

Appendix A: Mid Ulster (draft) Response to PfG Outcomes Consultation



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Re: Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework Consultation

To whom it may concern:

Mid Ulster District Council would like to take this opportunity to put forward relevant feedback in relation to the Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework Consultation. The response is set out as follows:

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Feedback on the Key Sections of the Draft Outcomes Framework

Section 3: Community Planning Specific Feedback

Section 4: Delivery Feedback

Section 5: Conclusion

1. Introduction

Mid Ulster District Council welcomes the development of this updated framework and the focus that it places on cross departmental working across the nine central government departments as well as providing scope for meaningful collaboration with local government.

The current Covid-19 has placed an emphasis on the delivery of local government services and has demonstrated how local government can effectively provide direct support to residents in a practical, effective and timely way. Mid Ulster District Council hopes that this will encourage a refreshed focus on resources being put directly at the disposal of Councils in order to allow Council to support residents directly to achieve positive outcomes.

2. Feedback on the Key Sections of the Draft Outcomes Framework

Theme 1: Our Children and Young People have the best start in life

Key Priority Areas:

- Access to Education
- Capability and Resilience
- Care
- Early Years
- Skills and Attainment

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Overall Mid Ulster District Council is content with this Theme and the associated key priority areas. However in order to support communities to provide the best start in life for children and young people the Programme for Government (PFG) should provide a response to local community within their local areas through Council's community development delivery model.

Council would also support the view that 'Sustainable Development is added as a key priority as it should underpin all other initiatives. The principle of working sustainably will certainly assist in the principle of both protecting the environment and achieving balanced regional development.

There is a need to develop hubs to facilitate home working and it is extremely disappointing that Mid Ulster was omitted from the recently announced list of areas to benefit from the establishment of Connect2 Hubs. This needs to be revisited to allow people who travel significant distances the option of working in a suitably equipped 'local hub' which would help to reduce carbon footprints through reduced fuel emissions etc. The Council believes that an effective cross-government and local approach to the Circular Economy will contribute to achieving this proposed outcome.

Theme 2: We live and work sustainably-protecting the environment

Key Priority Area:

- Natural Environment
- Green Economy
- Built Environment
- Housing
- Active and Sustainable Transport
- Waste Management
- Water and Wastewater Management

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

In the opinion of Mid Ulster District Council, a new Waste Management Strategy is required to provide clarity on how the EU Circular Economy Package (CEP) will be implemented in Northern Ireland as previously committed to. Also Northern Ireland does not have its own climate change legislation (unlike all other parts of the UK). Therefore, a local climate change law (Bill) with targets for Northern Ireland to contribute fairly to UK Net Zero by 2050 needs to be addressed by the Programme for Government with the relevant actions put in place and committed to.

Mid Ulster District Council also actively promotes access to the natural environment. Council work closely with other government departments and communities to create outdoor spaces to promote health & well-being. Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan, March 2020, outlines the action plan for outdoor recreation within MUDC for the next 5 years.

However, from the perspective of Mid Ulster District Council there is a need for rurality to be specifically addressed here via a Key Priority Area (and indeed in other themes/priority areas) as a core issue. This is particularly relevant when it comes to issues such as active and sustainable transport. As a District which is made up by 70% of rural dwellers it is disappointing that a reference to Rurality is made once in whole document (Theme 6: Growth where rural industries are mentioned). Mid Ulster District Council would recommend that this is reconsidered in the final version of the PFG and its associated themes and key priority areas.

Theme 3: We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

Key Priority Area:

- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage
- Rights and Equality
- Legacy
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council recommends that in order to deliver positive outcomes from this theme and the associated key priority areas, that good relations projects/programmes are delivered across Mid Ulster in partnership with the NI Office under the Together Building United Communities. This should include the delivery of Peace Plus (2001-2027) at a local level to support developing shared space and building positive relations under the Peace Plus guidance.

It is also worth noting that Mid Ulster is a low wage economy so there is a need to address the minimum wage to tackle poverty, disadvantage and inequality. The Executive should review the use of zero-hours contracts, casual contracts and living wage implementation in order to support the achievement of this outcome.

Theme 4: We all enjoy long, healthy and active lives

Key Priority Area:

- Access to Health
- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Older People
- Physical Health and Wellbeing

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council are largely content with the key priority areas of this theme and the related key priority areas. In relation to their delivery; Mid Ulster District Council's Leisure Services already aim to deliver on access on health (GP Referral/PARS, McMillan Move More, GOGA, 4 leisure centres, 2 sports arenas and a number of outdoor free spaces i.e. trim trails. Council's Leisure services also already deliver on Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage via leisure concession pricing scheme for leisure service and via the provision of Disability Sports Hub. This also includes concessionary pricing for Older People as well encourage and targeting age group to part take in specific classes and programmes.

Council's leisure services are also already delivering on Physical Health and Wellbeing via GP Referral/PARS, McMillan Move More, GOGA and extended opening hours of facilities. There is also a future capital development programme in place which secures significant investment in Council's leisure facilities.

However it should be recognised that the loss and non-replacement of the Everybody Active Programme (EBA) will make it significantly more difficult to continue to deliver for these highly successful and beneficial service to key target groups. In order to address this require support and funding from central government on building sustainable physical activity delivery models

Council would also like to make it clear that support is required in order to support the facilitation of greater collaboration between government departments and services specifically. Provision of the opportunity to innovate by seeking to encourage additional and new participants into physical activity through non-traditional routes would be extremely benefit to supporting the outcomes of this

theme. Currently there is poor engagement and alignment with the education sector that should be addressed and well as the aim to aspiring to promote early years to the elderly age group participation. Greater focused cooperative working required in future between Ministerial Departments, E.A, PHA, Health Trusts and Local Councils would be enormously useful. Partnership working needs to be developed and facilitated officially and not simply encouraged. The expectation is that we as a population rely on education to teach, train, develop future generations and when our educational system fails to give physical activity a pre-eminent position then opinion that we will continue to struggle to enforce a life-long healthy mind set. Mid Ulster District Council would urge that this perspective is taken into account in relation to this consultation feedback.

Also, opportunities to embrace new technology and the provision of support should be provided in order for service users to be able to become more digitally advanced. More clarity is also needed with the prioritisation and objectives on investment between participation versus performance (i.e. the new draft corporate plan for Sport NI).

Finally in relation to this theme, the benefits of Arts involvement and arts participation on Health and wellbeing is really worth highlighting within this theme and should not be overlooked. There are good examples of Arts practitioners, Arts organisations Local authorities and Health Trust working together to address health and wellbeing issues through Arts activity programme delivery and participatory Arts projects. Mid Ulster District Council would urge practical implementation of arts based programmes with the aim of improving health and wellbeing outcomes.

Theme 5: Everyone can reach their potential

Key Priority Area:

- Capability and Resilience
- Better Jobs
- Skills and Attainment
- Sports, Arts and Culture

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council would support the view that Education and Careers Policy in Northern (NI) must fundamentally change, as qualifications often do not match skills needed by local industry; we have the wrong mix of skills and skills levels are too low. The NI Skills pipeline is not responsive, adaptable or competitive as it needs to be. For example, Mid Ulster is the hub of manufacturing and engineering in NI, where it accounts for 21% of the local economy (compared to 9% in the rest of NI). However, there is undersupply of

talent entering this critical sector, which reflects the deficiencies in current skills policy. Skills is a key driver for economic growth and development and we must attract and retain the best and brightest talent.

There also needs to be significant reform in the NI Skills Eco-System – greater collaboration with industry, schools and colleges is essential to ensure students study relevant curriculum and subjects needed by the local region and are taught appropriate skills including enterprise. Employers should play a significant role in shaping the demand for training courses. Education and Training providers must pro-actively engage with employers to ensure they are better informed about job opportunities and industry skills requirements.

It is clear that funding for post primary schools should not be dependent upon retaining pupils to study towards the academic route – this is part of the problem. There are too many generic degrees having no contribution economically. There needs to be a much greater focus on training and apprenticeships which unfortunately are still perceived by many as being of lower status than the academic route. The apprenticeship pathway will be a critical skills pipeline in the rebuilding of the NI economy, improving the transition from school to work.

Council would support the proposal that pupils should not be able to leave full-time education in Northern Ireland until 18 years of age, similar to other parts of the UK. A cohesive cross-departmental strategy is needed to address levels of economically inactive to minimise skills shortages with targeted approaches for each of the different cohorts e.g. students, carers, people with disabilities.

Council would broadly support the recommendations outlined in the OECD Skills Strategy Northern Ireland with regards to strengthening the governance arrangements for effective skills policies to ensure a well-functioning skills system add better skills outcomes for NI.

Importantly it is already recognised in our region that industry leadership is central to addressing prevailing labour and skills challenges. To this end, the Council established the first industry-led skills partnership in Northern Ireland in 2017. The Mid Ulster Skills Forum is a 30 strong partnership of local businesses, colleges/universities, government departments and industry sectoral bodies, speaking as one voice to take forward its skills and employability agenda in a focused and co-ordinated manner.

The Skills Forum also established the MEGA (Manufacturing and Engineering Growth & Advancement) Network in 2019, which is supported by both Mid Ulster District Council and Invest NI to address the immediate and medium-term skills shortages in the manufacturing and engineering industries in the Mid-Ulster area.

Both the Mid Ulster Skills Forum and MEGA Network are recognised as models of best practice.

However, there is a need for sustained funding from central government departments to progress the delivery of 'local' programmes and initiatives aimed at addressing skills issues in the area.

The Council considers it essential that Further & Higher Education Colleges continue to develop Educational pathways from levels two to Honours Degree level 6. The provision of Higher Education full time and part-time courses at all levels within colleges is critical to ensure there is regional balance regarding rural educational opportunities that traditionally are urban centric.

In addition, having Higher Education Degree courses within Colleges supports local industry and provides a pool of skilled talent for now and the future. This will also contribute to reducing the brain drain of talent that leave the area never to return. Honours Degree provision would also support the objectives of the programme for Government, and contribute support to the College Widening Access and Participation agenda.

It is also the opinion of Mid Ulster District Council that this theme would benefit from the inclusion Heritage in its subsection (i.e. Sports, Arts, Culture and Heritage). Heritage is included alongside Sports Arts and Culture in section 9, but not included in this section. Therefore the Council would recommend that reconsideration is given to the benefits of including Heritage within Theme 5.

