Autumn 2022
Development Year 1	Maintenance & Enhancements	Boyne Row	Maintenance/Enhancement	Moyola	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 1	Maintenance & Enhancements	Knockloughrim	Maintenance/Enhancement (equipment)	Moyola	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Knockloughrim	Surface upgrades and additional 1 x kit	Moyola	£15,000	£13,203	Completed
Development Year 1	Maintenance & Enhancements	Northland Moneymore	Maintenance/Enhancement	Magherafelt	£20,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 1	Maintenance & Enhancements	Redford	Maintenance/Enhancement	Dungannon	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 1	Maintenance & Enhancements	Ballysaggart	Maintenance/Enhancement	Dungannon	£20,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 1	Maintenance & Enhancements	Killymerron	Maintenance/Enhancement	Dungannon	£20,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 1	Maintenance & Enhancements	Ratheen	Maintenance/Enhancement	Cookstown	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 1	Removal	Sperrinview	Listed as maintenance budget (no £'s specified)	Cookstown			Delayed - due to be completed 2022/2023
Development Year 1	Removal	Killymaddy	Listed as maintenance budget (no £'s specified)	Clogher Valley			Delayed - due to be completed 2022/2023
Development Year 1	Removal	Moneynenna	Listed as maintenance budget (no £'s specified)	Carntogher			Delayed - due to be completed 2022/2023
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Annaghmore (area Clonoe)	Play park at Community grounds	Torrent	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Ballynakelly	Play Park at Ballynakelly (Tamnamore). Play Area at Education Centre	Dungannon	£18,000	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Berkeley Square Tullyhogue	Play park- Council	Cookstown	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Castlebay, Brocagh	Play Park at Council lands	Torrent	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Henderson Park	Play park @ Henderson Park/Ardstewart Stewartstown	Torrent	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 2	Upgrades	Henderson Park	Upgrade to MUGA	Torrent	£40,000		Due for Tender April 2022

Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Loup	Kick about area	Magherafelt	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Swatragh	Play park upgrade additional piece of disability equipment	Carntoghter	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Tamlaght O'Crilly	Play area	Carntoghter	£12,000	£12,000	Completed
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Innishrush	Play area	Carntoghter	£12,000	£12,000	Completed
Development Year 2	RDP Funded	Ballymaguigan	Ballymaguigan/Creagh Play Park – Council	Moyola	£37,000	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 2	Change of Use	Innishmore	Change of use MUGA to LEAP	Torrent	£50,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 2	Upgrades	Railway Park	Upgrade and relocation. Funded via Capital Projects Programme	Dungannon	£150,000		To be completed as part of overall Capital Project
Development Year 2	Upgrades	Coolnafranky	Upgrade to NEAP	Cookstown	£50,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 2	Upgrades	Beechway	Upgrade to NEAP	Cookstown	£50,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 2	Maintenance & Enhancements	Lisnagull Ardrea	Maintenance/Enhancement	Torrent	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 2	Maintenance & Enhancements	Donaghmore	Maintenance/Enhancement	Torrent	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 2	Maintenance & Enhancements	Brackville	Maintenance/Enhancement	Torrent	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 2	Maintenance & Enhancements	Northland Village	Maintenance/Enhancement	Dungannon	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 2	Peace IV Funding	Castledawson	Peace IV Funding - MUGA	Moyola	£100,000	£100,000	Completed
Development Year 2	Peace IV Funding	Aughnacloy	Peace IV Funding - Development of play – larger play provision	Clogher Valley	£100,000	£95,000	Completed
Development Year 3	Upgrades	Clogher	Upgrade	Clogher Valley	£50,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 3	Upgrades	Battery Harbour	Upgrade	Torrent	£50,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 3	Maintenance & Enhancements	Orritor Street	Maintenance/Enhancement	Cookstown	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 3	RDP Funded	Killeen/Washingbay	Play park - Council	Torrent	£38,103	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 3	Maintenance & Enhancements	US Grants	Maintenance/Enhancement	Clogher Valley	£25,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 3	Maintenance & Enhancements	Stewart Avenue	Maintenance/Enhancement	Cookstown	£20,000		Due for Tender April 2022
Development Year 4	Upgrades	Moy Curran's Brae	Upgrade	Dungannon	£50,000		Tender to be planned for 2023
Development Year 4	Maintenance & Enhancements	Milltown	Maintenance/Enhancement	Dungannon	£25,000		Tender to be planned for 2023
Development Year 4	Maintenance & Enhancements	Conway Close	Maintenance/Enhancement		£25,000		Tender to be planned for 2023
Development Year 4	Maintenance & Enhancements	Gortalowry	Maintenance/Enhancement		£25,000		Tender to be planned for 2023
Development Year 4	Maintenance & Enhancements	Gortnasoor	Maintenance/Enhancement		£20,000		Tender to be planned for 2023
Development Year 5	Upgrades	Aughnacloy	Upgrade	Clogher Valley	£50,000		Tender to be planned for 2024
Development Year 5	RDP	Clady/Glenone	Maintenance/Enhancement - playpark at Glenone	Carntoghter	£25,000	£40,000	Completed
Development Year 5	Relocation	Ardboe	Relocation subject to alternative site	Torrent	£25,000		Tender to be planned for 2024
Development Year 5	Activity Centre Development	Ballyronan Marina	Activity Centre Subject to funding	Magherafelt	£250,000	£250,000	Completed
Development Year 5	Upgrades	Drumcoo Green	Upgrade	Dungannon	£50,000		Tender to be planned for 2024
Development Year 5	District Play Development	Roundlake Fivemiletown	District Play Subject to funding	Clogher Valley	£100,000	£100,000	Completed