Theme 6: Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral

Key Priority Area:

- Competing Globally
- Green Economy
- Growth
- Food, Farming and Fishing
- Infrastructure
- Innovation

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Council would suggest that the word 'inclusive' is included in the outcome to reflect the aspiration of an inclusive economy.

The Council would support a separate, outcome aligned to the development of high value infrastructure in terms of roads, rail, air and sea transport, environmental improvements, urban development, public transport, sustainable travel and availability of high speed telecommunications (broadband and mobile phone networks).

Council is particularly supportive of “regionally balanced” because Northern Ireland had developed an unbalanced economy with investment in jobs and infrastructure focussed largely on Belfast.

In order to drive the regionally balanced growth agenda, there needs to be a focus on investment West of the Bann. Council is particularly supportive of the inclusion of ‘Infrastructure’ as such regional imbalances and inequalities are profound.

A commitment to delivering modern and sustainable economic infrastructure and “levelling-up” is essential particularly due to the historical underinvestment in Mid Ulster’s basic enabling infrastructure, communication networks including broadband and mobile coverage, and utilities such as wastewater and sewerage systems. To achieve the aspiration of a regionally balance economy, rural communities must have access to services and an equal opportunity to participate in the economy.

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 well-being for the regional economy.

Key catalyst projects to achieve this outcome include the completion of a full fibre broadband network, the A29 Cookstown bypass, Dungannon bypass and investment in wastewater and sewerage systems.

Council also welcomes the rollout of Project Stratum, however, it will still not address a significant proportion of our district and this needs to be prioritised and funded as a matter of urgency. Firstly, there are many premises within our towns and villages that are outside of Project Stratum who have inadequate broadband provision and it is very unclear what the solution is for these people.

Secondly, there is new information to suggest that anomalies have been identified whereby numerous premises previously eligible for consideration under Project Stratum have been removed during the roll out stage. Again no solution has been proposed.

Investment in infrastructure should include “access to economic / industrial land” to allow for business growth and expansion. The acute need for development land has been identified as the single most important development constraint for medium/large sized companies in the Mid Ulster area. 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. As a consequence the area has missed out on significant business investment which is totally unacceptable.

Key catalyst projects to achieve this outcome is the acquisition of land by DfE/Invest NI to develop serviced sites for businesses in Mid Ulster. Council would recommend that the Theme should include ‘Encouraging Entrepreneurship’ as a priority area given that Northern Ireland has one of the lowest businesses churn rates in the UK (i.e. low business births and deaths). Economies with higher rates of business churn tend to be more dynamic and with businesses in higher value-added, high skilled, high growth sectors. Mid Ulster is recognised as one of the most entrepreneurial regions in Northern Ireland and business starts are a fundamental basis for job creation in any economy. The Council strongly asserts that encouraging entrepreneurial activity in priority sectors will help to promote sustainable economic growth as Northern Ireland recovers from the pandemic. Indeed Council would suggest that ‘Growth’ should be expanded to ‘Sustainable Growth’ which is a key tenet of balanced regional development.

Council would question the rationale and prioritisation of the 3 sectors included (Food, Farming and Fishing). The NI Economic Strategy prioritises a number of key sectors which are strongly represented in Mid Ulster which include advanced manufacturing and engineering. Mid Ulster has been described as Northern Ireland’s manufacturing hub. With a GVA of £3.24bn this accounts for 7.7% of the NI GVA, however a much larger proportion is from manufacturing output and is heavily export driven, accounting for 12% of NI exports. Manufacturing is hugely important to the area, accounting for 21% of the area’s economy (NI - 9%) and provides nearly 11,000 jobs. 40% of the world’s crushing and screening equipment is made in Mid Ulster. Council would urge the NI Executive to focus and target investment in these key economic clusters.

Continued support for Micro and SME businesses is critical in light of the devastating impact of COVID 19. Re-balancing of the regional economy is fundamentally important and must recognise the importance of growth within micro and SME's sectors in this regard. The loss of EU funding which previously supported growth within this sector needs to be maintained at current levels at the very least with Local Authorities given the flexibility to develop and deliver innovative initiatives which build on local sectoral strengths. There are limited details on the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) but it is understood that the SPF will not provide a full replacement for EU Structural Funds and it will not be devolved, but rather administered as a UK wide fund. This raises significant questions around the basis on which funding will be allocated and implications locally.

The estimated EU funding loss 2021-27 to Mid Ulster is £28.5M. The main areas being the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Investment for Growth & Jobs Programme (2014-20) where Mid Ulster Council will lose 80% funding (£1M) for our suite of business development programmes. The NI Rural Development Programme is financed through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. LEADER funding within the NI Rural Development Programme for the period 2014 – 2020 was worth approximately £11.1m to Mid Ulster and administered through the Local Action Group – Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership. Also, a total of £7.9M was leveraged under the European Social Fund (ESF) for the period 2018-22 which is targeted at helping the most vulnerable and distant from the labour market to undertake training and find employment.

Council would assert that sustainable rural development is a key tenet of balanced regional development. Mid Ulster is a largely rural region and the Council is committed to developing and supporting local rural communities and economies. A replacement, properly resourced Rural Development Programme will be critical in achieving these ambitions.

Promoting 'Innovation' is a fundamental in successful economies and investment is needed in R&D right across the business community. This will in turn help to raise productivity and create higher value jobs and wages.

Key catalyst projects to achieve this outcome include the development of an Innovation and Skills Academy in Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing and "Centre of Excellence" for Robotics and Automation, specifically for food and drink processing as part of the MSW Growth Deal.

Developing the skills base will be critical to achieving the proposed outcome. Firstly, by reducing the number of young people with low / no skills and encouraging them to remain in education to the level appropriate with their skills

and abilities (the only long term sustainable way to develop an inclusive economy). Secondly, ensuring young people are given the right advice and guided towards career pathways in tertiary level education that best suit them and also meet the needs of the economy. Finally, providing upskilling and re-skilling opportunities for those already in or seeking to re-enter the labour market. NI Executive need to progress the NI Skills Strategy and 14-19 Strategy to reduce the current skills deficits and mismatches within the local economy as a matter of urgency.

Access to skilled labour is fundamental to achieving this outcome. Mid Ulster is heavily reliant on migrant labour and depends on EU national to supplement the workforce particularly within Agri-food and Engineering. There is a need for a differentiated and more flexible migration policy that keeps our economy open to all levels of international talent.

Achieving a carbo neutral economy will require a “Whole of Government” response to help support economic growth. Long term funding co-ordination across departments will be necessary.

Theme 7: Everyone feels safe-we all respect the law and each other

Key Priority Area:

- Access to Justice
- Address Harm and Vulnerability
- Early Intervention and Rehabilitation
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council would recommend representation on the PCSP for delivery of the PCSP Plan under the DOJ and NIPB policy and guidance in order to achieve the outcomes in relation to this Theme.

This could be further strengthened by delivering good relations projects/programmes across Mid Ulster District Council area in partnership with the NI Office under the Together Building United Communities.

Theme 8: We have a caring society that supports people through their lives

Key Priority Area:

- Disability
- Housing
- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Older People

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council welcome this theme and the emphasis that it places on improved outcomes for older people and people with disabilities. However, Council would also like to highlight the role played by carers in relation to both older people and people with disabilities. The role of carer support is crucial to positive outcomes for both older people and people with disabilities. It is the opinion of Council that carers need to formally recognised for the role they would play in relation to the support they provide, formally and informally.

Mental Health and Wellbeing is also a welcome part of this theme, particularly in light of the damaging impact that the pandemic has had on the mental health and wellbeing of all age groups in society. As such Mid Ulster District Council strongly supports more equal access to the provision of Mental health and wellbeing services for all age groups. For rural dwellers in our District this can currently prove extremely challenging.

Mid Ulster District Council also supports the inclusion of Housing and Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage within these theme. The specifics detail of the feedback in relation to these areas are contained with the Community Planning section of this consultation response.

Theme 9: People want to live work and visit here

Key Priority Area:

- Competing Globally
- Better Jobs
- Growth
- Housing
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity
- Sports, Arts and Culture
- Planning

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Council would strongly assert the role of town centres in the economic recovery from the pandemic. However, substantial financial support is needed to support the rebuilding and place making of our towns and high streets as attractive places to live, work and visit.

Devolution of “Regeneration” powers and resources to local authorities will be required to achieve this outcome.

The Council welcomes the establishment of Northern Ireland High Street Taskforce, however, there is a need for rural districts such as Mid Ulster to have a voice on this forum.

The Council would support the view that the provision of substantial funding is required to address the challenges facing the High Street; for example the Future High Streets Fund in England and Strategic Sites Acquisition Fund in Wales which are not available in Northern Ireland.

Fundamentally, 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) is essential to enable our towns and high streets to emerge from the pandemic.

Mid Ulster Council has called upon government departments to prepare longer term development plans (i.e. over 4 years) instead of the current “ad-hoc” funding to Councils at short notice which prevents the development of more strategic programmes and project being taken forward.

The Council would also assert that investment in rural towns and villages to create civic pride should be a priority area in achieving this outcome. This should include improving access to services for rural communities and community infrastructure needed to make rural areas more appealing as places to live and work.

As referenced previously, investment in modern economic infrastructure is fundamental if NI is to achieve inclusive growth and compete globally. The pandemic has demonstrated that working from home either f/t or p/t basis (hybrid model) will be the future, but only if high value infrastructure is in place to facilitate this.

To create better jobs will require a focus on supporting innovation in specialist cluster economies including advanced manufacturing and engineering and agri-foods in Mid Ulster. Innovation increases productivity which is the foundation for higher value added jobs. This, along with a focus on skills pathways will help to ensure there are more people working in better jobs locally.

In the absence of EU funding, replacement funding will be essential to support businesses to grow and innovate in order to compete globally.

Historically, the Mid Ulster region has had minimal public sector investment and therefore has relied on the private sector to create employment opportunities. The Council would assert that public sector investment in Mid Ulster is crucial to the “levelling up” agenda in Northern Ireland.

3. Community Planning Specific Feedback

Mid Ulster District Council also has responsibility for the facilitation and delivery of Community Planning within the district in partnership with 12 Statutory Partners listed in The Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016, as well as over 30 additional support partners from across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. The Mid Ulster Community Plan is closely aligned to the outcomes of the Programme for Government (PfG) and therefore inextricably linked to its delivery.

Whilst Mid Ulster Community Planning appreciate that PfG is an outcomes document for the entire region, Community Plans are its reflection at a local district level. In this submission, Mid Ulster Community Planning would like to draw attention to a number of PfG outcomes that have specific bearing and impact on the priorities of the Mid Ulster Community Plan and the Mid Ulster District. Please note however, this is not the views of our individual partners, but rather, comments based on priorities set within the Mid Ulster Community Plan, which are of course endorsed by all partners.

Our children and young people have the best start in life

Access to Education

Disadvantage has a detrimental impact on a child’s educational attainment. Statistics show that children in low income families can underperform at key stages in education by up to 10% from their peers not impacted by poverty. Education must be free at the point of delivery. Research has highlighted that many children skip school on days where money is required, for example, to purchase text books, for home economics resources, art materials, school fees, school visits, charity days etc. There should be provision for low income families. This must not be a stigmatised system which highlights children from low income households. Good practice exists with uniforms based on transferable badges, educational school trips linked to public facilities (many of which are free), school resources books, art materials and so on included in budget etc.

Breakfast clubs can be an ‘effective support’ solution as many children, especially in disadvantaged areas, are going to school hungry and struggle to participate. After School Clubs can again provide effective support, particularly to children from disadvantaged backgrounds where they are less likely to be supported with

school work at home. Research would show those children who are struggling with school work are also more likely not to attend, further impacting on their achievement outcomes.

As evidenced above, low attendance and poverty are inextricably linked. There is a key importance to monitoring attendance and provide support in addressing it to ensure the child or young person is fully supported to attend education. There needs to be a promotion of young carers' needs as they are an unidentifiable group and are at risk of low attendance/attainment.

The family environment has a major impact on a child's educational attainment. Various issues within a family unit, such as physical and mental health problems, abuse, financial difficulties, can affect a child greatly and his/her ability to learn. A cross departmental whole family approach is required to address the health, economic and educational issues within the family, in order to achieve the best outcomes.

Family Learning Centres aim to provide parents with the support, knowledge and guidance that they need to support their child to achieve their full potential and overcome the barriers to learning that they are experiencing. Effective programmes delivered specifically to address educational attainment and poverty within Neighborhood Renewal areas in Mid Ulster are the Family Learning Programme (FLP) and the Primary Attendance Matters Programme (PAM). The aim of the FLP is to ensure that parents are provided with the skills needed to help their children at home, ensuring a good link is forged and nurtured between home and school. The aim of the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programme is to help parents to develop their written and spoken English skills, which will ultimately help them to assist their children at home.

IT equipment are essential items for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in improving their educational attainment. The current pandemic has highlighted this as a major issue for children.

Capability and Resilience

Mid Ulster Post Primary Schools are delivering a Peace IV funded Schools for Hope programme to engage all post primary schools across the district in a focused programme to improve children and young people's resilience and mental health. Emotional wellbeing in schools must not be ad hoc and should not have to be funded year on year via community grants programmes. Linkages must be made between the Government Departments of Health, Communities and Education to ensure a co-ordinated approach to children and young people's physical and psychological safety and wellbeing. The Schools for Hope model needs to be sustained and extended to primary schools. All schools should be required to deliver health and wellbeing as part of the curriculum and funded

appropriately to do so, with direct support linked to the PHA and Health Trusts, not relying on ad hoc voluntary and community led programmes. Mid Ulster Community Planning would like to see legislation that enshrines wellbeing in schools, with associated teacher training and dedicated funding put in place.

Early Years

Focus on early years development is fundamental to improving the outcomes of young people. Mid Ulster Community Planning supports the huge benefits of early years programmes and acknowledges the great work carried out by local organisations such as Sure Start. However, too often these programmes are targeted by methods such as geographical areas of disadvantage. Whilst Mid Ulster Community Planning acknowledges the need for area based intervention to address disadvantage, this can exclude pockets of severe deprivation that exists across the district. All early years intervention programmes must be made available to those identified by relevant services regardless of their post code.

Mid Ulster Community Planning would advocate that all pre-school children are allocated 30 hours per week in a pre-school setting in line with other regions of the UK.

We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment

Active and Sustainable Transport

Mid Ulster Community Planning has prioritised provision of an Integrated Transport Model for the district, as a response to local communities transport concerns around access needs and rural connectivity. As a first step to improving integration of transport services, it is proposed to establish an integrated working group to look at potential solutions/good practice, taking on board lessons learned from the Integrated Public Passenger Transport Pilot Project carried out in the Dungannon area in 2014/15. However, after discussions with the relevant organisations, it was agreed that progressing with the actions was unachievable without significant policy change and departmental commitment. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek that the required policy is implemented and there is cross departmental commitment to deliver an integrated transport scheme across the District.

Water and Wastewater Management

The issue of water and wastewater management in Mid Ulster will have detrimental 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 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 (WwTW), 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.

It is not only social housing provision that is required but also general housing needs. Mid Ulster boasts Northern Ireland's fastest growing manufacturing business base, and the largest outside Belfast. Our district produces 7.3% of Northern Ireland's economic output. As part of our evidence gathering in the process of preparing the Local Development Plan, we plan to meet the needs of our growing population by providing an adequate supply of economic development land to facilitate the creation of at least 8,500 new jobs up to 2030. 10,950 houses are required to support the delivery of this economic growth across the District. Given this significant increase, it is essential that significant investment be prioritised to upgrade and provide new sewerage infrastructure across the District.

NI Water have confirmed to Mid Ulster Community Planning that pump away solutions to provide easement on problematic areas of the sewer network were not an expensive option. More sustainable solutions such as SUDs needs to be explored, to offset rain water capture to alleviate pressure on the sewerage system re capacity. Council would therefore support greater consideration of SUD systems through development.

We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Mid Ulster Community Planning is fully committed to reducing poverty and the impact of poverty on individuals and communities within Mid Ulster and would call on the NI Executive to publish the Regional Anti-Poverty Strategy as a matter of urgency.

In 2019, in the absence of a Regional Anti-Poverty Strategy, Mid Ulster Community Planning partners came together from statutory agencies, business and community to look at a range of priorities impacting on poverty; with the aim to create a Poverty Plan that seeks to identify strategic actions for partner delivery. A number of poverty issues were identified through the development of the Plan for Mid Ulster. These were:

- Mid Ulster District has greater levels of absolute poverty than the NI average, whilst there shows to be a small percentage reduction in poverty across the region, mainly attributed to the uplift in the economy and job opportunities Mid Ulster remains higher than the NI average.
- Children in absolute poverty also remains higher than the NI average. A key issue that remains for Mid Ulster is high level rental costs greater than other parts of the region that impacts on disposable income for families and particularly contributes to the working poor.
- The cost of living also contributes to poverty due to high levels of expenditure on basic needs such as oil, coal etc, again these are high West of the Bann.
- Similarly childcare and access to good quality childcare is an expenditure item that is a barrier on a lower disposable income but also impacts on entering the employment market in the first instance.
- Pupils from poorer backgrounds have much lower attainment on average than those from better-off backgrounds.
- Key stage levels would highlight this differential; where those in lower income and in poverty have lower levels of attainment in Maths and English.
- At all key stage levels and GCSEs there can be up to 20% differential between pupils on free school meals and other pupils.
- There is a greater chance of a young person from a more affluent area attending university than those from areas of disadvantage.
- People who have higher qualifications and higher level training have higher paid jobs.
- Young people from areas of disadvantage do not have the same opportunities as those from more affluent communities as often there is a cost to support greater achievements in education.
- Charities involved in supporting people in poverty would state that children and young people in poverty are also not participating to the same level in school due to cost of additional activities e.g. school trips, visits etc. and often have higher levels of non-attendance.

- There are greater instances of mental health issues in areas of deprivation and for people living in poverty. There is shown to be a correlation between those in poverty and who have greater issues of mental health including depression.
- One in 10 young people are at risk of presenting with mental health issues at the age of 15 years, this increases to 29% for young people from a deprived background.
- Suicide is 3 times more likely in areas of disadvantage.
- There is a greater risk of a lifestyle related illness if you live in an area of deprivation or low income.
- People from areas of disadvantage can die up to 5-7 years earlier than those from more affluent areas.
- People living in deprived areas are more likely to be in a house that is of a lower standard of quality living e.g. house standard and heat etc.
- There is a higher possibility of people in deprived areas turning to drugs and alcohol and this links to the earlier issue on mental health.

In terms of moving towards alleviating the main causes of poverty, the key objectives are to:

1. Maximise the number of people in better paid jobs; through secured living wage employment, and through training and education.
2. Increase disposable income; through reducing housing/rental costs, reducing debt and maximising available income support.
3. Improve health and wellbeing; through increasing support to those in poverty to engage in better health and wellbeing activities and lifestyle choices.
4. Increase the level of quality of life and wellbeing opportunities; through targeting early years intervention and development.
5. Reduce levels of social exclusion; through greater access to services, support and opportunities.
6. Provide everyone with a quality home for life, through affordable rents via rent interventions of increased rent support, adequate social and affordable house provision in mixed tenure development and quality environments using the following model that is currently being applied by various local authorities in Scotland:



The Mid Ulster Poverty Plan does not seek to provide solutions or programmes for all agencies with a remit for addressing poverty but to provide priority issues where agencies can work together to develop localised initiatives and solutions. Mid Ulster Community Planning is fully committed to working with all government departments to fulfil the actions of the Mid Ulster Anti-Poverty Plan and a Regional Poverty Plan.

We all enjoy long, healthy and active lives

Access to Health

Due to the reduction of services and its peripheral location, much of Mid Ulster has the poorest access to acute hospital and care provision. Two thirds of Mid Ulster's population of 145,000 are rural; and by 2037 83% will be aged 65+ (against an NI average of 68%). During Mid Ulster District Council's extensive community consultations to draw up the new 'Community Plan' for Mid Ulster, the issue causing most concern was the ongoing reduction of health and social care services and facilities in the area and the apparent lack of investment in alternative provision. Opportunities now exist across sites which are already in public sector use in Mid Ulster, where services have been removed, which would facilitate the co-location of a broad range of localised health and social care provision, while also achieving a greater integration of service delivery. These sites have the potential to deliver a comprehensive range of local diagnostic facilities, primary care and elective surgery provision, which will also contribute to alleviating the pressures on Antrim and Craigavon. In line with the Bengoa Report, this seeks to "provide simpler and easier access to healthcare professionals and diagnostic equipment needed to assess and diagnose conditions". Whilst the Mid Ulster district has lost two acute hospitals, it does not have a Community Care and Treatment Centre in any of its three hub towns. Mid Ulster Community Planning would urge that this matter is urgently addressed.

A key action of Delivering Together is also enhancing support in primary care, 'a new model of person-centred care focussed on prevention, early intervention,

supporting independence and wellbeing...our future model of primary care is to be based on multidisciplinary teams embedded around general practice’.

‘Primary care is the bedrock of our health and social care system and provides around 95% of the care people need throughout their life’. However, like other rural districts, Mid Ulster is experiencing a chronic shortage of GPs, particularly in our rural practices. Mid Ulster Community Planning has been working closely with HSCB to monitor this issue. Whilst we acknowledge the number of programmes developed by DoH and HSCB to address the shortage, a concerted effort is required to ensure that they are implemented with the utmost urgency.

In recent years, Mid Ulster has recorded some of the worst Ambulance response times, consistently higher than the NI average and increasing year on year, and also poor access to acute provision – Mid Ulster travel time to a hospital with major injury treatment capabilities is over eight minutes longer than the NI average. Mid Ulster is the fastest growing of the 11 new Council areas (this is projected to continue as its population is expected to grow to 165,000 by 2030); the District and its road network is predominantly rural, adversely impacting on travel times. A longer term solution will therefore require planning and investment to ensure greater availability and more rapid deployment of vehicles in rural areas furthest from acute provision. This should also include developing the capacity of existing local ambulance stations as well as exploring the potential to use Mid Ulster as a regional base for some or all parts of the service.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Mental Health draft Strategy is most welcome as a means to drive forward the health and wellbeing agenda for the next 10 years. To date the provision of mental health services in Northern Ireland has been vastly underfunded. The number of people experiencing mental health problems in Northern Ireland has increased exponentially over the years to an estimated one in five. The current Covid19 pandemic has resulted in a sharp rise in the need for mental health support, with GPs estimating that the numbers of people presenting with mental health issues has doubled since March 2020. Waiting times to access support services have increased in line with this. In Mid Ulster, local community consultations have indicated that individuals and families have faced barriers to accessing the right mental health support services at the right time and therefore, a regionally consistent response for people suffering from mental health problems is essential.

The Health and Social Care Board published a Regional Mental Health Care Pathway in 2017 and Acute Mental Health Care Pathway in 2018, both lengthy documents filled with information about the delivery of Mental Health services and yet people are still voicing their confusion about who they should talk to about mental health, the services that are available at every level, and how to access those services and support. A clear pathway model that is easy to

navigate and provides clarity from early intervention, to targeted support, to treatment and recovery is essential.

Suicide increased every year in Mid Ulster from 2015 – 2018, with 179 deaths over the 10 years from 2008 to 2018. There is a deeply unequal level of provision in counselling services for those in need of support, particularly before they reach crisis point. This disparity is evident across the two Health and Social Care Trusts serving Mid Ulster, with 51% of GP practices in the Southern Trust having an in-house counsellor compared with 89% in the Northern Trust (figures provided by HSCB to PPR). This also applies to access to other talking therapies, which are low cost and can help address distress before it becomes acute, ensuring that fewer people end up needing crisis care, statutory mental health services and anti-depressants.

Just as physical poor health and pain are often the outward manifestations of mental health problems, physical illness and chronic pain, particularly experienced as people age, can lead to heightened levels of anxiety and depression. There is a direct correlation between short and long term mental health problems caused by biological, psychological and environmental factors including traumatic incidents, abuse, fertility problems, organ failure and transplant, menopause and many more illnesses and conditions that must all be taken into consideration when seeking to treat and improve people's overall wellbeing and health. Taking a whole body and mind approach to health and wellbeing is essential if the objective is truly to provide services that are tailored to meet the needs of the individual, highly personalised and recovery orientated.

More and more people are being referred by the mainstream healthcare system to the Community & Voluntary Sector for help, particularly in rural areas. In many cases, groups are reliant on donations and fund raising. One community/voluntary counselling group in Mid Ulster accepts referrals from a catchment area covering 38 towns across the district. Groups have reported that while they do not turn away anyone who cannot afford to pay, this causes an added financial burden. Community and voluntary mental health and counselling groups provide an excellent service but should not be overburdened by Health Trusts, particularly through knee jerk referrals to traumatic events in the community.

Mid Ulster Community Planning would highlight the role that local Councils and Community Planning Partnerships can play in addressing mental health. Mental health is incorporated into all Mid Ulster Community Planning themes, namely Health and Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Economic Growth and Vibrant and Safe Communities. In February 2020, the Council developed a Protect Life 2 Action Plan, co-ordinated through Community Planning, to embed suicide prevention through all community plans by building and strengthening

communication pathways for the Protect Life 2 message, suicide prevention awareness training, signposting and promotion of services and help-seeking behaviours, representation on Protect Life Implementation Groups, investment in suicide prevention initiatives, media and communications training and exploration of a Council charter on suicide prevention for employers.

Everyone can reach their potential

Better Jobs

The challenges facing all our town centres in recent times has been the economic downturn. The development pipeline has slowed to a trickle and many retailers have reduced their representation in poorly performing centres, or have disappeared from the town centres altogether. As a result, many town centres have experienced rising vacancy levels and falling market demand. However public services can play an important role notwithstanding that Mid Ulster has one of the lowest reliance on public sector workers in Northern Ireland. Presently there is limited public sector employment in Mid Ulster (22% against NI 31%). Co-location of public services in town centres has many advantages such as:

- It creates a network of Government Hubs making it easier for the public to access services
- Makes it easier for public servants to travel to work in NI
- Can occupy a derelict site and/or an unused building within a town
- Generates wealth to local economy
- Towns will become more resilient and have the ability to respond to challenges they face
- Produces positive outcomes for places
- There is a social role and economic benefit to the end user
- Provides a community focal point
- Co-location costs can clearly be reduced by sharing some capital and operating expenditures.

Taking all this into consideration, Mid Ulster Community Planning was extremely disappointed that the district was not considered for one of the 11 Civil Service Hubs announced by the Minister for Finance, given its central location in the region. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek to work with the Minister for Finance to re-evaluate the Hub sites and to discuss consideration of Mid Ulster as a potential location.

Skills and Attainment

Addressing the gap between skills demand and skills supply to create new jobs in the Mid Ulster region is a key priority. The Mid-Ulster sub region is home to over 8,500 small businesses, which is the second largest concentration of small businesses outside of the Belfast Metropolitan area. As the most entrepreneurial region in Northern Ireland, its business base provides the lifeblood of the local economy, whilst the skills and capabilities of its workforce are vital to its sustainability and growth. The availability of a high performing workforce, appropriately equipped to meet the current and future needs of the local industry's key sectors is therefore of vital importance. From education through to industrial strategy, the skills that are developed are important both for the local economy and for providing an opportunity for individuals.

This all has become the driving force for the establishment of Northern Ireland's first ever Skills Forum in Mid Ulster. This industry-led body works closely with the education sector to ensure that future talent aligns with the needs of business. The Mid Ulster Skills Forum is a ground-breaking initiative uniquely led by the private sector in collaboration with Community Planning partners and other statutory organisations and is the first of its kind to be developed in Northern Ireland. The Forum is currently overseeing the delivery of the Skills Strategy for Mid Ulster; with some early successes including greater engagement between the vocational and educational providers and industry. Mid Ulster Community Planning would put forward the proposal that the Mid Ulster Skills Forum is used as a model for skills development across the region or is incorporated into the development of the DfC's proposed Labour Market Partnerships (LMP).

Mid Ulster Community Planning welcomes proposals from DfC to create Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) in each council area, allowing for tailored interventions to address the district's particular issues. Key areas for delivery would be the retraining of sectors no longer providing sustainable employment, an issue that has been further exacerbated by the Pandemic. It is hoped that the LMP will complement and enhance the work of the Mid Ulster Skills Forum. Mid Ulster Community Planning is fully committed to working with DfC to establish a LMP in Mid Ulster and seeks full commitment from the Department to do so.

The Mid Ulster Community Plan seeks to ensure that every 18 year old person achieves a positive destination. In doing so it has become apparent that the current funding model between academic and vocational educational settings is a major impediment to this outcome. These two settings should not be competing as the current system forces them to. Instead, they should be working together to provide the most suitable pathway for each young person which often will require a blend of both settings. Mid Ulster Community Planning seeks that this issue is addressed as a matter of importance.

Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral

Competing Globally; Growth; Food, Farming and Fishing; Infrastructure; Innovation

A number of economic growth, infrastructure and skills actions from the Mid Ulster Community Plan have been incorporated into the development of a Mid South West Region Growth Deal that will 'supercharge' the growth of our economy and ensure inclusive prosperity for the Mid South West region. Mid Ulster Community Planning therefore supports the issues raised within the Mid South West Growth Deal submission to this consultation.

Green Economy

A Green Society is becoming increasingly important, and the focus and champions among young people is of great value to ensure our environment is not only sustained for our future but that it supports an equitable and quality life for all.

Please refer to the Mid Ulster District Council Service response for the important work on biodiversity, sustainable development and awareness and promotion, air quality, waste management and recycling. Other regional areas that remain important are good water quality, good waste infrastructure not only for our environmental protection but to support housing and jobs for the basic needs of people to live a good quality of life.

The climate change agenda is important and there is a need for a coordinated approach to ensuring that everyone plays their part and contributes to protect our environment. We also must provide for economic sustainability and growth, as well as equitable quality of life for people so that they can afford the quality of lifestyle needed to support good health. The Stern Report in 2006 instigated the thinking around the economic impact of climate change and its impact, and underlined that a fully integrated approach based on champions, awareness and action all play an important role in its development.

People want to live work and visit here

Housing

The Mid Ulster Housing market has experienced significant change over the last 20 years with significant increase in population and growth. Mid Ulster population growth has outpaced the NI average between 2001 and 2013 as population grew by 19% (compared to NI growth of 8%). The number of households increased by 18% between 2001 and 2010. There is a projected Housing Growth Indicator new

dwelling requirement of 10,300 for the period 2016 to 2030 for the district, which is well above the NI average of 7,709. Due to the levels of growth particularly in Dungannon this has had an impact upon housing demand and rental values; and limited increase in social housing stock which have all led to issues of poverty in the area.

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 comes from the issue of 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 1 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. Whilst the allocation of housing is a central element in addressing many of these themes it is difficult to consider it in isolation of the other key areas, particularly the supply of social housing provision and the affordability issue of housing. Both of these are critical issues for the district. Mid Ulster Community Planning has identified a number of actions to address the housing crisis in the District.

1. Social Mixed Tenure Housing provision

There is strong evidence that highlights the benefits of mixed developments in promoting quality housing, social cohesion, reducing social exclusion and creating stronger communities. This requires a two tier approach; one through the delivery of the social and affordable housing provision and through private developer schemes via planning. Quality management of delivery of such provision is essential by the NIHE as an independent overseeing body to ensure adequate provision of social and affordable housing remains a priority.

2. Intervention in the Rental Market

The private rented sector across the district has seen an unprecedented increase in its tenure share between 2001 and 2019. The impact of COVID19 on rising levels of unemployment, lending restrictions and growing social housing waiting lists will ensure that demand for the private rented sector will continue to grow.

Rental values in Dungannon and to a lesser extent Cookstown are very high and there is significant difference between actual rental charges and Local Housing Allowance amounts with a shortfall between rental charge and benefit payable between £50 - £60 pw. In addition, the largest number of housing benefit claimants are living in properties belonging to the private sector. There is a real need for intervention. If a solution is not found the social housing crisis will continue to escalate and the social issues heighten. It will also cause further problems with regard to housing allocation in terms of meeting need, vulnerable people, family unity, strong communities, etc.

Mid Ulster Community Planning would advocate for Executive intervention in the rental market, to monitor rental values in our main hub towns and cities (which are where the populations are concentrated) and to intervene where the market is creating real issues of poverty and social deprivation. Similar models are being delivered in the South of Ireland and other EU countries.

3. Balance between town centre regeneration and social and affordable housing provision.

Mid Ulster Community Planning wants to see a better balance achieved between town centre regeneration and the provision of social and affordable housing. It is unarguable that Mid Ulster has a high level of social housing need but addressing the need cannot come at the expense of negatively impacting on other areas of society, like our town centre viability or growth.

There has been a number of recent instances where Housing Associations have been granted permission and provided with grants to build social housing (mainly apartments) in streets primarily dominated by retail and leisure. The provision of social housing in such locations is not viable or addressing real need. Not only does it impact on the retail and leisure economy of our hub towns, but they are often occupied by young families living in 1st or 2nd floor apartments, with no garden or space to play and near bars, restaurants or gambling establishments. At a recent NIHE meeting with the proposed social housing development list, 90% of proposed delivery was town centre retail units across the main towns. This was a cheap option based on easy provision and not taking account of the needs of families that are in real need on the social housing list.

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 Principals' for town centre development based on complementing the priorities for regeneration for Dungannon town. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek Executive support to replicate this partnership and process across all hub towns.

4. Housing Quality

It is important that housing provision takes account of long term sustainability of areas and lifetime homes. Housing is one of the basic hierarchy of needs for people. The provision of suitable homes for people is critical to all elements of wellbeing. Families should have adequate space for children to grow and develop in all areas of life. This is similar in the allocation of housing to people who are separated and have children for part of a week, and the importance of the family unit and tie with parents which is invaluable to the wellbeing of the child. It is the central principle of community planning, where the wider integrated impact of one policy has on another and on resources.

Mid Ulster Community Planning would like to see targets that support both mixed tenure and mixed housing type developments. Design concepts should be agreed by NIHE in advance of grant support to Housing Associations.

Other issues that we are seeking to address is to ensure the planning gain of adequate green space provision in housing; that green space is not edge strips of green around an estate but a central space that is accessible to all. Evidence would show that where our social housing provision has been well planned with good space and green space provision then there are less social issues in the longer term. Green space needs to be integral to the design for social and affordable housing and to the allocation of the housing grant to build. NIHE needs to have a greater say in the final design that allows for good practice.

House quality does not just relate to new housing, but to existing provision. There are quite a number of people renting in poor accommodation. The repair grant is still available in NI but it is very hard to get, as to be eligible you must have a statutory notice from environmental health to apply.

There is also a need for greater legislative remit for inspecting house quality condition to ensure it is fit for purpose for health and wellbeing, not just in a state of complete disrepair. The issue of lung related conditions and asthma in houses of poor quality have long lasting impacts on health and the health service.

5. Supported Housing Schemes

The 2020 annual update of the Housing Investment Plan for Mid Ulster states that the gross, three year (2019/20) SHDP contains no supported housing schemes for Mid Ulster as there is currently no identified or known requirement

for supported housing in the district. Mid Ulster Community Plan has identified a need for supported housing across the District. Supported housing need has been identified for people with disabilities, older people and vulnerable women who are victims of domestic violence. A need was also identified in Dungannon for people with learning disabilities. This has been brought to the attention of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust who did recognize the need but stated that there is no current funding.

There has been no supported housing provision in the last number of years, which would question the issue re lack of need whilst other plans and engagement with the sectors are identifying a real need. There is confusion if it is need or lack of resource that is driving the agenda. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek a review of supported housing needs for people.

Sports, Arts and Culture

The Mid Ulster Community Plan recognises the importance of sport and physical activity in order to shift responsibility for the population's health away from traditional health and care structures to more focus on intervention and prevention. There are several key objectives that the Mid Ulster Community Plan seeks to address through its actions delivery and would ask PfG to take these into consideration when developing the strategy.

Better coordination by statutory agencies

It was identified that there were several organisations and agencies working in Mid Ulster to deliver Health and Wellbeing Initiatives, including sport and physical activity programmes. Several of the actions named above set out initially to map these organisations, initiatives and programmes and bring them together in one plan. To date much of the mapping has been carried out and a number of working groups have been established, bringing together the various organisations involved in Health & Wellbeing delivery. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek to see all sport and physical delivery in a similar coordinated approach, taking into account current sports and physical activity organisations and programmes already operating in the district. Any outcomes and targets set should also aim to be cross organisational eg 'To keep all children and young people active' which would require a range of partners to achieve.

Access to services in our rural communities

One in four people live in a rural community in Mid Ulster which are serviced by poor transport links. At the most critical end of the Health and Wellbeing scale, this translates into the worst ambulance response times in Northern Ireland. However, it also has a detrimental effect on a person's ability to participate in sports and physical activities which are often based in the population centres in the district. Through our 'Healthy Towns and Villages' action, Mid Ulster Community Planning want to address this issue, looking at the health and

wellbeing offering throughout the district, ensuring equitable provision. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek all PfG delivery to consider the equitable provision of services across the district.

Mental Health

At the start of this year, Mid Ulster Community Planning commenced a number of actions to address mental health. COVID-19 has reinforced this as a priority area moving forward. Mid Ulster Community Planning will be exploring the impact of poor mental and wellbeing on infant mental health, young people and families, workplace mental health and crisis response as well as developing actions to address it. It is well documented that sports and physical activity plays a hugely important role in positive mental health and wellbeing. Mid Ulster Community Planning would like to see mental health directly addressed with a sports and physical activity delivery.

Other actions and objectives that the Mid Ulster Community Plan is seeking to achieve that are also relevant:

Poverty

The Mid Ulster Community Planning Poverty Strategy identifies the increased risk of lifestyle related illnesses in areas of deprivation. There is much evidence published on the key determinants of health inequalities. At a fundamental level, for many, the cost of participating in sports and physical activity is simply one they cannot afford, a key issue the Mid Ulster Poverty Plan seeks to address, and one the PfG needs to take important cognisance of, if it is to make sport and physical activity accessible to all.

Older people

One of the first achievements of the Mid Ulster Community Plan was the successful delivery of an Ageing Well action, addressing the social isolation and wellbeing of our older people. The next phase of this action is to develop Mid Ulster as an Ageing Friendly society. This will involve activities and programmes to promote the participation of older people in various parts of society, including sport and physical activity. Mid Ulster Community Planning believes that older people need to be a specific and targeted group for sport and physical activity.

ASB

Addressing disengaged young people and ASB is an important element for the Community Planning partners of the Vibrant & Safe Communities thematic group. This work acknowledges the positive impact sport and physical activity can play in this. Sporting role models can be used to change perceptions, reduce ASB and seek to make positive statements for young people e.g. drugs and alcohol.

Team sports can have a positive effect on community integration, civic pride and cross community relations, as well as mental health.

Volunteering

The Mid Ulster Community Plan acknowledges the important role of volunteers in society and the contribution they make to their communities. These contributions are no more apparent than in the sporting communities. Mid Ulster Community Planning believe that volunteers need to have a specific focus within any sports and physical activity strategy, providing for necessary support, training and guidance required to sustain and grow this sector.

Overall whilst it is important for support to traditional organisations for sports development there is potential to allow for greater support to those that outreach to disengaged groups of young children, older people and women, to encourage wider participation, to achieve this better and to underline ALL the benefits of sports and physical activity, beyond the traditional sporting achievements.

4. Delivery Feedback

Mid Ulster District Council welcomes the overall long-term strategic direction presented by the Programme for Government but would also like to reinforce the benefits of joined up, cross lateral working in order to achieve effective delivery and implementation of the strategic themes and priorities identified above. This Programme for Government and its associated outcomes based approach presents an opportunity to create the delivery of inclusive and effective public service delivery. Mid Ulster District Council welcomes this opportunity to be involved in constructive collaborative delivery mechanisms and looks forward to playing a part in the improvement of outcomes for the residents of the Mid Ulster district.

5. Conclusion

Mid Ulster District Council looks forward to the implementation of a robust and ambitious Programme for Government that provide local government with an effective collaborative role which builds on the delivery of the its current services and the associated positive outcomes for residents.

Yours sincerely

Cathal Mallaghan
Chairperson of Mid Ulster District Council

Programme for Government

Draft Outcomes Framework

Consultation Document



25 January 2021

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The Outcomes in the Programme for Government Framework present a picture of the kind of society we want to see. An inclusive society in which people of all ages and backgrounds are respected and cared for and in which we all prosper. A society which has no barriers to prevent people from living fulfilling lives. The Outcomes apply equally to everyone, and no one is excluded.

The Programme for Government will be underpinned by a budget and supported by key Executive strategies including an investment strategy, an economic strategy and an anti-poverty strategy aimed at building a strong and prosperous society by tackling disadvantage and achieving sustainable economic growth.

Foreword

The Executive is united in its aim to improve the well-being of all of our people.

To do this we are developing an ambitious and comprehensive programme of work that will harness the full power of joined-up action across Departments.

We are committed to making sure that this is a Programme for Government that fully reflects and responds to the needs of our society and protects the environment in which we live and work.

A proposed strategic framework of nine Outcomes presents a picture of the kind of society we want to see. An inclusive society in which people of all ages and backgrounds are respected and supported. A society which has no barriers to people living prosperous and fulfilling lives.

This has been informed by engagement with representative groups across different sectors and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all involved for sharing with us their ideas, energy and expertise.

Now we want to hear your views on the Outcomes Framework which will guide our actions over the next business year and beyond.

This is what will drive any changes to laws, the delivery of our public services and investment in future projects.

It is the starting point for a real and positive transformation and we need you to help us get it right.

Tell us what your priorities are, share with us your knowledge and experience, work with us to create and innovate to help build and sustain a better society and a healthy, clean environment for everyone.

Although we are in the midst of the worst global health pandemic in 100 years, we are beginning to see and understand that, in the midst of the difficulties and challenges, there are emerging positives.

We have seen an awakening sense about the things that are most important in life: people's health and happiness. We have experienced a willingness to work in new and innovative ways, harnessing technologies and using them to best advantage to ensure business continuity and to find more efficient ways of working.

In responding to the pandemic we have learned a great deal about working in partnership with others - not just across central government, but with other sectors

too, including local government, the private sector and the community and voluntary sector. We have had to move quickly and decisively and we have seen that great success is possible when we get it right. This has helped us get things done and make a difference where it is needed most.

That is the vision we have for the new Programme for Government.

Signed:



The Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA
First Minister



Michelle O'Neill MLA
deputy First Minister

Introduction

Where are we now?

The 'New Decade New Approach' (NDNA) document set out the process and approach for developing the Executive's Programme for Government (PfG). The key points being that the Programme should:

- be developed through engagement and co-design, using an Outcomes-based approach;
- focus on prosperity and wellbeing for all;
- establish a shared and ambitious strategic vision for the future;
- provide for accountable and transparent monitoring and reporting arrangements.

The Executive had begun to develop the new Programme prior to the COVID-19 pandemic which, since March 2020, has been the predominant matter facing the Executive. The Executive has agreed that work to develop a long term, multi-year strategic PfG should now commence.

The Executive wants this to be a PfG that recognises and proactively responds to the dependencies and connections that exist between different strands of public policy – a Programme that focuses on the things that matter most to people (health, happiness and life-satisfaction) and which uses that focus to design, shape and deliver public services that will achieve the best possible Outcomes of societal wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has given the world a different perspective on the way we live our lives and it has shone a light on established principles and standards that we have taken for granted for so long but which are now falling out of favour. We have also been able to see and measure the impact of different governmental responses to the pandemic and, in doing so, have learned that those countries that have been most successful have acted responsibly by putting citizens first and by working collaboratively with those who have the skills, knowledge and expertise to bring about positive change and to get things done.

COVID-19 has exposed flaws in traditional models and approaches to public services, but it has also progressed thinking and practice around new and different ways of working. Most importantly, it has demonstrated very clearly that, when it comes to putting in place fast and effective responses to challenges and problems, governments cannot do it by acting alone. Rather, a whole societal approach is needed – an approach which draws together scientific and technical expertise, combines it with local knowledge and information about what might work at community or individual level, and which uses relevant data to target where need is greatest. That means government working across departmental boundaries and the wider public sector as well as with partners in other sectors – in local government, academia, the private sector, with the community and voluntary sector and beyond.

That is the essence of an Outcomes-based PfG – government partnering with civic society to respond to the needs of people and communities everywhere. An inclusive society where Outcomes of individual and collective wellbeing are the drivers for the government agenda.

The Outcomes-based concept is not new to the Executive, and the concept has gained currency internationally in recent years, with governments in a number of countries using the approach to set their agenda. The United Nations has set a series of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are part of an internationally agreed performance framework designed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. All countries are aiming to achieve these goals by 2030. The intention is that the Outcomes Framework will be our way to demonstrate progress towards the achievement of SDGs. The Executive has agreed on an approach which draws on the techniques set out by Mark Friedman in his book 'Trying Hard is Not Good Enough', which describes a range of practical techniques designed to help keep the focus on Outcomes.

Developing an Outcomes-based PfG requires the Executive to have a clear view of the things that matter most to people and to know what their aspirations are in relation to those things. In order to do that as fully as possible and to ensure that everyone is able to have their say, the Executive is opening a public conversation around the quality of life conditions people want to see and what those conditions would be like if we could experience them.

That is the critical first step in the development process, and getting it right is key to everything that follows from it – knowing how to measure success and understanding where as a society we are currently; identify partners that can help make improvements; and, learning and understanding what works well and what does not. That is the conversation the Executive wants to have right now so that it can reach an informed view on the actions which, taken together, it needs to incorporate in the new Programme for Government.

The Executive believes this is an approach with immense potential to transform public service delivery. The expectation is that it will help remove organisational barriers and be a strong driver for the collaborative working practices that are needed to effect real and lasting change and improvement. The key principle is the Executive working in partnership with people and communities everywhere to identify and deliver actions that will help achieve the quality of life conditions that go to the centre of people's wellbeing.

Previous Programmes for Government had been prepared on the basis of service inputs and outputs which, when it comes to measuring success, are strong on counting levels of activity but which are less good at the more fundamental assessment of

whether the activities are the right thing to be doing based on their effectiveness when it comes to achieving positive change and improvement. The old, traditional model also underpins rigid organisational structures in delivering public services which then makes it difficult to see the bigger picture and to present a whole of government response to societal challenges and needs.

Despite significant investment and effort, the core Indicators that signal economic and social progress and improvement in the areas that matter most to people and their elected representatives had been static for too long. Evidence, including from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and from progressive governments around the world points to Outcomes-based working being much more likely to drive innovation and creativity in how we do things and to deliver better results in the longer term.

What we are doing?

The Executive's approach to the Programme for Government begins with a draft Framework of Outcomes – statements of societal wellbeing which, taken together, are intended to capture the range of things that experience and research suggest matter most to people – good health; a fair, equal and inclusive society; the economy; climate change; being able to fulfil potential; feeling safe and secure; having respect for each other; living in a place where people want to live, work, visit and invest; being able to reach out and connect with others; ensuring children and young people have the best start in life.

However, the Executive recognises the need to determine the completeness of these Outcomes and wants to hear the views of people and communities, and test them against the experiences of people of different gender, age, with/without disabilities, marital status, race, religious belief, political opinion and with/without dependants.

The Executive also wants to know more about the challenges and problems that people face and what they would like to see done differently or better in order to make improvements that would enhance their wellbeing. The Executive also needs to know who can help deliver real and lasting improvements in those things that matter most.

As a basis for the public conversation about these matters, officials have prepared an outline Framework of Outcomes. This is intended only as an aid to the conversation – a starting point for discussion and debate. The Framework sets out draft wording for the Outcomes and incorporates some early thinking around what the key priority areas might be under each one.

It is crucially important to get the wording of the Outcomes right as they will provide the starting point for future long-term strategic policy planning by the Executive and act as a touchstone for its strategies and actions moving forward. A key feature of the approach is that the design and content of work plans will be directly dependent on

the contribution they make towards helping achieve one or more of the desired Outcomes within the Framework.

The intention is that new PfG will be maintained in a “live” format with work plans being continually evaluated and adjusted to ensure they are achieving the desired impact. New actions to achieve positive change and improvement can be introduced as and when it is appropriate to do so, for example in response to changing circumstances or to put innovative thinking into practice or to utilise new partnership approaches. By the same measure, old/completed actions or ineffective plans (those not contributing to desired improvements) will be halted and removed from the Programme.

The benchmark always will be the contribution that each action makes towards achieving the desired Outcomes, **and that is why it is so important to get the Outcomes right at this early stage, and why the Executive wants to take the views of others.** The purpose of this consultation is to find out what people (individuals, communities, groups, businesses, sectoral bodies) think – to give everyone an opportunity to provide forthright feedback on the draft Framework, the individual draft Outcomes and outline key priority areas – **Do people agree with the Outcomes and Key Priority Areas that have been identified? Are there things missing or which are not relevant?**

A survey questionnaire has been designed to help structure responses to the above questions. We would encourage respondents to use the online survey, but written responses are equally welcome.

When completing the survey or in providing written comments, it might be helpful to think in terms of how to make this a Programme for Government that makes real and lasting positive change towards improving wellbeing for all – Think about what you or your group can bring to the Programme? What could be the game-changing actions? Who can help show the way forward? Who should the Executive partner and invest with to get the most impact from our collective efforts? Who is best placed to deliver programmes on the ground? What ideas are there for innovative new things or for seeing problems in a new light or for working in different ways?

Next Steps

This initial consultation is open for the next eight weeks to Monday 22 March 2021. The results will then be analysed and, where appropriate, adjustments made. More detailed action plans will then be developed and there will be further engagement with stakeholders and delivery partners.

To support the fact that this is to be a Programme for Government that is maintained in a “live” format responsive to changing circumstances and always open to new ideas and ways of working, and with a view to making it a programme that is impactful, responsive and inclusive, the Executive recognises the importance of continuous civic

engagement and it sees that as an essential aspect of the Outcomes-based approach moving forward. In that respect, consultation about the Programme and its monitoring processes will never close.

Responding to the Consultation

The best way to respond to this consultation is online, through our survey which can be accessed here:

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nisra-pfg-analytics/pfg-consultation/>

This is quick and simple to complete, and provides for views on the Outcomes and Key Priority Areas for Action that form the Framework.

A copy of the survey is also available for you to download at the following link:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-downloads

Completed hard copy survey questionnaires and general written responses can be sent to us by:

E-mail at: pfg@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Or

Post at: Programme for Government Team,
The Executive Office
Block E, Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SR

Separate easy read and children's versions of the consultation document, and a children's survey questionnaire are available here:

Easy Read Version Consultation Document:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-consultation-documents

Children's Version Consultation Document:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-consultation-documents

Children's Version Survey Questionnaire:

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nisra-pfg-analytics/pfg-childrens-consultation>

Responses to this consultation are invited until 11.59pm on 22 March 2021.

We look forward to hearing from you and are keen to engage with you. If you want to speak to a member of the Team about the PfG or the approach being taken, or if you or a group you are involved with would like to participate in a PfG engagement event, please do let us know.

Note – Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all engagement activities will be conducted using a virtual platform.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Consultation Responses

To support transparency in our decision making process, all responses to this consultation will be made public (subject to our Moderation Policy). This will include the name of the responding organisation (if applicable). However, names of individuals will only be published if you give consent. Your contact details will not be published.

For more information about what we do with personal data please see our consultation privacy notice at Annex A.

Your response, and all other responses to this consultation, may also be disclosed on request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR); however all disclosures will be in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential, so that this may be considered if the Department should receive a request for the information under the FOIA or EIR.

For further information:

TEO Data Protection Officer
Dr David Lammey
Room A.5.16 Castle Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3SR

TEL: 028 9052 8242 (or NICS internal number: 28242)

EMAIL: david.lammey@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework

Our children and young people have the best start in life

We know there is a strong relationship between what happens in the earliest years of life and future health and wellbeing. It is our responsibility to ensure our young people get the best start in life and grow up safe, healthy and happy.

This Outcome is about ensuring all our children and young people grow up in a society which provides the support they need to achieve their potential.

We want to ensure all our children and young people have access to the high quality education they all deserve and are equipped with the skills to help them make the best life choices. We also recognise the importance of ensuring our children and young people have good health, quality physical environments with space to play, opportunities for cultural and artistic expression and to make a positive contribution to society, and protection from violence and harm.

We want to make sure that families, childcare and education providers and those responsible for meeting the needs of more vulnerable children and young people are equipped to provide the high quality level of care and support required of them, so that all our children and young people enjoy their childhood and adolescence and grow to become resilient, confident and well equipped to take on the challenges and opportunities that adulthood brings.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Education

Addressing resourcing pressures, taking a strategic approach to area planning i.e. ensuring all have access to fit for purpose schools and supporting our education sector, including integrated and shared education.

(Department of Education, Department of Finance)

Capability and Resilience

Equipping children and young people with the knowledge and support to make safe, healthy and sustainable life choices, building their social, cultural and environmental awareness and self-confidence through team sports, and cross community activities.

(Department of Health, Department of Justice, Department for Communities, Department of Education, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Care

Providing stable, nurturing environments for looked after children, those formerly in care, and 'newcomer' children, and giving them the best possible standards of support.
(Department of Education, Department of Health)

Early Years

High quality healthcare provision for parents and infants, supporting and enabling parents into work with accessible and affordable childcare, meeting the complex needs of children, addressing child poverty with appropriate welfare and support, and supporting learning and development with universal and targeted services.
(Department of Health, Department for Communities, Department of Education)

Skills and Attainment

Delivering a high quality curriculum and an enhanced approach to careers advice, improving educational achievement and life chances, addressing persistent underachievement, and supporting children with specific needs, such as SEN and those with English as an additional language to access the curriculum.
(Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas
(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- Childcare Strategy (NDNA),
- Child Poverty Strategy (NDNA)
- Food Strategy Framework
- Strategy for Looked After Children
- Road Safety Strategy
- Sports Strategy
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

Our health and wellbeing are directly affected by the quality of the environment around us. We have a collective responsibility to tackle climate change to ensure that our children and future generations can draw benefit and enjoyment from our environment, and each of us must play a part in ensuring that happens.

By taking a Green Growth approach we will manage our resources efficiently and effectively, reducing our carbon emissions to ensure our environment is protected and enhanced while achieving sustainable economic growth to create a living and working active landscape that can be enjoyed and valued by everyone.

We need to ensure our infrastructure is integrated, efficient and sustainable and people are encouraged to make environmentally responsible choices.

Key Priority Areas

Natural Environment

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and the natural environment, supporting sustainable practices and resource use in the energy, agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors and ensuring human, animal and plant health.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Green Economy

Creating economic opportunity through tackling climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (including energy decarbonisation).

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Built Environment

Creating and shaping high quality, sustainable, places for people to live, work and spend leisure time. Furthering sustainable development and supporting positive place-making and effective stewardship.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Housing

Maintaining and redeveloping our current housing stock and ensuring new houses are built in an energy-efficient, sustainable way that protects our natural environment and built heritage.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Active and Sustainable Transport

Promotion of and access to safe, active and sustainable transport to encourage people to make environmentally responsible choices about transport.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department of Education)

Waste Management

Reducing and reusing the waste we produce by improving the services and infrastructure to enable the processing of waste materials and increasing awareness and understanding to drive cultural and behavioural change to result in less waste being generated, and a greater proportion of waste being reused or recycled.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Water and Wastewater Management

Enhancing and improving the existing network and infrastructure to ensure service delivery and sustainable environmental management.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Green Growth Strategy
- Environment Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Future Agriculture Policy Framework
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Sustainable Land Management Strategy
- NI Forestry A Strategy for Sustainability and Growth
- Marine Strategy
- Fisheries Strategy
- R&D Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy
- Energy Strategy
- Regional Development Strategy
- Circular Economy Strategy
- Economic Strategy
- Education and Skills Strategy
- Invest NI Strategy
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- NIHE draft Supporting People Strategy
- Investment Strategy
- Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Future Clean Air Strategy
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

It is important that everyone in our society feels included and valued and that we can all respect and celebrate the diversity of our society.

This Outcome is about tackling inequality and discrimination, increasing trust and respect, promoting understanding, ensuring that a person's background or identity is not a barrier to their participation in society.

We want to address the legacy of the past and create space for sharing between traditionally divided and new communities.

Key Priority Areas

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Tackling the issues that lead to inequality and disadvantage in terms of welfare and poverty, and providing support where it is needed in both urban and rural communities.
(Department for Communities, The Executive Office, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Rights and Equality

Promoting and protecting the rights of individuals to ensure we are recognizing and respecting diversity, ensuring everyone feels included.
(Department for Communities, The Executive Office, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Legacy

Delivering for those affected by the legacy of the Troubles, seeking to promote a shared and reconciled future for all, and recognizing and valuing the achievements of the peace process to date.
(The Executive Office, Department of Justice)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Tackling the issues of the past and ending sectarianism. Promoting, protecting and providing education on the rights of individuals across our public services to ensure different values and identities are respected and welcomed in society.
(The Executive Office, Department for Communities, Department of Justice, Department of Education)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas
(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Anti-poverty strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty (NDNA)

- Childcare Strategy
- Racial Equality Strategy
- Active Ageing Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy
- T:BUC Strategy
- Disability Strategy
- Gender Strategy
- Sexual Orientation Strategy
- Irish Language Strategy
- Ulster Scots Strategy
- Anti-poverty Strategy
- Strategy for Looked After Children
- Food Strategy Framework

We all enjoy long, healthy active lives

Our physical and mental health impacts on every aspect of our lives.

This Outcome is about enabling and supporting people to maintain their health and lead healthy, active lives, addressing the factors which impact on mental and physical health.

We want to ensure everyone has access to high quality care when they need it throughout their lives.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Health

Taking forward health and social care reform to ensure we can deliver safe, high quality services to meet the challenges of the future, and provide the right services where they are needed.

(Department of Health, Department of Finance)

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Address the issues that lead to inequality and disadvantage in terms of health and healthcare.

(Department of Health, Department for Communities)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive attitudes towards mental health and wellbeing. Ensuring access to a comprehensive array of early intervention and healthcare services to address mental health issues where they present.

(Department of Health, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Older People

Considering the health and social care needs of an ageing population, promoting positive attitudes to older people and tailoring support to enable them to enjoy better health and active lifestyles.

(Department of Health, Department for Communities)

Physical Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive public health measures, increasing awareness and supporting safe, active and healthy lives.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Anti-poverty strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty (NDNA)
- Active Ageing Strategy
- Mental Health Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together
- Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy 2026: Delivering for Our People
- Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
- Disability Strategy
- Cancer Strategy
- Substance Misuse Strategy
- Making Life Better 2012-23
- Green Growth Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Anti-poverty Strategy
- Mental Health Action Plan
- Protect Life 2 – Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- Sports Strategy
- Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Tackling Rural Poverty and Isolation Framework

Everyone can reach their potential

It is important that everyone in society is supported to help them realise and achieve their potential.

This Outcome is about giving people access to better jobs across different sectors by developing more opportunities, supporting personal development, addressing the issues that lead to underachievement and strengthening links between industry and academia.

We want to help people achieve their ambitions and to feel confident and empowered to pursue their goals and interests.

Key Priority Areas

Capability and Resilience

Supporting personal development opportunities for everyone, and building confidence and capacity.

(Department for Communities, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Better Jobs

Creation and development of more opportunities and better jobs, by tackling issues such as job security, wages and flexibility and giving employees a voice. Improving employability and helping those who are unemployed into work and ensuring we develop a workforce that is equipped and ready for employment. Protecting workers' rights, addressing "zero hours" contracts and barriers to employment.

(Department for Communities, Department for the Economy)

Skills and Attainment

Addressing underachievement alongside skills shortages, aligning Further Education and Higher Education to labour market demand, supporting vocational training and apprenticeships, as well as qualifications and tertiary education and continuing professional development.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Sports, Arts & Culture

Supporting creative industries, oversight and delivery for the arts, cultural and language sectors. Promoting cohesive communities through the culture, arts and language sectors

(Department for the Economy, Department for Communities, The Executive Office)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Economic Strategy
- Skills Strategy
- Childcare Strategy
- DfC employability NI
- Disability Strategy (NDNA)
- Gender Strategy (NDNA)
- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty Strategy (NDNA)
- Securing our Success – Apprenticeship Strategy
- Generating our Success the Youth Training Strategy Preparing for Success
- Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral

A strong, regionally balanced, inclusive economy is essential if we are to tackle the social and economic challenges facing us. This will be very significant in terms of the impacts of exit from the EU and recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. It is also important that our economy grows in a sustainable way that supports and protects our environment.

It is internationally recognised that a sustainable development approach seeks to progress economic and social ambitions while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

This Outcome is about creating the conditions required to achieve a strong, competitive economy that helps Northern Ireland compete on the global stage, attract investment and stimulate innovation and creativity.

The production of high quality, nutritious food is a crucially important factor for our economy. We want to provide the tools to enable the industry to pursue increased productivity in international terms. The intention is to grow an industry that is environmentally sustainable, supporting high quality air, water, and soil. An industry with a low carbon footprint which promotes biodiversity; is resilient to external shocks and operates within an integrated, efficient, sustainable, competitive and responsive supply chain.

We want to develop our infrastructure to enhance opportunities for growth and ensure growth in our economy is undertaken in an environmentally friendly way to help tackle climate change, striving for low-carbon/zero-carbon alternatives.

Key Priority Areas

Competing Globally

Dealing with the outworking of the EU Exit Protocol and developing internationalisation to help Northern Ireland compete on the global stage, and to promote Northern Ireland as a sector to visit and invest in.

(Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Green Economy

Developing our economy and energy supply in an environmentally friendly way, recognising the impacts industry has on climate change and striving for low-carbon / zero-carbon alternatives.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Growth

Growing the economy to attract and stimulate investment across Northern Ireland, including building sustainable investment, encouraging business start-ups and development through City and Growth Deals and supporting sustainable development of rural industries.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Food, Farming and Fishing

Providing the tools under a future agricultural policy to increase productivity, enhance environmental sustainability, improve resilience and supply chain integration of the agrifood industry.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Infrastructure

Developing our digital, energy and physical infrastructure to provide opportunities to grow business in all areas.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for the Economy, Department of Finance)

Innovation

Helping companies engage in innovation and research, and develop creativity and entrepreneurship.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- NI Innovation Strategy
- UK R&D Roadmap
- UK R&D Place Strategy
- Economic Strategy
- EU Exit Protocol
- Tourism Strategy
- Circular Economy Strategy
- Investment Strategy
- International Relations Strategy

- Exports Strategy
- Energy Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Future Agricultural Policy Framework
- City and Growth Deals
- Environment Strategy
- DAERA Innovation Strategy
- DAERA Digital Strategy
- NI Forest Service Strategy
- Marine Strategy
- Fisheries Strategy

Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other

This Outcome is about ensuring we all have a safe community and feel respected.

We need to tackle crime, reduce reoffending and divert people, especially young people, from entering the justice system by challenging and supporting people to change and assisting those in custody to make better life-choices when they are released.

It is important that we address the harm and vulnerability caused by crime and make the justice system more effective; the speed that cases progress through the system matters to victims and witnesses, their families and their communities and can help offenders to better understand the implications of their actions.

We need to promote understanding of different cultural identities to help build respect for each other.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Justice

Improving the effectiveness and accessibility of justice at all levels, speeding up justice and supporting the PSNI in bringing about transformational change, and delivering for victims and survivors of historical abuse and for those affected by the legacy of the Troubles.

(Department of Justice, Department of Finance, The Executive Office)

Address Harm and Vulnerability

Supporting and putting protections in place for those who are vulnerable, meeting the needs of those who have experienced serious crime, including the complex needs of children, and delivering for victims and survivors.

(Department of Justice, Department of Health)

Early Intervention and Rehabilitation

Addressing offensive behaviors and tackling organized crime, supporting rehabilitation, intervening early, meeting the often complex needs of both children and adults throughout the justice system.

(Department of Justice, Department of Health, Department for Communities, Department of Education)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Supporting safe and resilient communities, building respect for cultural identities and rights of individuals, providing integrated and shared education, addressing hate crime, tackling sectarianism, ending paramilitary activity and addressing the harm and vulnerabilities caused by it.

(Department of Justice, Department of Education, The Executive Office, Department for Communities)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Organised Crime Strategy
- Racial Equality Strategy (NDNA)
- T:BUC Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- A multi-agency three year victim and witness action plan
- 7 year Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy
- Justice and Health Initiatives
- Executive Mental Health Strategy
- Digital Justice Strategy
- Reviews of Family and Civil Justice
- Committal Reform Programme (NDNA)
- Review of sentencing policy
- Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime

We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives

It is important that we as a society care for those who need our support.

This Outcome is about enabling everyone to live their life in a fulfilling way as valued members of an inclusive society.

We need to tackle the issues that lead to disadvantage and provide the services and support people need, when they need it.

Key Priority Areas

Disability

Improving the quality of life for those of us with disabilities, empowering people to have more influence over their own lives and providing opportunities to participate in decisions that affect them.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for the Economy, Department for Infrastructure)

Housing

Tackling homelessness. Facilitating and supporting housing associations, provision and maintenance of appropriate social housing, investment in new social and affordable homes.

(Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Supporting people to build a route out of poverty, administering an effective social security / benefits system to those who need it, tackling the issues that lead to inequality.

(Department for Communities)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, and addressing social issues, risk factors and environmental impacts, such as social isolation and loneliness. Providing access to supportive services and promoting early intervention.

(Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Older People

Considering the health and social care needs of an ageing population, promoting positive attitudes to older people and tailoring support to enable them to participate fully in society.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for Infrastructure)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- NIHE's draft Supporting People strategy
- Disability Strategy (NDNA)
- Active Ageing (NDNA)
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Child Poverty Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy

People want to live, work and visit here

This Outcome is about promoting Northern Ireland as a place where people want to live, work and visit.

We want to retain and attract people to live and work here by having attractive employment, a healthy and clean environment, recreation and housing opportunities where people feel respected and safe.

We want to build on international relations and enhance our reputation, deal with the impacts of EU Exit and the COVID-19 pandemic, attract investment and help grow our economy.

We want to promote our built and natural environment our sports, arts and culture sectors to encourage tourism and provide opportunities for people to take part in the things they enjoy.

Key Priority Areas

Competing Globally

Retaining our workforce and attracting newcomers and inward investment. Dealing with the impacts of EU Exit. Meeting international environmental standards. Promotion of Northern Ireland as a place to live, study, work and visit.

(Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Better Jobs

Creating varied, fulfilling and quality employment opportunities for our workforce to support retention of our workforce, and attracting skilled workers to Northern Ireland's industries.

(Department for the Economy)

Growth

Growing the economy to attract and stimulate investment across Northern Ireland, including building sustainable investment, encouraging business start-ups and development through City and Growth Deals and supporting sustainable development of rural industries, including increased digital access.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Finance, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Housing

Tackling the issues to ensure everyone has access to good-quality, affordable housing and in promoting an integrated, shared society.

(Department for Communities, The Executive Office)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Supporting safe and resilient communities, building respect for cultural identities and rights of individuals, providing shared/integrated education, tackling sectarianism, ending paramilitary activity and addressing the harm and vulnerabilities caused by it.

(Department of Justice, Department of Education, The Executive Office, Department for Communities)

Sports, Arts and Culture

Providing access to sports, arts and culture and encouraging and facilitating opportunities for people to get involved. Promoting built heritage, eco-tourism and outdoor recreation. Providing spaces and facilities for sports, arts and culture events and activities to take place.

(Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Planning

Creating and shaping high quality, sustainable, places for people to live, work and spend leisure time. Furthering sustainable development and supporting positive place-making and effective stewardship.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Investment strategy
- Economic strategy
- T:BUC Strategy
- Tourism Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy
- City and Growth Deals
- Food Strategy Framework
- Rural Policy Framework (under development)

PFG Consultation Privacy Notice

[EU General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) 2016](#) and [Data Protection Act \(DPA\) 2018](#)

The Executive Office (TEO) is committed to protecting your privacy. This privacy notice explains how TEO uses information about you and the ways in which we will safeguard your data.

Why we process personal information

We will process personal data provided in response to consultations for the purpose of informing the development of our policy, guidance, or other regulatory work in the subject area of the request for views. We will publish a summary of the consultation responses and, in some cases, the responses themselves but these will not contain any personal data. We will not publish the names or contact details of respondents, but will include the names of organisations responding along with those of individuals working in a private capacity.

If you have indicated that you would be interested in contributing to further departmental work on the subject matter covered by the consultation, then we might process your contact details to get in touch with you.

Lawful basis for processing

In order to comply with data protection legislation, we must have a lawful basis for processing any personal data. The processing that this Department carries out is on a 'Public Task' basis (i.e. Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR: the processing is necessary for the Department to perform a task in the public interest or for our official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law).

We will only process any special category (sensitive) personal data you provide, which reveals racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious belief, health or sexual life/orientation when it is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest under Article 9(2)(g) of the GDPR, in the exercise of the function of the department, and to monitor equality.

The type of personal data we process

We process personal data relating to:

- Names
- Telephone Numbers

- Postal addresses
- E-mail addresses

How will your information be used and shared

We process the information internally for the above stated purpose. We don't intend to share your personal data with any third party. Any specific requests from a third party for us to share your personal data with them will be dealt with in accordance the provisions of the data protection legislation.

How long will we keep your information

Information from responses to a consultation will be retained until our work on the subject matter of the consultation is complete. Data will be retained for five years in line with TEO's approved retention and disposal schedule.

What are your rights

- You have the right to obtain confirmation that your data is being [processed, and access to your personal data](#)
- You are entitled to have personal data [rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete](#)
- You have a right to have personal data [erased and to prevent processing](#), in specific circumstances
- You have the right [to 'block' or suppress processing](#) of personal data, in specific circumstances
- You have the right to [data portability](#), in specific circumstances
- You have the right to [object to the processing](#), in specific circumstances
- You have rights in relation to [automated decision making and profiling](#).

Alternative formats/General enquires

If you have any other queries about this Privacy Notice or need a copy in an alternative format or language, please contact the PFG Team at the address below.

Programme for Government Team,
The Executive Office
Rm A5.01, Block E
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast, BT4 3SR

Telephone: 028 9052 3466
E-mail: pfg@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Complaints

If you wish to request access, object or raise a complaint about how we have handled your data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer using the details provided below.

Dr David Lammey
Data Protection Officer
The Executive Office
Room A5.16, Castle Buildings
Belfast, BT4 3SL

Telephone: 028 9052 0694

Email: David.Lammey@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Email: casework@ico.org.uk

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

Changes to this privacy notice

We keep this Privacy Notice under regular review. This Privacy Notice was last updated on 22 December 2020.